



**Parent/Carer workshop
Understanding Your Child's Behaviour
Grasmere School**

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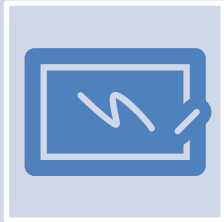
Introductions



Hi I'm Nina, a clinical psychologist at First Steps, City & Hackney CAMHS

- Here as part of the Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) Project.
 - Aims to improve relationships between schools and CAMHS to support children and families' wellbeing
- I can provide workshops for parents on areas you'd like to know more about
- I offer one-off parent consultations, if you have concerns about your child's wellbeing or behaviour, or have concerns about your own wellbeing

Hopes for this workshop



What do you hope to get out of this workshop?



What behaviours do you find easy to understand and what behaviours do you find more challenging?

Ground rules

- Be respectful/ listen to others – everyone's input is important.
- Ask questions if you want more information or feeling unsure. No such thing as a silly question.
- Confidentiality/privacy: Only share what you are comfortable sharing, be careful when sharing information about others.
- We cannot discuss individual cases, this is general advice that tends to work for most CYP.
- Take time to look after yourselves.

RULES



'Bad' Behaviour Iceberg



Behaviour = Communication

When we understand children's behaviour as communication, we can try to reflect on what they are trying to say to us.

There are times when children do things that can be hard to understand or frustrating to try and manage as a parent.

Can you think of an example of a time when your child presented you with behaviour which was difficult to understand or challenging to manage?



How can we understand behaviour?

How well can they communicate?

Your child's feelings

What might they have been trying to say?



Have there been any recent changes?

Any recent changes in your child's life?



Is this to be expected at my child's age and stage?



Your child's development

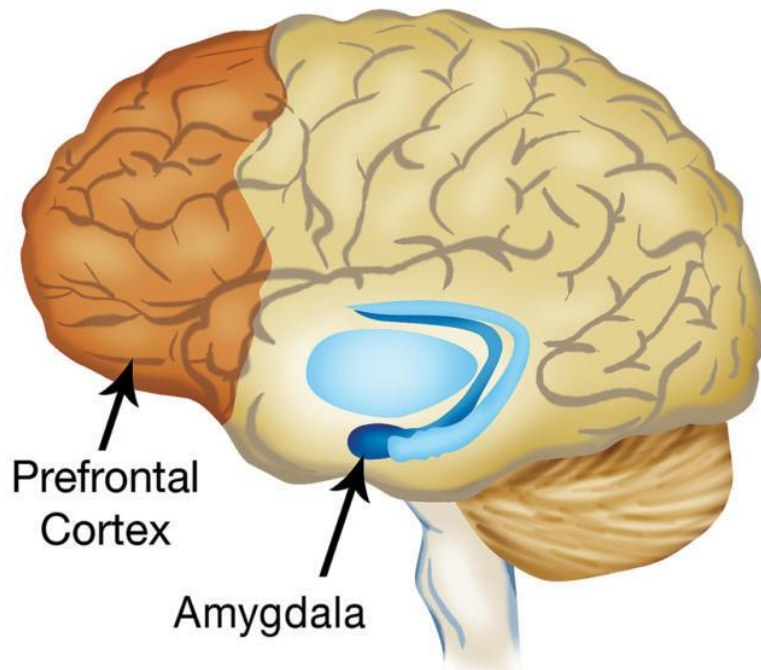
Communicating Feelings

As children get older they develop in their ability to identify emotions within their body, label these and use words to express how they feel and communicate their needs to others around them.

