



# School-Link

Health and Education Working Together



2019  
Issue One



Health  
South Western Sydney  
Local Health District

# Magazine

# PCIT comes to South Western Sydney

Six schools from Macarthur and Liverpool area (Ingelburn PS, Macquarie Fields PS, Sackville Street PS, Warwick Farm PS, Robert Townson PS and Campbelltown Community Preschool) have come together to establish the world's first school-based clinic to provide Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) – one of the most effective programs for managing emotional, oppositional and defiant behaviour in young children.

Students with this diagnosis should be of primary concern to schools as a comprehensive review of over 200 published studies provides evidence that these children show a more stable and aggressive pattern of behaviour problems that often results in serious harm to others, including bullying in schools. PCIT is a scientifically supported intervention for reducing problem behaviours in young children aged 3 to 7 years old. This program will be matched to the unique needs of students from diverse developmental backgrounds and seeks to strengthen parent, school and teacher partnerships, and work together to help children to learn appropriate behaviours that improve their social and academic outcomes.

PCIT treatments will be conducted with both the parent and child at the same time. What distinguishes PCIT from other programs is the systematic use of real-time, in-session, in-vivo parent coaching. The therapist monitors the family from an observation room and provides live, individualised, unobtrusive



coaching via a parent-worn bug-in-the-ear device. Parents will learn play-therapy skills to improve the quality of the parent-child relationship, and will also learn how to give more effective directions and implement more consistent discipline strategies to better manage child behaviour. The length of the therapy is between 14-21 weeks depending on specific child/ family needs. Teachers with a student participating in the trial will be invited to access informational and in-class PCIT support services tailored to the unique needs of both the student and teacher.



These support services are designed to help teachers acquire and develop skills to manage problematic behaviours within the classroom, which can help to create a more positive teaching and learning environment for all. We strongly believe the entire Macarthur and Liverpool Community will benefit from this project. This can impact on their relationship, career prospects and quality of life. Some children will develop more serious conduct disorder, which is characterised by aggressive, criminal and violent behaviour. By providing PCIT we are reducing/ preventing potential future delinquency, substance use and youth/ adult crime.

Apart from supporting children, positively influencing overall family function and creating better teaching and learning environment, we strongly believe that we, as a society, can do a better job in preventing crime and violence through early intervention. Researchers and key stakeholders in the community need to work together to make sure that how we tackle this program draws from the latest scientific knowledge and can work within existing infrastructure. That's why our schools have partnered to do a better job in identifying at-risk children before and as they enter primary school, to deliver the right intervention.

WATCH video



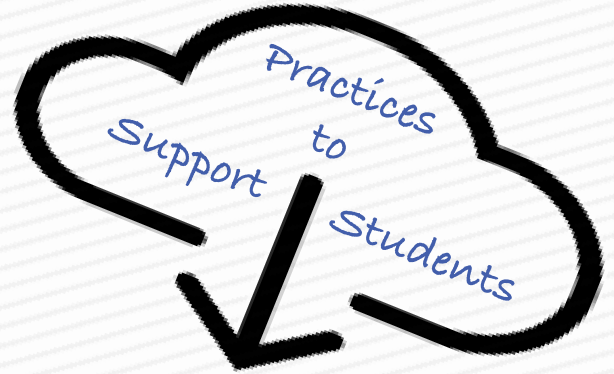
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# How Teachers Can Use Trauma-Informed Mindfulness Practices to Support their Students

Poonam Desai, PhD  
3 October 2018

The school year is under way and as educators, students, and families fall into a new, yet familiar rhythm, the business of learning begins. Despite many teachers' best planned lessons, best decorated boards, and most innovative stations, they may be dismayed to find that some of their students are simply not learning, are having trouble paying attention, or are even too emotionally dysregulated to engage in the basics of math, writing, and reading. There are a lot of good reasons this could be going on, and we often jump to ADHD, ODD, laziness, or any number of common "culprits" behind such behaviors. While we're quick to label, we often forget to investigate why those behaviors might be showing up in the first place, and frequently overlook the impact of toxic stress and trauma on our students.



