

# An introduction to Thrive

## For parents and carers

# An overview of this presentation:

## 1. A brief introduction to Thrive.

- What is it?
- Why is the school choosing to use this approach?
- How will it affect teaching and learning in school?
- Why do some children have sessions outside the classroom?
- How can I support my child/ learn more about Thrive?

## 2. A summary of the neuroscience behind Thrive.

- What are interruptions to social and emotional development?
- Is it my fault? Am I being judged?
- Why is my child being chosen for extra help?

## 3. How does Thrive work in practice?

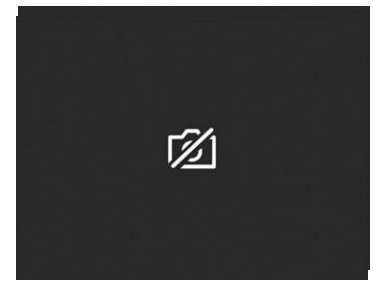
- What are the Action Plans like and how are they created?
- How often is progress reviewed and how do you know if it is working?
- What happens next?

There will be an opportunity to ask questions or find out more information in a live Zoom meeting next week. Alternatively, please email Nancy Darke (SENDCo and Thrive Practitioner at Bawdsey and Orford Primary Schools) directly:

[nancy.darke@bawdsey.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:nancy.darke@bawdsey.suffolk.sch.uk)

# What is Thrive?

## What is Thrive based on?



**Established  
research in  
neuroscience**



**Attachment  
research**



**Child  
development  
theory**



**Research  
into role of  
creativity  
and play**





# What is the Thrive Approach?

- Thrive helps adults prepare children and young people for life's emotional ups and downs
- Thrive is rigorous, targeted, measured
- Thrive tells you how to be and what to do with children's differing and sometimes challenging behaviours to help them engage with life and learning.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6UVrnjOVRk>



# Why is my school using Thrive?

- Thrive supports children from all backgrounds and experiences to develop resilience, social and friendship skills and the ability to understand and manage big emotions.
- The first priority of Thrive is to support children to flourish and develop in age appropriate ways emotionally and socially.
- The approach runs alongside and is embedded in all areas of learning in the class room. It doesn't take anything away in terms of time or learning content, just helps teachers be mindful of the emotional and social developmental needs of the children in their classes.

## Why do some children get additional Thrive sessions?

- As well as supporting children across the school in their natural stages of development in terms of identity, resilience and social and emotional literacy skills, Thrive can help address the problems caused by interrupted emotional development in children and young people.
- **Interrupted emotional development:**
  - Can happen because of significant events in a child's life, such as grief, loss, change etc.
  - Can happen because a child is developing more slowly/ differently as a result of additional needs, ASD, ADHD etc.
  - Can be linked to attachment difficulties in early life.
  - Can be virtually impossible to explain for some children – they just `do` show some areas where they are struggling, despite being older than when this skill would normally be seen.

# Why do some children get additional Thrive sessions?

- Thrive helps address the problems caused by interrupted emotional development in children and young people.
- **Interrupted emotional development:**
  - Can present in lots of different ways – loud, disruptive and disrespectful behaviour but also quiet withdrawal, bullying and being bullied, not engaging or taking the risk of failure in learning, giving up easily, poor self esteem and high levels of anxiety etc.
  - Affects mental health and wellbeing, which can also have an impact on physical health.
  - Is much easier to support when children are younger and the concerns are identified early.

For a very small number of children, without support, their lives can be affected long term and there are far reaching consequences of their loss of opportunity to narrow emotional and social gaps in development. This clip gives the worst case scenario.

Please click on link to watch clip.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-8jTIsJ7Q>



# Are the school judging my parenting? Is it my fault?

Is it my fault that my child needs extra help?

**No! No! a million times no!**

All sorts of things can affect a child's social and emotional development – and some areas children may struggle in can be very much part of how they are. For example, some children are shy and struggle to be assertive – our aim is to support them to be able to communicate when they really need to and be able to keep themselves safe and happy in and out of school. Nature and nurture are very much still a current debate!