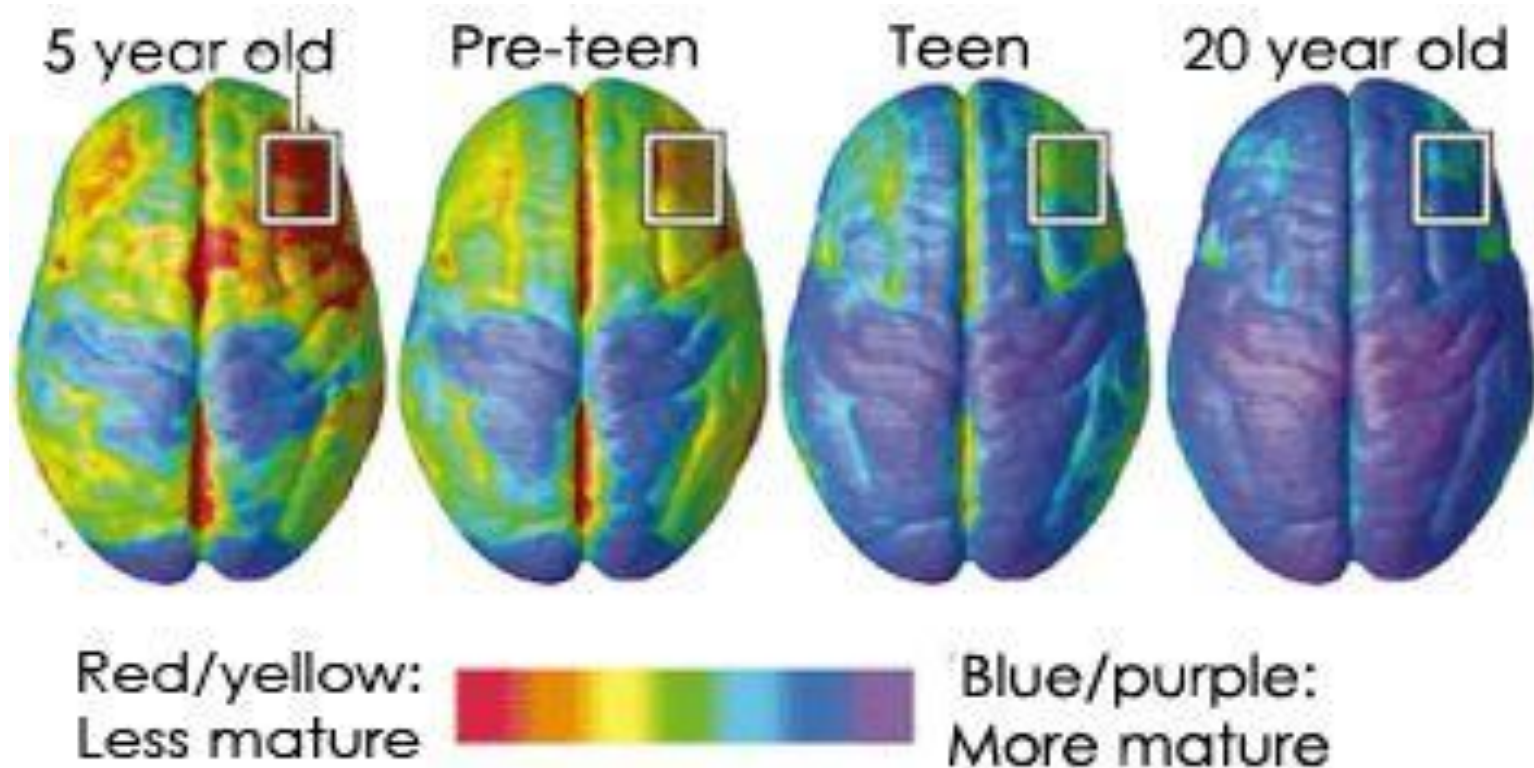
It is important to remember that children's emotional brains are still developing and they might struggle particularly with communicating big feelings. Children often use behaviour rather than words to express to us how they are feeling.



Brain Development and Emotions



Brain Development and Emotions



Stop Look Observe

When your child is presenting you with a particular challenging or confusing behaviour, it can be helpful to try to understand what emotion they might be trying to communicate to you.

What might my child be feeling right now?

How does their behaviour make me feel? (What emotions are being communicated to me)

Your Child's Age and Stage



It can be helpful to think about the age and developmental stage of your child. What's normal, expected behaviour for their age? How able is your child to communicate their needs?

What's the context?

- Children often communicate the emotions they feel in relation to change through their behaviour.
- Are there any changes going on in your child's life? Try to think about all the changes big and small.

What behaviours have you noticed recently and what emotions have come up for your child?

Helping children to understand and express their feelings



Why?

- Emotions feel less overwhelming and less scary
- Gives children a language to communicate emotions rather than acting out
- Children develop the ability to empathise, understand others' perspectives, enjoy better friendships

Helping children to understand and express their feelings



Children often notice their emotions in their bodies

These emotions can feel unpleasant, uncomfortable, overwhelming and scary at times.

Finding words to express emotions

Try to help your child to name what emotions you think they might be experiencing. Sometimes validating emotions in the moment can help but sometimes it's best to wait until things are calm.



I've noticed you
don't seem your
usual self...