Take a deep breath, and shift your frame of reference for students. Rather than asking "What is wrong with this child?," ask, "What has happened to this child?" You may not get straight answers about this, but trauma-informed teachers don't need to know what the trauma is to know how to understand, support, and encourage a child.



Create awareness by understanding the trauma response. Hyper-vigilance, fear, shame, and guilt are typical reactions to trauma. Corresponding behavior is usually not purposefully manipulative, defiant, or avoidant. Rather, it is adaptive and functional for the child for him/her to get what they need. Understanding behavior this way can help you think through other ways for your students to get their needs met.



Practice self-awareness by knowing your own triggers and know how to regulate yourself. You can help a child regulate their bodies when you regulate yours. It's a bit like a superpower, and it has a fancy name: interpersonal neurobiology, but the concept is quite simple. When an adult is calm, regulated, and using their prefrontal cortex, students can co-regulate with the adult, helping to calm their own limbic structures and engage their prefrontal cortex. In other words, by being in the presence of a calm and regulated adult, children can become calmer and their brains and bodies can learn from the adult's regulation.



Build relationships with students not based on academics. Find out what they like to do, who their favorite pop or rap star is, and what movie they want to watch. You'll find that once your students know you care about them as people, they'll care about what you say and teach them.



Teach your students about their brains, their stress response system, and basic coping skills they can access in your classroom, like soothing themselves, breathing mindfully, and asking for help.

While you may not be a therapist or cannot change the history of your students, you can help them to feel safe, valued, calm, and hopeful in your classroom.

# Building Resilience in Young People



## What is resilience?

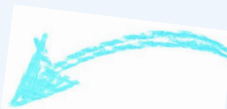
Resiliency skills help young people to effectively deal with adversity and change and are vital to their wellbeing.

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity. It is a necessary skill for coping with life's inevitable obstacles and one of the key ingredients to success. When we apply resilience through the positive psychology lens, the learning is not only to bounce back, but to bounce forward. Examples of challenges some young people may face where resiliency skills are essential:

- physical illness
- change of school
- transitioning from primary school to high school
- change in family make up (divorce, break up)
- change of friendship group
- conflict with peers
- conflict with family
- managing study workload

**Building Resilience in Young People** contains lesson plans which explore each of the 7 elements of resilience and has been designed for implementation in Years 7-10.

## Next steps



Download the **Building Resilience in Young People** resource

Watch our online webinar on the **Building Resiliency in Young People**.

Download the webinar activity sheets



**REACH  
OUT.COM**

The second in the ReachOut 'Wellbeing@School' series, this resource explores the seven essential skills of resilience- emotional awareness and self-regulation, impulse control, optimism, flexible and accurate thinking, empathy, self-efficacy, connecting and reaching out in to practical activities for years 7-10.

This will help you to:

- explain resilience
- implement resilience building skills in to every classroom
- explore the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities (Personal & Social Capability).





## The cerebellum, a brain structure humans share with fish and lizards, appears to control the quality of many functions in the brain

An ancient part of the brain long ignored by the scientific world appears to play a critical role in everything from language and emotions to daily planning. It's the cerebellum, which is found in fish and lizards as well as people. But in the human brain, this structure is wired to areas involved in higher-order thinking, a team led by researchers from Washington University in St. Louis reports Thursday in the journal *Neuron*. "We think that the cerebellum is acting as the brain's ultimate quality control unit," says Scott Marek, a postdoctoral research scholar and the study's first author.