Are we judging you or your child?

**Definitely not!**

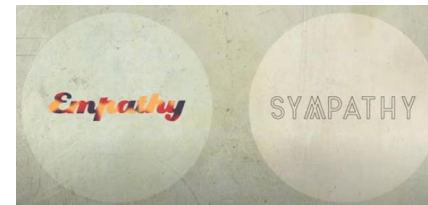
Your child's teacher may have observed some difficulties that your child is currently having emotionally or socially. These may not have a negative impact on the class or on the teacher, but we want to help boost your child's confidence and coping skills.





## How will Thrive support children who have interruptions in development or who are showing us that they need some additional support?

Once a child is identified as needing some extra support to work on a key area, teachers will answer a number of questions to find out precisely what they need help with.



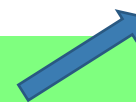
The Thrive Practitioner, with the class teacher and/or TA, will use the Thrive toolkit to create an action plan. This will have a number of activities but also suggestions of approaches to being with and supporting the child.

Children will then be seen for two or more short sessions (15-30 minutes depending on the child) each week, individually, working with a member of staff outside the class environment. Alternatively, they may have sessions in a pair or a small group of children who have similar needs. Sessions are fun, play based and usually looked forward to by the children because they are forming a relationship with a `special` adult and being listened too and helped.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

Please click on link to watch clip.



# How can I support my child? Can I have help in how to work with them at home?

The Thrive programme can produce a parent/carer's action plan either based on the school's assessment of the child's needs or, if it seems appropriate, on a joint assessment between parents/carers and the Thrive practitioner.

This plan will contain fun games and activities and also tips on how to approach supporting your child, for example what part of an activity to focus on and what language might be useful.

The school's Thrive practitioner can also give advice and ideas for use at home if this is needed. However, it is not like homework – if it isn't helpful, if it isn't fun, if the difficulties aren't shown at home then you don't have to do anything!



# What are the benefits of Thrive...

- For children?
- For parents and families?
- For schools and staff?



# The theory and science behind the Approach





# Developmental stages as strands

Each comes online sequentially and remains in play throughout life.





