



A Thrive Approach to support reconnection

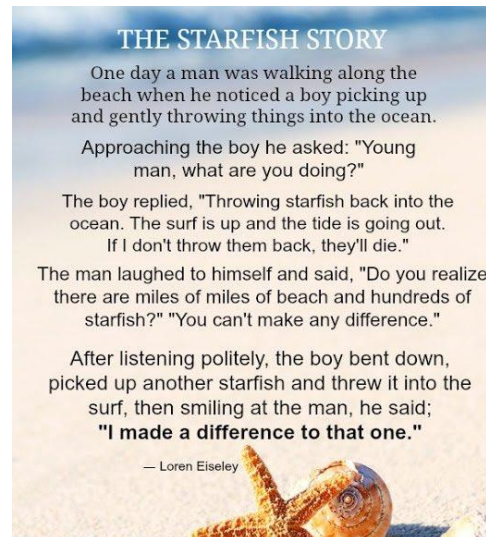


“The energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard and valued; when they can give and receive without judgement; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.”

Brene Brown

There is no more effective neurobiological intervention than a safe relationship, the relationship works to bring the brain back into regulation. The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely he will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love.”

(Bruce Perry, PhD, MD, researcher & child psychiatrist)



STAGE (Including Key Characteristics)	TASKS (What the youngster will instinctively 'grapple with' during this stage)	AFFIRMATIONS <i>(How the youngster is encouraged to grow through this stage)</i>	SOME WAYS THE COVID 19 TRAUMA CAN LEAD TO A RE-VISITING OF THIS STAGE	HOW ADULTS CAN SUPPORT PUPILS WHO HAVE A TEMPORARY INTERRUPTION AT THIS STAGE <i>(Communicating the affirmations in tangible ways)</i>
<p>BEING (first visited 0-6mths)</p> <p>Key Job: Calling for & accepting care</p> <p>Hunger: Contact</p> <p><i>Do I have value? Will my needs be met? Do I belong here?</i></p> <p>Clues for returning to this stage: Dysregulated behaviours: 'losing it', 'meltdowns' Separation anxiety related behaviours – 'clingy' Unsure about feelings Attention-seeking – or rather attention-needing – behaviours</p>	<p>Thrive Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To Being safe • Being special • Having needs met call for care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To accept nurture ▪ To cry or otherwise signal to get needs met ▪ To bond emotionally; trust caring adults and self ▪ To accept touch ▪ To decide to live; to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What you need is important to us ▪ We want you to be here and want to care for you ▪ We're glad you're here ▪ You belong here ▪ You can feel all of your feelings ▪ We are glad you are you ▪ You can grow at your own pace <p>Key role for adult/carer: Co-Regulator</p> <p>Promote a sense of belonging and trust. A sense of psychological safety.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deprivation of touch from loved ones - Significantly limited contact from key figures eg a parent having to socially isolate or be shielded; staff at school, clubs etc etc; - Reduced quantity of affirmations coming from others outside of home - Parents/carers' capacity to offer affirmation negatively impacted by stresses associated with Covid 19 - Anxieties about health and death being triggered - Lacking a sense of safety due to the threat of the virus; picking up on parent anxieties about money etc; exposure to the news - Separation from key carers eg parent who lives in a different house - Exposure to domestic violence - Continuation of abuse and neglect, with an even greater sense of isolation from those who might be able to protect them. 	<p>Re-establishing a sense of belonging in the classroom and school eg new labels on pegs/lockers</p> <p>Be explicit about feelings eg 'I wonder how you are feeling being back? Relieved? Worried? Happy?'</p> <p>Being grounded and attuned to the pupil</p> <p>Think for them at times they are overwhelmed with emotion/struggling to connect with the thinking part of their brain</p> <p>Use safe and appropriate touch, holding, talking, singing – and intuition to decide how and when</p> <p>Consider use of contracting to help build trust and sense of safety.</p>