The finding adds to the growing evidence that the cerebellum "isn't only involved in sensory-motor function, it's involved in everything we do," says Dr. Jeremy Schmahmann, a neurology professor at Harvard and director of the ataxia unit at Massachusetts General Hospital. Schmahmann, who wasn't involved in the new study, has been arguing for decades that the cerebellum plays a key role in many aspects of human behavior, as well as mental disorders such as schizophrenia. But only a handful of scientists have explored functions of the cerebellum beyond motor control. "It's been woefully understudied,"

says Dr. Nico Dosenbach, a professor of neurology at Washington University whose lab conducted the study. But the Washington University team thought there was a lot more going on in this part of the brain. So they used a special type of MRI to study the brain wiring of 10 people. This allowed the team to quantify the various connections between the cerebellum and other brain areas. And what they found was that just 20 percent of the cerebellum was dedicated to areas involved in physical motion, while 80 percent was dedicated to areas involved in functions such as abstract thinking, planning, emotion, memory and language.



"We already thought that the cerebellum was cooler than most people thought," Dosenbach says. "But these results were way more exciting and clear than I could have ever dreamt." The cerebellum doesn't directly carry out tasks like thinking, just as it doesn't directly control movement, Marek says. Instead, he says, it appears to monitor the brain areas that are doing the work and make them perform better. In essence, this structure appears to act as a kind of editor, constantly reviewing and improving a person's thoughts and decisions, Dosenbach says. If that's true, he says, it's no surprise that alcohol affects more than our physical movements.

"We have an explanation for all the bad ideas people have when they're drunk," he says. "They're lacking cerebellar editing of your thoughts." The new study suggests how the cerebellum has evolved over hundreds of millions of years, Schmahmann says. "What's happened over time is that the cerebellum has expanded enormously," he says.

And this extra capacity has allowed it to take on functions beyond motion. But the way the cerebellum works hasn't changed, Schmahmann says. It makes a process smoother and faster and more accurate. "What we now understand is that what cerebellum does to motor control, it does to cognition and emotion as well." And

the cerebellum does all this automatically, allowing our conscious mind to focus on more important things, Schmahmann says. But when the cerebellum isn't doing its job, Schmahmann says, the result may be a brain disorder. "There is increasing evidence from a variety of fields now that psychiatric diseases from autism spectrum, schizophrenia, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, all have a link to cerebellum," he says. So Schmahmann and a few other researchers have begun trying to treat patients with some of these problems by improving the function of this ancient structure in the brain.

# On Children's Art

For almost all of human history, it has been unthinkable that someone could lay claim to maturity, sanity and reliability by pinning a picture by a six-year-old to the walls of their office, or throne room. At least until the 20th century, the art that won prestige showed great command of technical skills and a sensitive fidelity to the real appearance of things.

What is it about children (reflected in their bold, vivid, and utterly distorted and wonky drawings) that we now see special merit in? We know casually that children – and their art – can be very sweet. But what is really going on beneath that word 'sweetness' and quite why do we seem to need this quality so much at this point in history?



The work below was done by Noah. He is five and three quarters and lives in Durham, England. His father, who is a regional manager for a supermarket chain, has it prominently in his cubicle at work. The art shows mum, dad, Noah and little brother James. It is raining, as it often does in that part of the world. But the mood is decisively upbeat. The artist seems broadly extremely optimistic about the human condition.

More valuable than the Mona Lisa - What often touches us in the art of children are a host of qualities that are deeply under threat in adult lives and yet which we unconsciously recognise as precious to a sense of inner balance and psychological well-being. The sweet is a vital part of ourselves – currently in exile. One of the most recurring features of children's art is evidence of trust. So long as things have gone reasonably well, children can believe in surfaces: if mummy smiles, she must be OK. There is, at a young age, blessedly little room for ambiguity. Children are not always trying to peer below the surface and discover the compromises and evasions that belong to maturity. Their art functions as a highly necessary corrective to cynicism. Adult lives seldom allow us not to be wary and suspicious. We grow to expect trouble to come from any direction. We are aware of the fragility of things; and how easily safety and hope can be crushed. It is rare to have fifteen minutes without being submerged by a new wave of anxiety. It is therefore understandable if we turn with relief to the trusting attitude of those great diminutive artists, as brilliant at lifting our spirits as they are hopeless at delivering correct representations of an oak tree or a human face. Noah's picture is full of hints as to what we deeply need. For a start, we need to be more willing to suppose that most other people are really quite nice. A touch of cynicism is – obviously – highly useful. It's just that collectively we have talked ourselves into giving a cynical attitude too much prestige. It crowds out other things we require. And children's drawings have become our contemporary way of smuggling them in. Another endearing and psychologically necessary quality of children's art is quite how inaccurate it tends to be. A traditional assumption of drawing is that being 'good' at it requires one to lay aside the demands of one's own ego in order to pay precise attention to what is actually out there. The artist must learn how to observe the world, and in order to do so, must put a lot of themselves to one side.