# Thrive Developmental Strands

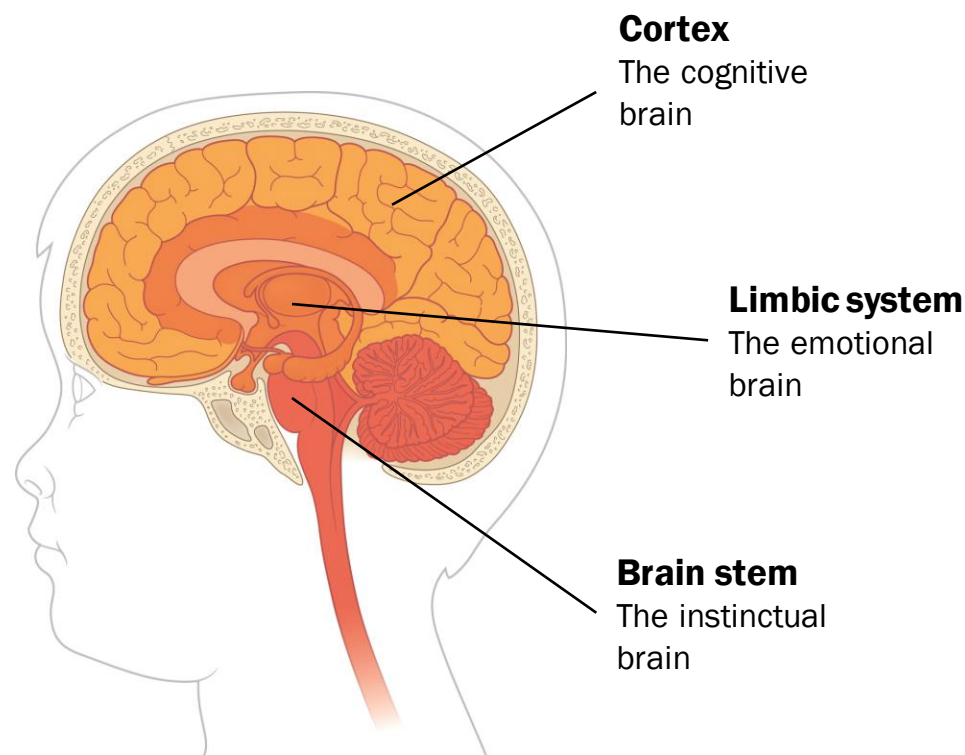


<p><b>Interdependence</b> 11–18 years</p> 	<p><b>Developmental tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing independence</li> <li>Connecting with peers</li> <li>Exploring identity and gender</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enjoys individuality and periods of independence</li> <li>Is developing a confident sexual identity</li> <li>Engages with new opportunities and challenges</li> </ul> <p><b>Interrupted development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes inappropriate risks</li> <li>Has poor relationships</li> <li>Is unwilling to separate</li> <li>Displays addictive, abusive, self-harming behaviours</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adult role:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing a secure base for the child to leave and return to so the child learns responsibility for self, independence, and to explore their sexuality safely</li> <li>Providing a resource for information, values and support</li> <li>Setting clear values and boundaries for the child to test themselves against</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents' role:</b></p> <p>Parents 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 children re-work and review their earliest years as they separate healthily while staying connected. <b>Children enjoy taking responsibility for themselves.</b></p>
<p><b>Skills and Structure</b> 7–11 years</p> 	<p><b>Developmental tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motivation for developing skills</li> <li>Developing morals and values</li> <li>Understanding the need for rules</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enjoys diversity, difference and acquiring new skills</li> <li>Possesses internal/external structures: values; rules</li> <li>Is developing a confident gender identity</li> </ul> <p><b>Interrupted development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is anti-authority and anti-rules</li> <li>Shows mismatch between expectations and skills</li> <li>Is over-casual; does not complete tasks</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adult role:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging and supporting the extension of skills</li> <li>Introducing the child to diverse experiences and people</li> <li>Acting as a role model for the exploration of values</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents' role:</b></p> <p>Parents acknowledge children's emerging values and morals and individual ways of doing things. Parents teach the children the significance of rules and regulations and help with the development of their negotiation skills. <b>Children enjoy sharing their opinions and using their skills.</b></p>
<p><b>Power and Identity</b> 3–7 years</p> 	<p><b>Developmental tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing an identity</li> <li>Distinguishing fantasy from reality</li> <li>Exploring power with responsibility</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a positive sense of self and individual identity</li> <li>Adapts to different roles and relationships</li> <li>Understands consequences and contexts</li> </ul> <p><b>Interrupted development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Threatens, bullies and lies</li> <li>Has low self-esteem; discounts self</li> <li>Uses reputation to bolster self</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adult role:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating the child's individuality</li> <li>Helping the child to learn responsibility for their behaviour and to distinguish between fantasy and reality</li> <li>Role-modelling how to use power in relationships</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents' role:</b></p> <p>Parents support children to find out who they are, what they like to do and to separate fantasy from reality. With this comes growing independence and responsibility, with children learning that they can still ask for help and care. <b>Children enjoy being who they are and being responsible.</b></p>
<p><b>Thinking</b> 18 months – 3 years</p> 	<p><b>Developmental tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing a view</li> <li>Learning about cause and effect</li> <li>Feeling, thinking and problem-solving</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Names, expresses and handles feelings</li> <li>Understands rules and cause and effect</li> <li>Thinks for themselves; can say 'no'</li> </ul> <p><b>Interrupted development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is oppositional; acts tough</li> <li>Directs others; over-reacts</li> <li>Is demanding and pushy; or acts powerless</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adult role:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting as a co-constructor of meaning</li> <li>Naming and creating opportunities for the safe expression of feelings</li> <li>Lending their adult thinking brain to help the child develop language and make sense of what is happening</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents' role:</b></p> <p>Parents stay in control as they listen, enjoy and support the development of their toddler's independent thinking. Parents help to establish understanding of cause and effect while the toddler begins to think for themselves, test limits and push boundaries. <b>Children feel competent and can make sense of their experience.</b></p>
<p><b>Doing</b> 6–18 months</p> 	<p><b>Developmental tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring and experimenting</li> <li>Experiencing options</li> <li>Initiating, engaging and doing</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is curious and creative; takes initiative</li> <li>Is active and easily stimulated; seeks sensory experiences</li> <li>Enjoys investigating and getting involved</li> </ul> <p><b>Interrupted development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is passive, quiet; hangs back</li> <li>Is unable to settle or focus</li> <li>Displays extreme responses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adult role:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting as a co-adventurer, inviting the child into sensory exploration</li> <li>Accompanying the child in seeking and exploring</li> <li>Ensuring safe boundaries for physical play</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents' role:</b></p> <p>Parents encourage their infant to explore and experiment safely, while at the same time giving meaning to her/his feelings and discoveries and explaining about the world. <b>Children feel capable and good in their bodies, and they enjoy physical activities.</b></p>
<p><b>Being</b> 0–6 months</p> 	<p><b>Developmental tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being safe</li> <li>Being special</li> <li>Having needs met</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is confident and appropriately trusting</li> <li>Is receptive to new experiences and relationships</li> <li>Is aware of needs; is able to signal distress and ask for help</li> </ul> <p><b>Interrupted development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is timid and fears change</li> <li>Is out of touch with own needs</li> <li>Demonstrates repetitive oral behaviours; is easily distracted</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adult role:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting as a co-regulator/container</li> <li>Providing a positive experience of dependency</li> <li>Mediating the child's experience of the world</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents' role:</b></p> <p>Parents experience joy and delight in their new baby and are ready to keep them safe, meet their needs and get to know them as a new unique person. <b>Children feel lovable and begin to trust themselves and others.</b></p>