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<p>DOING (6-18mths)</p> <p>Key Job: Experiment & explore;</p> <p><i>What can I know? Is it safe for me to explore?</i></p> <p>Hunger: Stimulus</p> <p>Clues for returning to this stage: Difficulties in settling; Lack of concentration High risk-taking behaviour Getting into prohibited places</p> <p>Avoiding doing things unless they can be done perfectly; Trouble finishing tasks</p>	<p>Thrive Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring and experimenting • Experiencing options • Initiating, engaging and doing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop sensory awareness using all senses. • To use all senses to explore the environment • To start to learn that there are options and that not all problems are easily solved • To develop initiative • To signal needs; to trust others and self • To continue to form secure attachments with parents and/or care-givers • To get help in times of distress • To continue learning earlier tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You can use all of your senses when you explore ▪ You can explore and experiment and we will support and protect you ▪ You can be interested in everything ▪ We like you when you are active and when you are quiet ▪ We like to watch you grow and learn ▪ You can know what you know ▪ You can do things as many times as you need to <p>Key role for adult/carer:</p> <p><u>Co-Adventurer</u></p> <p>Provide activities to stimulate 'doing' – ensuring safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A reluctance to explore for fear of danger - A reluctance or refusal to engage in learning for fear of making mistakes - <p><i>NB Adapt to age and also context</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a variety of sensory experiences. • Respond when youngster initiates activity. • touch and encouragement. • Say 'yes' more than 'no'. • Listen to the youngster, especially if s/he is struggling to express something. • Exploratory activities • Responsibilities that involve getting up and about eg equipment monitor – legitimate exploration of the classroom! 	<p>Be explicit as to how the classroom/school has been made as safe as possible re: threat of infection.</p> <p>Offer a variety of sensory experiences to help them reconnect with themselves</p> <p>Say 'yes' more than 'no'. Keep an eye on the balance of positive and negative strokes, and giving recognition for what they simply being 'them' as well as for what they do. (See 'Self-esteem' resource sheet)</p> <p>Provide encouragement to 'have a go' at tasks. Be patient and accepting of reluctance to do so.</p>

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<p>THINKING (18mths - 3yrs)</p> <p>Start separating out from parent(s)/carer(s)</p> <p>Saying 'No'</p> <p><i>'Is it OK for me to start thinking for myself?'</i></p> <p>Hunger: Structure</p> <p>Clues for returning to this stage: Non-compliant behaviour/ Inappropriate rebelliousness</p> <p>Tantrums Difficulties sharing belongings</p> <p>Fear of anger in self/others</p>	<p>Thrive Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning about cause and effect • Expressing a view • Feeling, thinking and problem-solving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To establish ability to think for self ▪ To learn to think and solve problems with cause-and-effect thinking ▪ To start to give up beliefs about being the centre of the universe ▪ To separate from parents without losing their security ▪ To express anger and other feelings ▪ To start to follow simple safety commands e.g. 'stop', 'come here' ▪ To test reality, to push against boundaries and other people ▪ To continue learning earlier tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>I'm glad you're starting to think for yourself</i> ▪ <i>You can learn to think for yourself and others too</i> ▪ <i>You can think and feel at the same time</i> ▪ <i>You can know what you need and ask for help</i> ▪ <i>You can be yourself and we will still care for you.</i> ▪ <i>It's OK for you to be angry, and we won't let you hurt yourself or others</i> ▪ <i>You can say no and push the limits as much as you need to – and we will keep you and others safe as you do so</i> <p>Key role for adult/carers:</p> <p><u>Co-Constructor of Meaning</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Separation anxiety - Living under the restrictions re: where to go and what to do could generate frustrations and resistance to following instructions - Struggling to cope with feelings, some of which they might believe aren't ok (eg 'big boys don't cry'; girls expressing anger) - Difficulties solving problems due to the 'thinking part' of the brain being hijacked by emotions - Anger being turned inwards - Depression 	<p>Re-establish routines and expectations. Be clear about negotiables and non-negotiables. Make reasonable adjustments in light of the emotional pressures pupils will be under.</p> <p>Keep instructions clear & simple</p> <p>Allow for expression of individuality, whilst maintaining safety</p> <p>Give permission to feel: Talk about feelings: including appropriate self-disclosure. Circle time activities</p> <p>Be attuned to pupils. Get alongside to provide co-regulation</p> <p>Provide rich diet of unconditional positive strokes to affirm their sense of individuality</p> <p>Provide safe ways in which anger and fear can be expressed</p> <p>Teach about how the brain works to support development of self-regulation</p> <p>Calm boxes</p>