It's totally understandable that we learn, as adults, to accommodate ourselves to the needs of reality and of other people. But we can devote ourselves to this goal with so much zeal, our souls dry up. Societies get sensitive to things that they are missing. We live in a world of highly complex technology, extreme precision in science, massive bureaucracies, insecurity and intense meritocratic competition. To survive with any degree of success in these conditions, we have to be exceptionally controlled, forward-thinking, reasonable and cautious creatures. However; we tend not to identify what has grown in short supply in our lives head on. It would be rare to say: we need more flights of fancy, more innocent trust, more gleeful disregard of expectations... We have forgotten that this is what we even want. Instead, we simply find it moving – in fact sweet – to encounter these things in symbolic forms in the scribbles of a child. Children's art provides an opportunity to start to get to know our own needs. They are, in their own way, political demands, compact manifestos for some of the things we urgently need a little more of in the anxious, compromised conditions of contemporary adult life. Against such a backdrop, children's art is no longer just endearing, it is positively necessary

# Growing a mentally healthy generation



## What is Be You Professional Learning?

### A flexible, whole learning community approach

The Professional Learning consists of 13 modules grouped under five domains.

- ✓ [Mentally Healthy Communities](#)
- ✓ [Family Partnerships](#)
- ✓ [Learning Resilience](#)
- ✓ [Early Support](#)
- ✓ [Responding Together](#)

Login

Sign up



< [Resources](#)

## Fact Sheets

Be You Fact Sheets help you explore and gain knowledge on mental health and wellbeing topics, and to share information and ideas with your learning community.

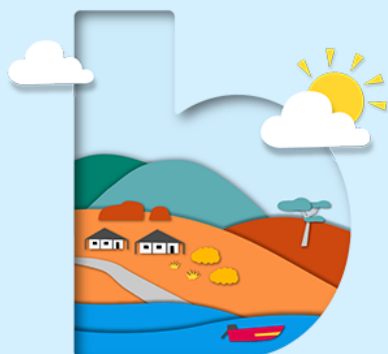


## Let's grow a mentally healthy generation

Be You aims to transform Australia's approach to supporting children's and young people's mental health in early learning services and schools, from early years to 18.

 [Play Video](#)

Get started



## Bring JOY to the Classroom with Passion Projects

## Five Steps to Enhance Learning in the Classroom



Every great teacher wants their students to find joy in the learning process. How do we as educators provide students an environment to discover who they are, help them unlock the passions they hold, and guide their journey of self-discovery while also teaching our mandated curriculum?

The answer is simpler than you might imagine: provide time for students to explore their passions. Devoting a portion of work time to exploring passions is not a new concept. Almost 70 years ago, 3M encouraged their employees to devote 15% of their work time to research and create innovative projects that captured their interests and passions. Google did something similar...Both companies valued a spirit of innovation and productivity; allowing employees to be creative resulted in the creation of such products as post-it notes.

### Step 1: Brainstorm

Before we introduced anything to the students, we brainstormed our own passions together, talking about things that made us happy, and exploring the “what-ifs” of being educators. The more we talked about our passions, the more excited we became! Rather than being inundated with logistical worries, we were empowered by the potential of “What if?”

This is what we wanted our students to feel: excitement, passion and the pure joy of learning simply for the sake of learning. Students began their work by coming up with a list of things that made them happy, and we encouraged them to identify areas about which they wanted to learn more. We used pencils and paper to create our Wonder Wall.

