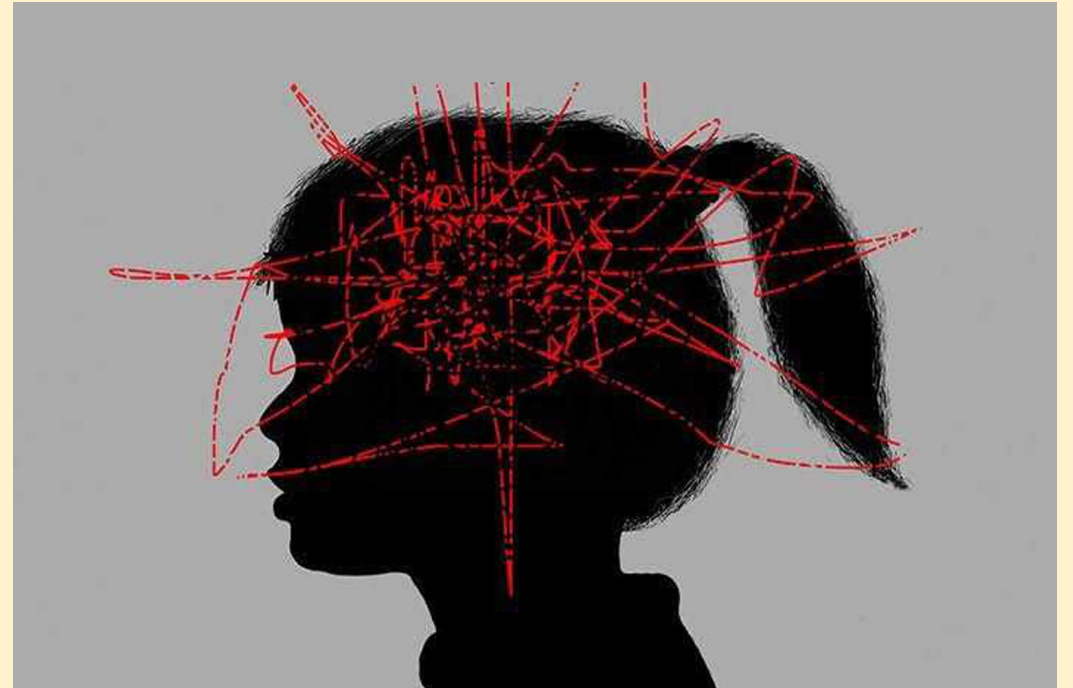


Creating a Trauma supportive Classroom

‘Trauma’s a big word. Don’t worry Suzi, children bounce back...’

...Do they?



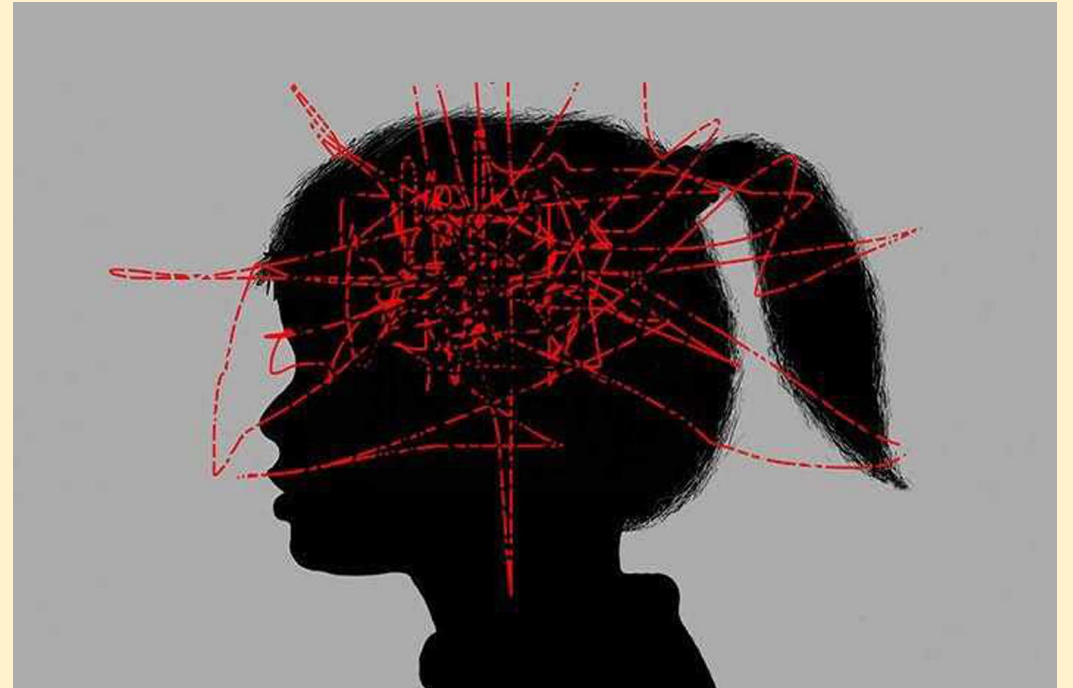
The Questions...