# The triune brain

Three interlocking systems







# What happens in a melt down?



- What we see
- What they feel
- Why won't they listen?
- What can we do to help?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FC4qRD1vn8>

Freeze response

Please click on link to watch clip.



# Flip the Lid (Hand Model of the Brain)



Make a **Fist** with your thumb tucked inside your fingers. This is a model of your brain.



Figure 1. A model of the brain.

**Thumb** = Midbrain (Stem & Limbic) = Emotional Brain. This is where emotions and memories are processed. This is where the fight, flight & freeze is triggered.

**Fingers** = Cerebral Cortex = Rational Brain. Houses our ability to think and reason.

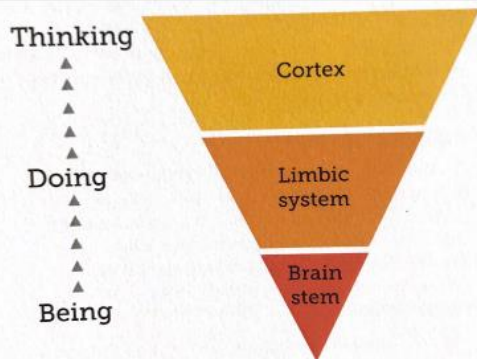
**Fingernails** = Prefrontal Cortex = Problem-Solving