### Step 2: Question

To make the Passion Projects manageable, we asked students to narrow their focus to one question they wanted to explore. We added their questions to a shared spreadsheet on Google Drive to keep everything organized and worked together to add resource links and additional information as we guided students through the research process.

### Step 3: Research

To provide support and guidance during this lengthy process, we used a once-a-week two-station rotation. Students either worked with classroom teacher support to read and take notes in their writing journals, or they worked with an instructional technology specialist, to design their project to share using a relevant computer program.

We encouraged students to use both low-tech and high-tech research options. Many students found the answers to their questions in library books. Others used alternate forms of informational text like tourism brochures. When Internet research was required, students used appropriate information resources, such as videos showing how to make books or steps to build a specific Lego figure. When online texts seemed to be too advanced for emerging readers, we used screencasting tools to record ourselves reading the articles and shared the recordings with students through our district’s network and shared cloud storage.

### Step 4: Create

As students transitioned from research to creation, we noticed a change in the classroom culture. We had fewer discipline problems and students were engaged with their research and putting more effort into their reading and writing. They were excited about their own digital creations and were helping their classmates who needed assistance...all with smiles, laughter, and joy! We continued our weekly station rotations until the digital backgrounds were complete. Students then started individual recordings to share what they had learned about their passion.

### 5. Share

Students showcased their work with an authentic audience of classmates, teachers, parents, and administrators at a Passion Project Share Fair. The guests validated the time and effort students had put into their work and were able to clearly see how each student had come to realize the joy of learning through the exploration of their passions. To extend the project beyond the concrete walls of our classrooms, we also created a Passion Project website and shared the links on Twitter and Facebook. When students realized their projects were being viewed by people all across the world, they took even more pride and care in their work and asked, “Can we do this again?”

Read more @ [www.creativeeducator.tech4learning.com/2016/articles/passion-projects](http://www.creativeeducator.tech4learning.com/2016/articles/passion-projects)



# Sex and relationships



## Sex, Safe and Fun



Family Planning NSW: 2016  
Book, booklets and condom pack.  
Activity cards (online only)



*Sex Safe and Fun* is a resource pack for teaching people with intellectual disability about positive safe sex messages. The resource presents a factual and balanced view of the rights and responsibilities associated with a range of sexual activities. *Sex, Safe and Fun* includes two parts for the learner– the easy to read booklet and a condom pack including step-by-step instructions about how to use a condom. It also has three parts for the support person – the support person’s guide, demonstration video and activity cards.

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[www.fpnsw.org.au/sexsafeandfun](http://www.fpnsw.org.au/sexsafeandfun)



**All About Sex** is a series of fact sheets for people with intellectual disability and the people who support them. The fact sheets are easy to read and include illustrations to help people with intellectual disability learn about sexuality and relationships. The fact sheets cover a range of topics including bodies, relationships, sex, pregnancy and reproduction, sexual health and sexual assault.

Some people with intellectual disability will be able to read the fact sheets independently while others will need the support of a family member, teacher, support worker or advocate. The fact sheets have been designed to make it easier for support people to have conversations and provide information about sexuality and relationships. Each fact sheet is available in PDF and Word format. Topics include:



**Introduction to All About Sex**  
**A woman’s body**  
**A man’s body**  
**Private and public**  
**Puberty**  
**Periods**  
**Masturbation**  
**Relationships**  
**Having sex**  
**HIV**



**Safe sex and sexually transmissible infections**  
**Contraception**  
**Planning Pregnancy and Pregnancy Choices.**  
**Pregnancy and birth**  
**Menopause**  
**Sexual assault**  
**Private body parts - keeping them healthy**  
**Lesbian**  
**Gay**  
**Bisexual**



To talk to a health professional about information and support for young people call **1800 835 932**

### How we help

CanTeen is the best place to help young people deal with the challenges cancer brings because we get it.