Why are we discussing trauma today?
What is trauma?
What does trauma look like?
How do we know?
Flipping the script on Trauma
Boulders Vs. Pebbles
What impact can it have?
Why do teachers need to know more?
Why is this important for Food & Nutrition?
What do our students need?



Why?

“Childhood trauma can have a direct, immediate, and potentially overwhelming impact on the ability of a child to learn. Yet, this issue has largely been ignored by our education system” (McInerney & McKlinton 2014).



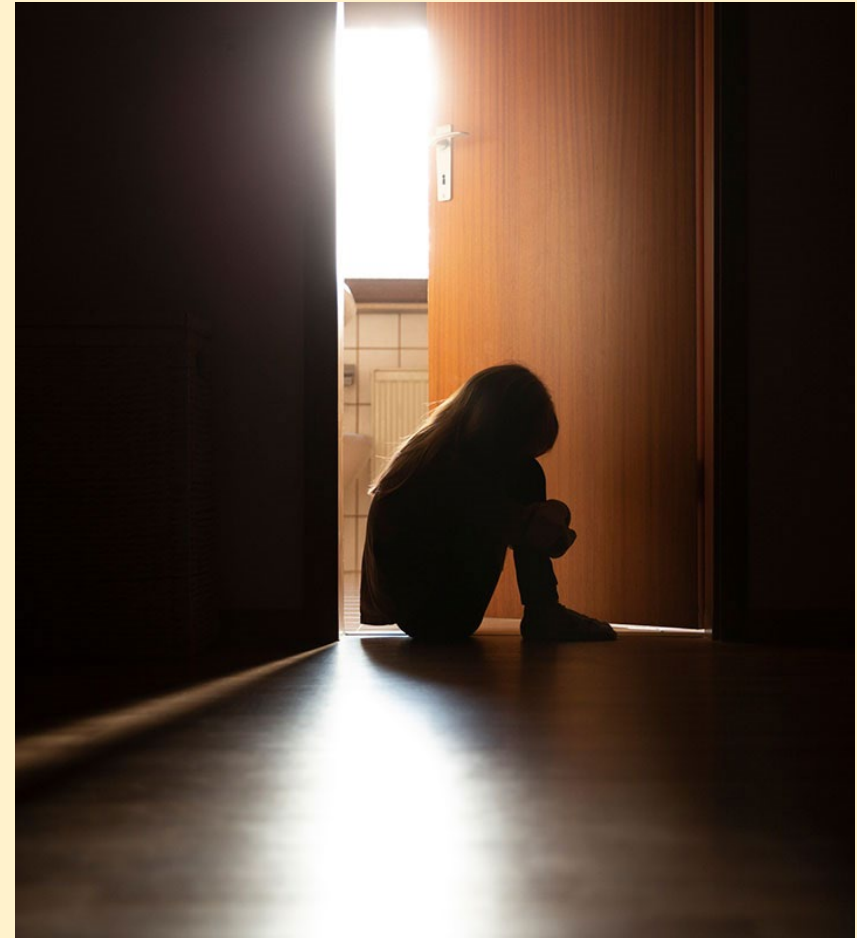
“Trauma is the emotional, psychological, and physiological residue left over from heightened stress that accompanies experiences of threat, violence, and life-challenging events” (p. 10, ACF 2010).

What is Trauma?



Trauma isn't the event itself but the inability to discuss the event or feel understood (Mate 2021) <https://thewisdomoftrauma.com/>

What does trauma look like?