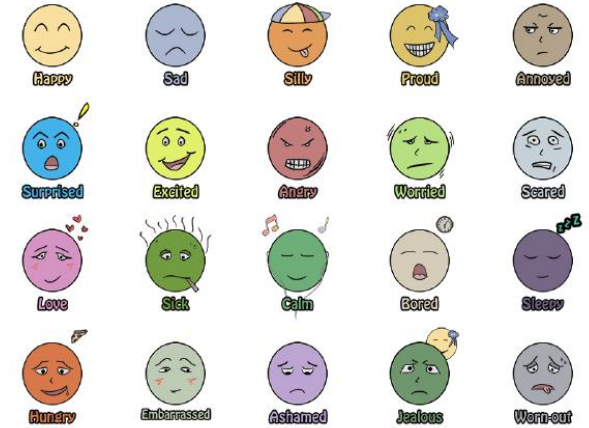
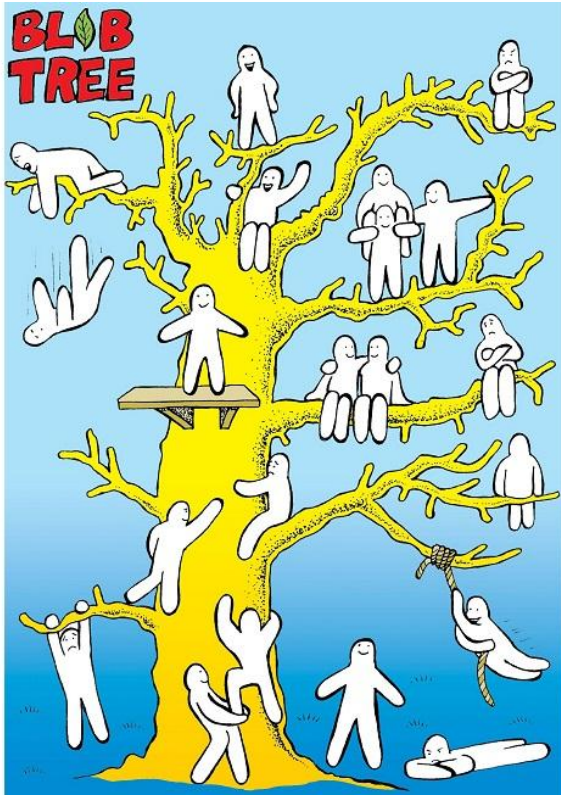
I wonder if
you're
feeling....

Do you fancy a
chat, I can't talk
now but we can
in 5 minutes...

I wonder if you
might need help
right now to feel a
bit
better/calmer/safer

It seems like
you are
feeling...

I know how
frustrating this
is



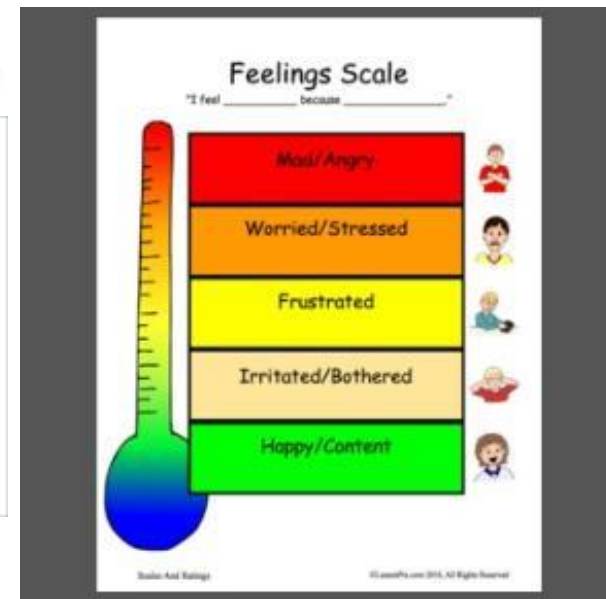
Helping Children Talk About Their Emotions

Continued...

- Zones of regulation
- Emotions wheels
- Scales
- Thermometers

5	I can't stand this and ready to explode. I want to hit or kick someone, or throw something. I need help from an adult.	
4	I am getting <u>too angry</u> . My face feels hot, I need to go to my safe spot to take a break.	
3	I am getting <u>frustrated</u> . I will tell an adult. Take deep breaths.	
2	I am <u>doing OK</u> . I am not happy, I can stay where I am and keep working. I can control myself.	
1	I am <u>doing great</u> . I feel good about myself and about what is going on around me.	

Rating	Looks/Sounds like	Feels like	I Can Try
5			
4			
3			



Modelling



Be a good emotional role model



Talk about your own emotions



Name your coping strategies



Make conversations about emotions, feelings and mental health a normal part of life

Exploring your child's behaviour

You might find it helpful to talk to your child about their difficult behaviour.

You could explore together what was happening for them at the time, how it made them feel and how they might respond differently next time.

It is best to do this when they are calm- we call this **striking whilst the iron is cold**



Exploring your child's behaviour

Some helpful acronyms:

1. *ABC – Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence*
What happened just before the behaviour?
What happened as a consequence?
Try and understand the function of the behaviour.
2. *SEAT – Sensory, Escape, Attention, Tangible.*
Is my child's behaviour getting them one of these four things? If so, this might **reinforce** the behaviour over time as the child learns that it is an effective way to get something they want.

Consistency is key-ensure everyone in the household reacts the same and follow through on your consequences!