Counselling and individual support



Connect with other young people online



Peer support and programs



Youth Cancer Services



For health professionals



Books and resources



Useful links

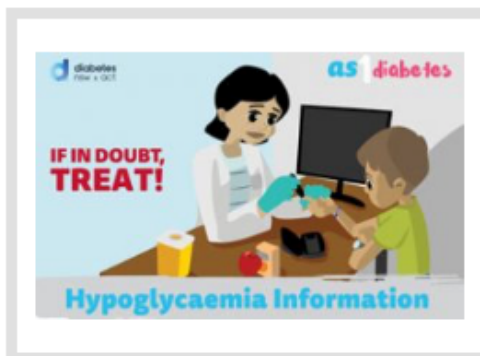
[www.canteen.org.au](http://www.canteen.org.au)

# as1 diabetes

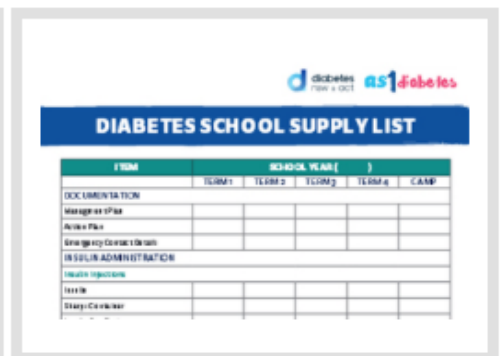
Information, ideas and resources to help kids, teens, parents, teachers and carers understand type 1 diabetes and how to manage it.