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<p>IDENTITY & POWER (3-6yrs)</p> <p>Pick up messages about the appropriateness of feelings</p> <p><i>Is it okay for me to be me? How do I get noticed around here? What feelings are OK?</i></p> <p>Hunger: Recognition</p> <p>Clues for returning to this stage</p> <p>Difficulties in distinguishing between play fighting & aggression Lying; Manipulation Issues re: gender identity Having to be in a position of power; being afraid of or reluctant to use power. Unsure of personal adequacy. Frequently comparing oneself to others and needing to come off better.</p>	<p>Thrive Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an identity • Distinguishing between fantasy and reality • Exploring power with responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assert an identity separate from others • To acquire information about the world, self, body and gender role • To separate fantasy from reality • To learn extent of personal power • To learn to exert power to affect relationships • To discover the effect on others & place in groups • To practice socially appropriate behaviour • To continue learning earlier tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>You can explore who you are and find out about others</i> ▪ <i>You can try out different ways of being powerful</i> ▪ <i>You can be powerful and ask for help at the same time</i> ▪ <i>All of your feelings are OK here</i> ▪ <i>You can learn the results of your behaviour</i> ▪ <i>You can learn what is pretend and what is real</i> <p>Key role for adult/carer: Facilitating the child's individuality Helping the child to learn responsibility for their behaviour and to distinguish between fantasy and reality Role-modelling how to use power in relationships Supporting exploration of roles and identity. <i>Providing opportunities to practice social behaviours.</i></p>	<p><i>Difficulties with peers – falling out</i></p> <p><i>Struggling with a sense of powerlessness/lack of control</i></p> <p><i>Checking news feeds etc – with ongoing exposure to predominantly 'bad news'</i></p> <p><i>Negative impact of Increased use of social media to feel connected with friends they can't be with</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach clearly that it is OK to be who you are, and that both sexes and all cultures are OK. • Communicate acceptance of child. • Be clear about responsibilities • Encourage fantasy while being clear about what is fantasy and what is reality. • Acknowledge and respond to appropriate behaviour. • Use of stories to explore identity, roles, differences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer questions accurately, providing information and correct misinformation. - Be clear about responsibilities - Support with learning of specific social skills - Expect to possibly be needed to arbitrate more than usual with peer conflict and tension - Provide ways in which pupil can experience a sense of power and control in positive ways - Provide reassurance that it's ok to ask for help – including for eg work they were previously competent at - Give explicit messages that encourage acceptance of one another as individuals. - Acknowledge not just the collective experience of Covid but also that there will be individual difference in experience.

STAGE	TASKS	AFFIRMATIONS	HELPFUL ADULT/CARER BEHAVIOURS	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS & USEFUL RESOURCES
<p>SKILLS & STRUCTURE (6-11 yrs)</p> <p>Making sense of the world especially rules & fairness;</p> <p>How do I develop an internal structure that will help myself and others?</p> <p>How do I develop the competence necessary to acquire the skills that will help me get along with others and in the world?</p> <p>Hunger: Excitement</p> <p>Clues for returning to this stage: Fear of trying Rubbishing imperfect work Falling out with peers repeatedly Trusting the thinking of the group rather than one's own intuition Being reluctant to learn new things</p>	<p>Thrive Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire new and extended skills • Understand the need for rules • Know what is right for you • To learn skills, learn from mistakes; to learn to be 'good enough' • To test abilities against others • To identify with one's own sex • To test ideas and values • To reason about wants and needs • To learn to listen in order to collect information and think • To practice thinking and doing • To check out family/school rules and structures • To learn the relevance of rules • To experience the consequences of breaking rules • To learn what's one's own responsibility and that of others • To disagree with others and still be wanted • To develop the capacity to cooperate • To develop internal controls. • To continue earlier tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You can learn from your mistakes ▪ You can think for yourself and get help instead of staying in distress ▪ You can think before you say 'Yes' or 'No' ▪ You can find ways of doing things that work for you ▪ You can trust your intuition to help decide what you want to do ▪ You can learn the rules that help you live with others ▪ You can learn when and how to disagree ▪ We still want to be with you when we differ and we can learn together <p>Key role for adult/carer: Encouraging and supporting the extension of skills Introducing the child to diverse experiences and people Acting as a role model for the exploration of values Building self-esteem Listening to youngster's tussles with the social world – falling out, making sense of rules etc etc.</p>	<p>NB Adapt to age and also context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the message 'It's OK to make mistakes'. • Be clear that mistakes are a key part of learning. • Teach conflict resolution and problem-solving skills. • Respect youngster's opinions and beliefs and allow discussion. • Give lots of recognition for learning, thinking and finding out own way to do things. • Encourage skills development. • Be encouraging, enthusiastic, reliable and consistent. • Challenge negative behaviour and confront discounting of responsibility. • Encourage participation in rule-making, and be clear about negotiable and non-negotiable rules 	<p>2 components to this stage: Developing the skills needed to get on with others and on in the world around them; Strengthening their internal structure – their resilience</p> <p>Social skills difficulties – check out what specific skills</p>

