



Trauma-Informed Practice at School

How to support healing and growth within an educational context.

The effects of trauma are pervasive and enduring and can have a detrimental reach into every aspect of a young person's world, including behavioural, educational, social, relational, and emotional. The complex wounding to children can be compounded by the often significant impact on the adults who support them. A trauma-informed approach will support schools and school staff to better understand and respond to traumatised children in ways that support their healing, minimise the risk of long-term harm, and strengthen them towards growth. It will also place schools and school staff in the best possible position to preserve a positive school experience for all children and the adults who support them. We will explore:

- the effects of complex trauma on the developing brain and how this impacts learning, behaviour, relationships;
- how to recognise behaviour that may be fuelled by trauma, and how to respond effectively;
- the classroom practices and whole-school responses (practices, policies, procedures) that:
 - will create and maintain a supportive and safe learning environment for all children,
 - will minimise the potential for retraumatisation,
 - support learning, regulation, and ultimately reduce the occurrence of critical incidents of behaviour;
 - can heal and protect against the long-term effects of trauma;
- how to build relationships that heal, protect, build safety and trust, and maximise learning, relational, and behavioural outcomes;
- why adults can feel like, and be responded to, as 'threat', and the important practices to mitigate this;
- a model for challenging behaviour that will make way for a more compassionate, targeted response;
- a new lens on challenging behaviour - a toolbox of strategies to calm challenging behaviour;
- the classroom practices that can proactively position children towards calm, and maximise learning and behavioural outcomes for all students;
- why many common, well-intended behaviour management techniques don't work (including separation-based disciplines, classroom reward charts, suspension), why they can often backfire, and what to do instead;
- how to identify paths to success for all students, and increase their sense of belonging, connectedness, and engagement in school;
- the potential impact on the adults who support young people who have lived through trauma, and the practices to support the wellbeing of all staff.



About Karen Young

Karen has worked as a psychologist in private practice, and organisational and educational settings. She is now a sought-after speaker, educator, and consultant, both at home in Australia and overseas. Karen is the founder of 'Hey Sigmund', an internationally popular online resource that provides contemporary, research-driven information on anxiety, trauma, and the neurodevelopment of children. She has written five books, including the bestselling 'Hey Warrior', which creatively assist children to understand and manage anxiety, feelings, and behaviour.