What is Type 1 Diabetes Poster



Hypoglycaemia Information Poster



Diabetes School Supply List

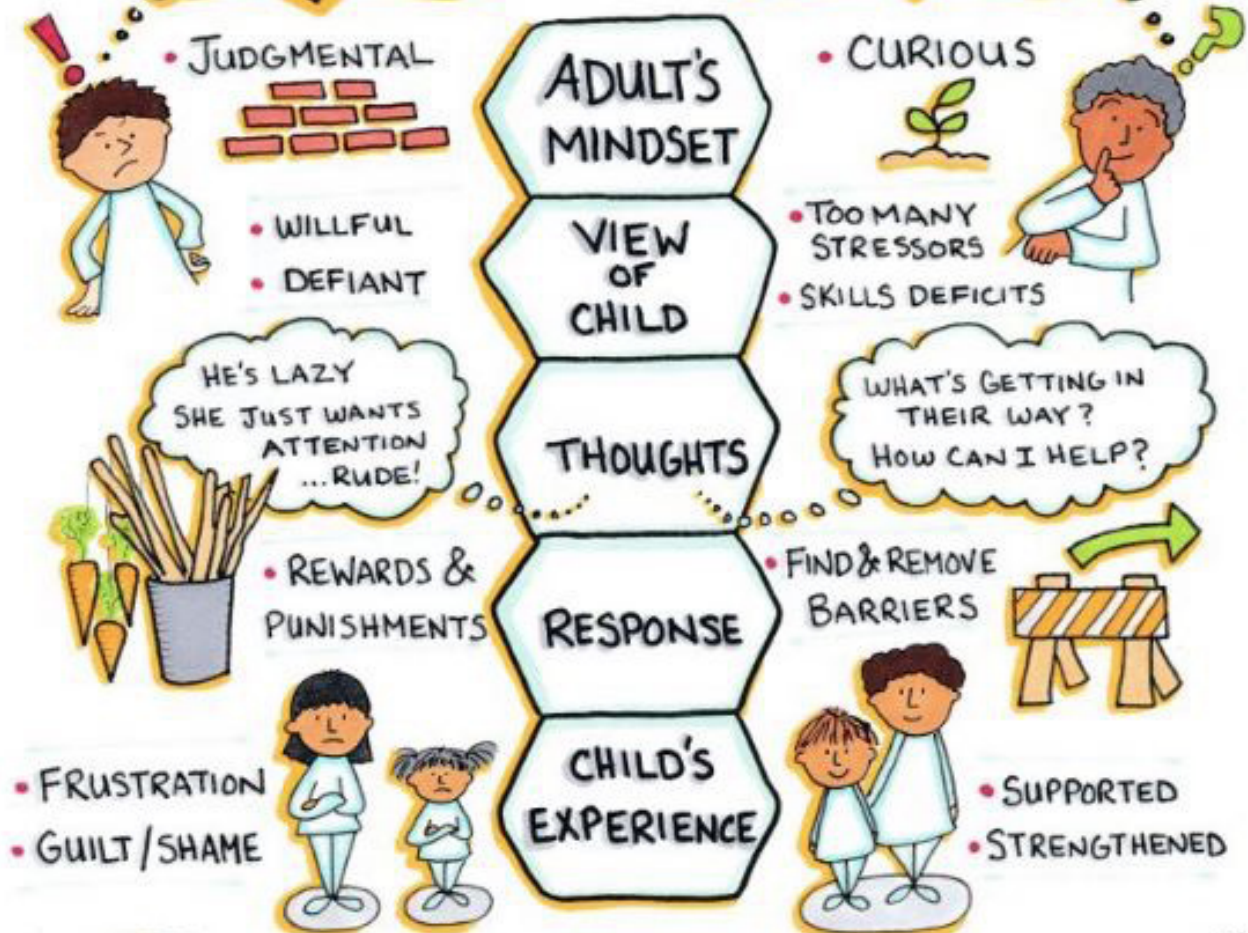
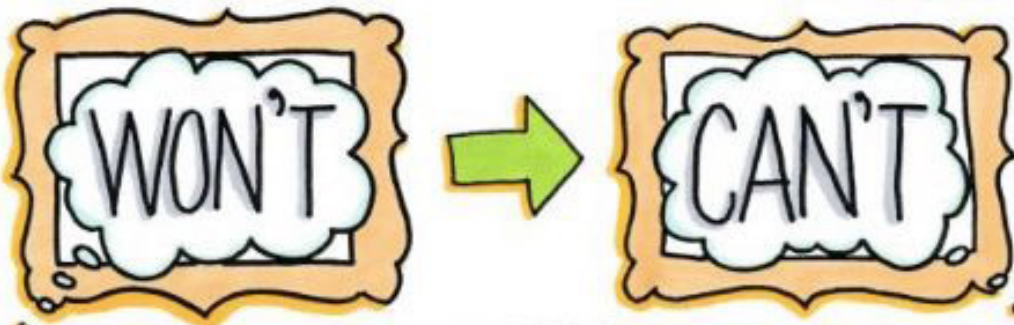
Take advantage of the resources designed to assist teachers and school staff to understand and manage the needs of children with type 1 diabetes.



# REFRAME THE BEHAVIOUR

"KIDS DO WELL IF THEY CAN"

~ROSS GREENE



"SEE A CHILD DIFFERENTLY, YOU SEE A DIFFERENT CHILD"  
~Dr. Stuart Shanker

When kids exhibit challenging behaviour we can be "STRESS DETECTIVES"...finding and removing barriers.

- FIND STRESSORS → REDUCE THEM
  - FIND UNMET NEEDS → MEET THEM
  - FIND SKILLS DEFICITS → TEACH THEM
- @kwiens62



More great resources @  
[www.northstarpaths.com/visuals/](http://www.northstarpaths.com/visuals/)

**School Link** is funded by NSW Health working in partnership with the Department of Education and Communities and many other government and non government organisations. School-Link aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people through making positive links between health, education and other services.

## About us

Our service is free and available to education staff, health workers, all government organisations and non government organisations.

### Subscribe to our magazine and professional development

Email your details:

Name  
Organisation  
Position  
Phone number

### Vivian Benjamin

School Link Administration  
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Find the right service for children, young people and their families

Consultation including complex cases - open to all government and non government organisations

Information - evidenced based prevention & early intervention programs

Accessing education, training and professional development

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