PACES: Play a Counter to ACEs

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There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way it treats its children.

Nelson Mandela
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly harm a child or affect the environment in which they live. (Bellis et al 2016)

Trauma refers to experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. ...Traumatic experiences can have lasting adverse effects on the individual’s physical, social and emotional well-being. (adapted from SAMSHA 2014)
Brain Development

Adapted from Dan Siegel

1. Survival State
   Brain Stem
   Am I safe?

2. Emotional State
   Limbic System
   Am I loved?

3. Executive State
   Prefrontal Lobes
   What can I learn from this?
I am OK

Inside tolerance window

Child can love, learn and relax

Window of Tolerance adapted from Beacon House.
(www.beaconhouse.org.uk)
Importance of Play for Development

• The self organisation of the developing brain occurs in the context of a relationship with another self, another brain (Shore 1996)

• Baby needs access to the mothers social and emotional brain in the first year of life – dyadic relationship, mirroring, cuddling, sensitive tone

• Communication of positive emotional states and negative emotional state

• Emotional and social development of infants not just cognitive development
I am not OK;
Recognition of Trauma

Window of Tolerance adapted from Beacon House. (www.beaconhouse.org.uk)
Christmas Tree Task
The Therapeutic Benefits of Play

• A safe place in which to express their thoughts and feelings. Supporting emotional healing and growth.
• Facilitates the development of self esteem, problem-solving, decision making and coping skills.
• Fosters a child’s ability to make friends and to understand the world he or she lives in.
• Encourages children to be confident and focused.
• Fosters imagination and creativity.
Recovery Is Always Possible

I AM.... I CAN..... I HAVE.....
Thank you for participating

More information on Trauma informed practice project:

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