

Use trauma-informed practices

A suggestion for implementing the strategy
'Foster wellbeing and mental health' from the
Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

-
- Includes:**
- Use school-wide approaches
 - Understand the impacts of trauma
 - Understand what happens in the brain and body
 - Recognise the "Window of tolerance"
 - Discover insights into stress, trauma, and the brain
 - Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Foster wellbeing and mental health](#)

Suggestion: [Use trauma-informed practices](#)

Date

22 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/understand-the-impacts-of-trauma

Use school-wide approaches

At Henry Hill School in Napier, a trauma-informed approach is having a community-wide impact. This video shows some of the practices and physical spaces at the school that help ākonga to be regulated and calm.



Video hosted on Youtube http://youtu.be/_SESJGjuLnk

Closed Captions

Source:

[The Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_SESJGjuLnk&t=85s

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Understand the impacts of trauma

Build your understanding of trauma and the impacts on learning and behaviour.

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as harmful or threatening and has lasting adverse effects on the individual's physical, social, emotional, or spiritual wellbeing (Liberty, 2017).

It is important to recognise that most children recover well from traumatic experiences if they have access to:

- safe, inclusive environments
- responsive relationships that support understanding and problem solving around difficult times.

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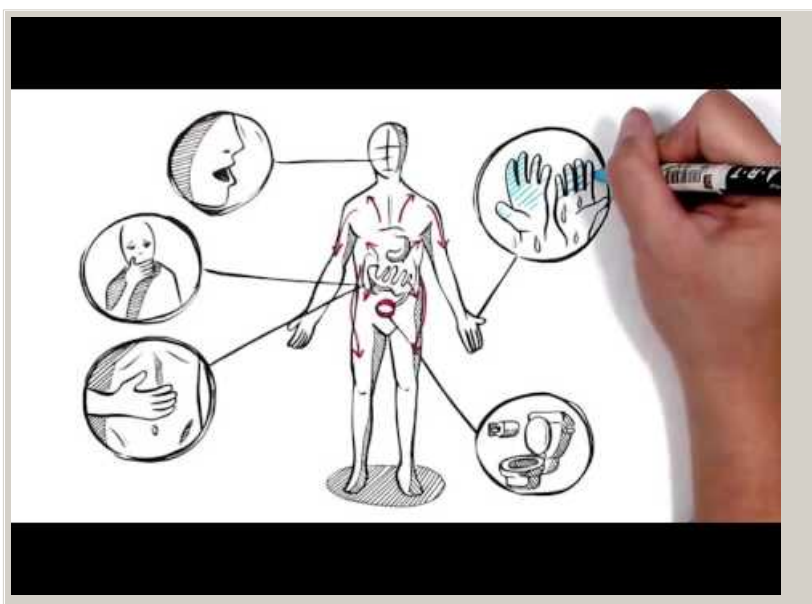
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Understand what happens in the brain and body

Neuroscience helps us to understand what happens in the brain and body of ākongā when they feel unsafe or distressed.



Video hosted on Youtube http://youtu.be/jEHwB1PG_-Q

Closed Captions

Source:

[Braive](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEHwB1PG_-Q

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Recognise the "Window of tolerance"

The "Window of tolerance" is a metaphor that can be helpful when working with students. The window of tolerance is the optimal zone, where ākongā can deal with stress and challenge effectively.

The "Window of tolerance" describes a state where the nervous system is well regulated.

Some students may have a wide window that allows them to cope with high degrees of challenge and emotional intensity.

Other students, especially those who have experienced trauma, may have a narrow window of tolerance and may find it difficult to stay within the optimal zone for learning. Adverse experiences can narrow the window of tolerance and result in ākongā being overwhelmed more easily.

By understanding what ākongā may be experiencing in times of stress, staff can respond in ways that help ākongā to regulate.

Calm, thoughtful staff responses can prevent further trauma.

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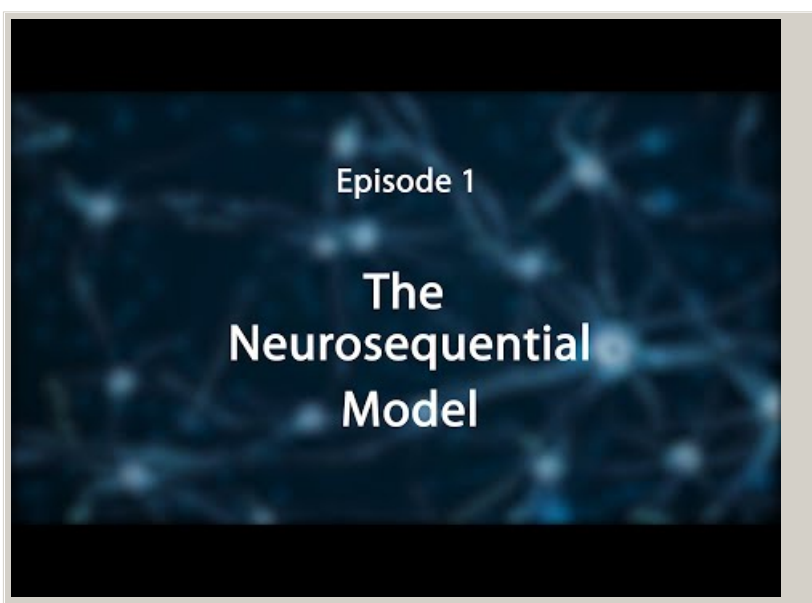
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Discover insights into stress, trauma, and the brain

Dr. Perry describes the Neurosequential Model and the way it applies to an education setting. The model can help educators increase their students' engagement in learning and mitigate behavioural problems.



Video hosted on Youtube http://youtu.be/_3is_3XHKKs

Closed Captions

Source:

[ThinkTVPBS](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3is_3XHKKs

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Useful resources



Revelations in Education

Website with a range of resources related to neuroscience and it's application in education.

Publisher: Revelations in Education

[Visit website](#)



Trauma-informed practice in primary and secondary schools

An overview of the key elements of trauma informed practice.

Publisher: The Education Hub

[Visit website](#)



Trauma Informed Educators NZ

This Facebook group is designed to provide support, connection and resources to NZ educators interested in developing trauma-informed practice in their schools and centres.

Publisher: Trauma Informed Educators NZ

[Visit website](#)



K-12 trauma-informed resources for coping with tragedy and loss

This article includes a link to the research brief Best practices for trauma-informed instruction, which examines classroom-based strategies for identifying, supporting, and instructing students experiencing trauma.

Publisher: Hanover Research (US)

[Visit website](#)



Policy and practice packs

This web page includes the guide Trauma informed early learning and school, which examines myths, facts and things to consider.

Publisher: Monash University

[Visit website](#)

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