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<p>INTERDEPENDENCE (11-18 yrs)</p> <p>Preparing for adulthood</p> <p>During adolescence, there is a huge burst of growth and maturation in the brain, second only to the rate of change happening during the first three years of life. These changes mean adolescents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feel emotions more intensely • connect with their peers differently • seek rewards by trying new things • push back on existing ways of doing things to create new ways of being in the world 	<p>Thrive Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing independence • Connecting with peers • Exploring identity and gender <p>To take steps towards independence</p> <p>To achieve a clearer emotional separation from family</p> <p>To emerge as a separate independent person with own identity and values</p> <p>To be competent and responsible for own needs, feelings and behaviours</p> <p>To integrate sexuality into earlier developmental tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You can know who you are and learn and practice skills for independence ▪ You can develop your own interests, relationships and causes ▪ You can grow in your femaleness or maleness and still need help at times ▪ You can learn to use old skills in new ways ▪ We look forward to knowing you as an adult ▪ We trust you to ask for support when you need it <p>Key role for adult/carer: <i>'Teenagers need friendly parents, not parents as friends.'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage children to be responsible for their own needs, feelings and behaviour, and to ask for help when they need it. • This may be a turbulent time as young people re-work and review their earliest years as they separate healthily while staying connected. • Promote and allow youngster to grow up, encourage growing independence. • Celebrate emerging adulthood, personal identity etc. • Continue to offer appropriate support. • Accept young person's feelings. • Negotiate rules and responsibilities. • Confront unacceptable behaviour • Confront destructive or self-defeating behaviour. • Be clear about school's position on drugs, social media etc. • Expect thinking, problem-solving and self-determination. 	<p>NB The teenage yrs involve revisiting all of the previous stages – but at twice the pace (and with the additional element of hormones!):</p> <p>Teenager sleeping a lot, demanding food, lifts, money? – sounds similar to babies (<i>Being</i> stage!)</p> <p><i>Doing</i> stage – first time round – fingers into everything as the world is explored. Teenager 'exploring' – drugs, alcohol etc etc.</p> <p><i>Thinking</i> Stage – pushing of boundaries – what teenager doesn't do this?</p> <p><i>Identity and Power</i> – finding out who am I? 3-6yrs – based on gender; ethnicity</p> <p><i>Skills & Structure</i> – continuing to develop social skills and strengthening internal resilience.</p>

Note: Melatonin helps regulate the body's natural sleep–wake cycle and influences our energy levels throughout the day.

- During the day, light suppresses the release of melatonin.
- At night, melatonin levels rise, causing sleepiness.

- blue light from digital devices decreases our levels of melatonin more than any other wavelength
- Exposure to blue light from digital devices before bedtime can disrupt our sleep patterns.

The release of melatonin is delayed by up to three hours in mid-to-late adolescence, compared to adults and children, meaning young people

- tend to fall asleep later at night and stay asleep longer into the morning
- may feel like it is 5am when it's 8am
- who attend school with a traditional timetable could experience chronic sleep deprivation
- sometimes turn to caffeine-rich energy drinks as a stimulant to compensate for their sleep deprivation, which can result in them feeling 'tired but wired'.

Dopamine changes in adolescence Dopamine baseline levels are lower, meaning young people:

- are more likely to feel bored
- need increased stimulation to feel alert and engaged.

Dopamine levels increase much more sharply when young people experience stimulation, meaning they:

- experience a heightened feeling of euphoria
- tend to thrill-seeking
- may focus on the potential positive rewards of the experience rather than the possible risks.