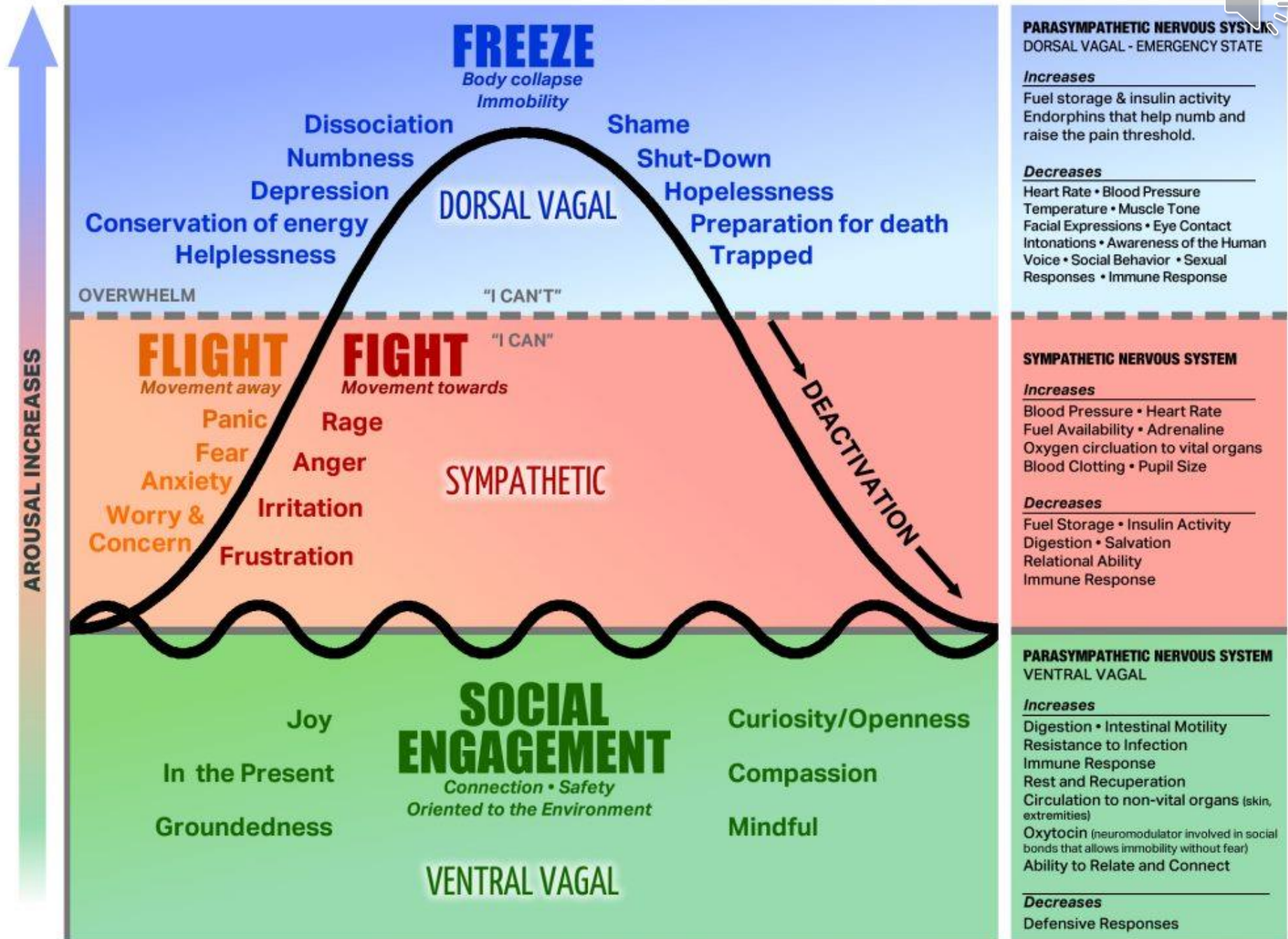
When something triggers us, we are prone to “**Flip our Lid**” which means the Prefrontal Cortex (Fingernails) have a very poor connection with the Midbrain (Thumb), and we’re not able to access the logical, problem-solving part of our brain. Our emotions are overriding our ability to think clearly.



Figure 2. Flipping your lid.