Teach your child appropriate ways to manage big feelings e.g using calming activities and taking themselves away from the situation.

Ideas to help prevent difficult behaviour

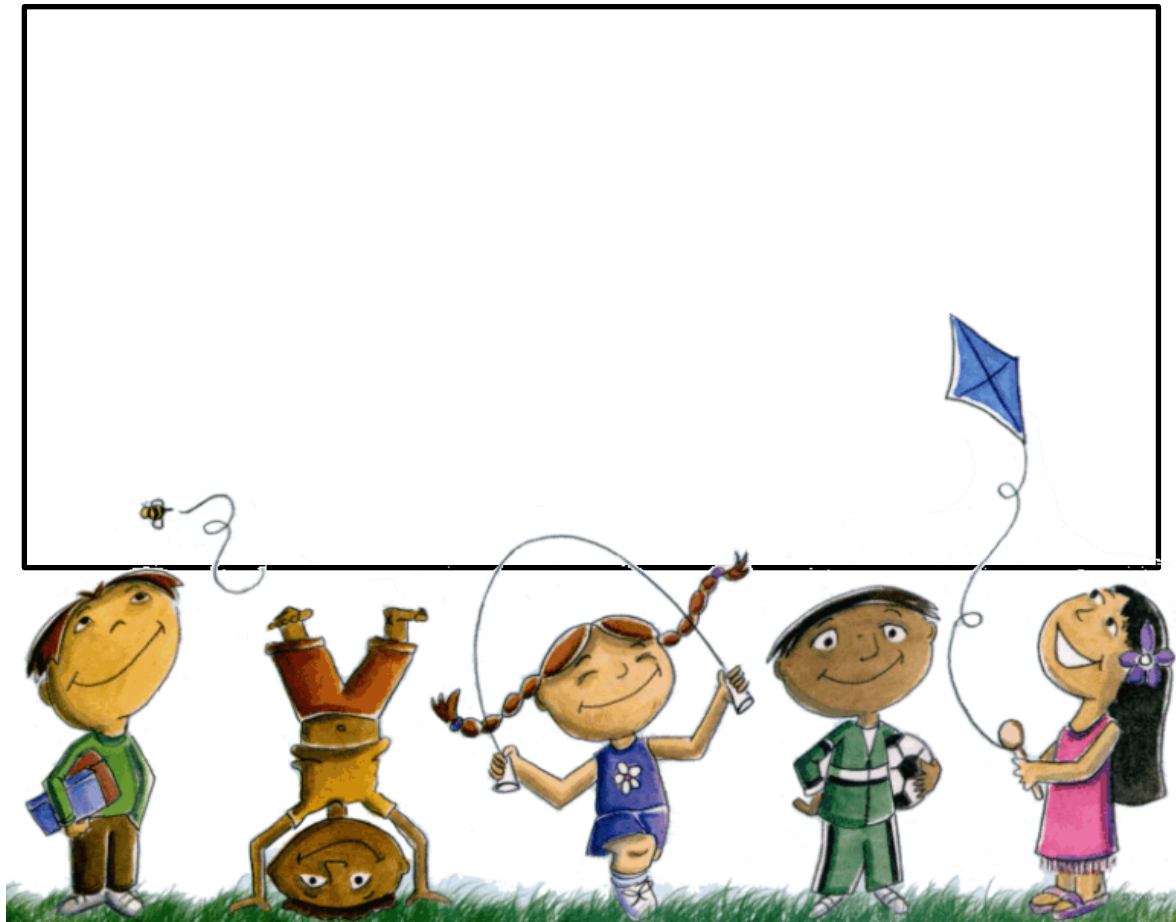
State requests positively- “please do...”

Encourage time outside and exercise.

Provide lots of praise and encouragement for positive behaviours.

What will I take away from this workshop?

Think about one thing that you will take away:



Other resources you might find helpful

- *The Incredible Years: A Trouble-Shooting Guide for Parents of Children Aged 2-8 Years* by Carolyn-Webster-Stratton
- *What Every Parent Needs to Know: Love Nurture and Play with Your Child* by Margot Sunderland
- www.understandingchildhood.net
- www.solihullapproachparenting.com
- www.mind.org.uk
- www.familylives.org.uk
- www.relaxkids.com
- www.cosmickids.com
- www.stopbreathethink.com/kids,



Sources of support

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (First Steps in City & Hackney; ask GP for other boroughs)
- Tower Hamlets parenting support groups
 - 020 7364 6398
 - or parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Pre-recorded parent webinars -
www.youtube.com/@firststeps4996
 - Supporting your family through emotionally challenging times
 - Building confidence and managing anxiety in your child
 - Early Years Workshops: play and positive relationships
- Childline





Thank you!