-Dr. Dan Siegal





Adapted by Ruby Jo Walker from: Cheryl Sanders, Steve Hoskinson, Steven Porges and Peter Levine



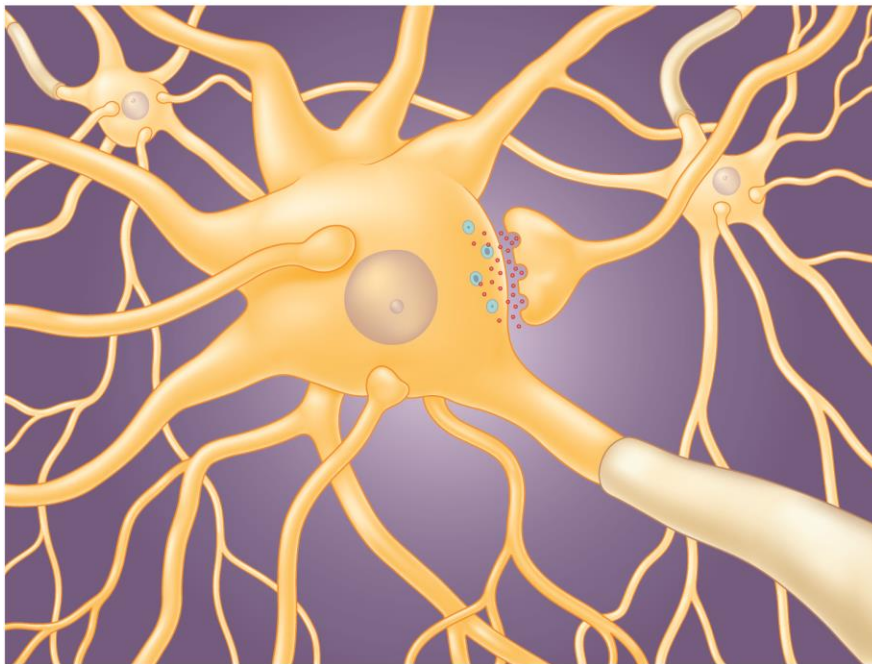


# Early development of neural pathways

Please click on link to watch clip.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqAUMsqi>

Fxl



Positive attachment at Being and beyond



Please click on link to watch clip.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apzXGEb>

Zht0

# How will we use Thrive in school?





# VRFs (Vital Relational Functions)

Thrive Vital Relational Functions (VRFs)

- Attune**  
Catch 'n' match the feeling!
- Validate**  
Stop the behaviour, validate the feeling.
- Contain**  
Make the unbearable survivable!
- Regulate**  
Meet the intensity then calm and soothe.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLK3ui2m61U>

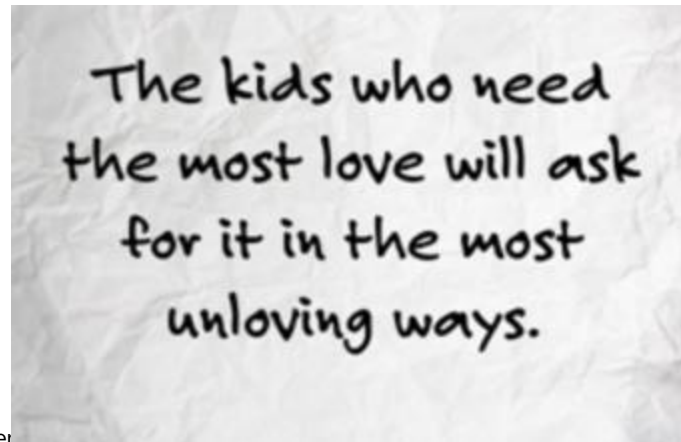
Please click on link to watch clip.





# PACE Attitude – Quality of Contact

- **Playfulness** – A willingness to laugh, joke and play even in difficult situations. Pulls an individual out of fight flight into frontal lobe and limbic connection.
- **Acceptance** – Acceptance builds a context of safety and connection. Accepting is not agreeing or supporting but just recognizing reality when it is present.
- **Curiosity** – Curiosity is the hallmark of social engagement. This pulls an individual out of fear or anger states and into the state where new possibilities can arise. It begins to support decreased stress reaction and increase parasympathetic tone.
- **Empathy** – The experience of being understood develops the ability to care for one's self. Creates a context of safety and understanding. This allows for an individuals guard to go down and the shift into more curiosity and possibility.







# How life events can cause revisiting of earlier developmental strands.

Early Years  
(0–4 years)



Childhood  
(4–11 years)



Adolescence  
(11–18 years)





# Individual profile – summary

☰ Summary

🔗 Action plans (2)

📊 Reporting

## About Power & Identity

This child's developmental task is **to learn to have secure identity and to know how to use power appropriately in relationship.**

Profile Score 42%

## Key task

Developing a positive sense of self and understanding and respecting self and others.

## Needed Developmental Experience

Developing an identity 43%

Fantasy and reality 39%

Responsibility for own behaviour 43%



# Individual – example action plan



## Action Plan #397535

Let's help every child  
**thrive** 

**Child Name:** [REDACTED]

**Child ID:** #554897

**Date completed:** 15/02/18

**Profile Type:** Baseline Skills at Being

**Profile ID:** #272898

**Action Plan Setting:** Educational

**Action Plan Focus:** Other Support, General - Always tick this option

**The child's key task is:** To have a positive experience of being dependent and then being able to move on to make new relationships.

**The needed developmental experience is:** Being Safe - Being Special - Having Needs Met

**Chosen learning targets to work on:**

- Can make eye contact with an adult (Being Safe)
- Can meet a visitor or guest without getting upset or embarrassed (Being Safe)

### Chosen Strategies for this plan

1. Remember to make eye contact and smile as you work alongside the child/young person
2. Regulate child or young person's emotional state by your breathing, voice, words or attuned actions; remember to support emotional range
3. Be reliable and contactable. Let the child or young person know where and when they can find you.

### Chosen Activities for this plan

1. Draw round hands, feet, bodies. Talk with the child as you are doing this activity e.g. 'I am approaching your foot etc.'
2. If the child agrees, use feather tickling on face, arms and hands to increase their sensory awareness
3. Finger puppet friends: name and play at feelings conversations; use puppets to explore situations and name feelings

Please note that Thrive-Online relates only to the child's emotional and social developmental needs and is NOT an assessment of any other person or influence.

# Who has access to information about my child?

Action plans can be reviewed and written by teachers, Teaching assistants and also parents, with the support of the school's Thrive practitioner. Plans can be reviewed (by those given access only) directly on the Thrive website, which is secure and password protected or through a print out. Access can only be given by the Thrive manager in school, who is usually the Thrive Practitioner. Thrive are very careful to ensure data is secure and cannot be accessed or altered by anyone outside the school.

With your permission, the school can share Thrive assessments and plans with outside agencies, who may be working with your child (e.g. CISS), if this appropriate and relevant to their work. The school can also share information with another Thrive school if your child changes school, so that there is a continuity of provision and important details aren't lost in transition.

# How long will support last for? What happens next?

The answer is it depends on the child and their needs.

For some children, they may just need a few sessions to help them understand or manage a particular problem – for example, how to cope with an anxiety about a change, how to recover from a bereavement, how to get on better with a group of other children. In this case, they may just have sessions for 3-4 weeks and it will be clear that they are able to manage and move on.

For some children, they may need sessions for much longer because of the complexity of their needs and difficulties. The content of their sessions will change and develop to reflect their progress and their Action Plan will be reviewed and developed alongside the support.

For any child who has Thrive, we try to achieve consistency (so that they have the same member of staff at the same time each week, where possible). We also make sure that reducing support is done carefully and that children, teachers and families monitor them closely to ensure they are ready to move on – and keep the door open so that they can return if and when they need to.

*“I always wondered why somebody didn’t do something to help these children – then I realised I am that somebody.”*



# To find out more

[www.thriveapproach.co.uk](http://www.thriveapproach.co.uk)

There will be an opportunity to ask questions or find out more information in a live Zoom meeting next week (details to follow). Alternatively, please email Nancy Darke (SENDCo and Thrive Practitioner at Bawdsey and Orford Primary Schools) directly:

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