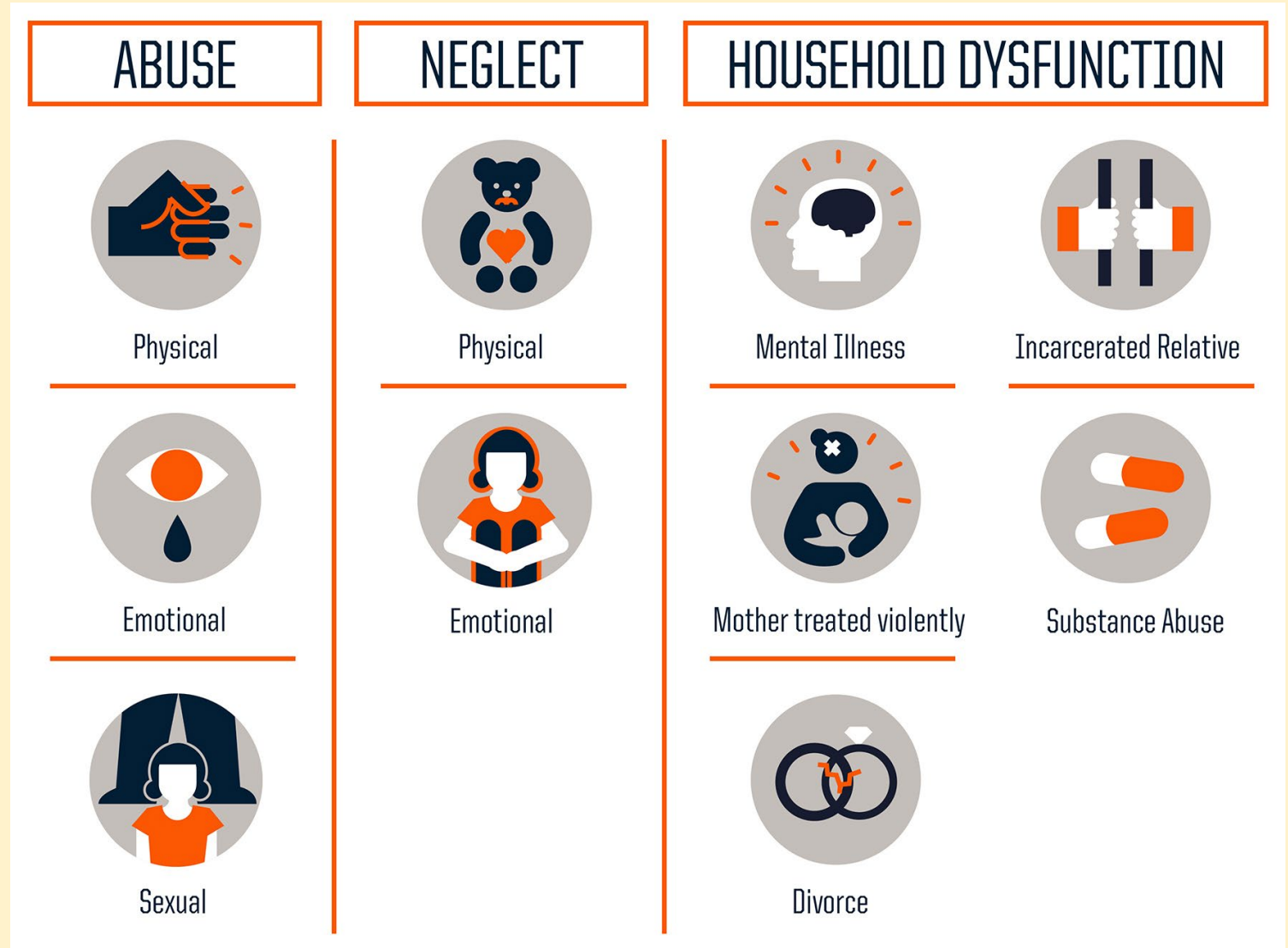
How do we know?

ACE's Scale (Felitti et al., 1988)

Indicators of trauma, not certainties
Other indicators for trauma exist
(Bartlet & Sacks, 2019), yet the only
measurable scale we have.

67% of UK population thought to
have experienced at least 1 ACE in
2018.

Pandemic made ACE's occurring
more likely



SIMPLE VS. COMPLEX TRAUMA

Simple

- Non-interpersonal
- Limited exposure (single event)
- Shorter duration
- Occurrence at later developmental stage
- Support of caretaker/family
- Secure attachment with primary caretaker(s)

Complex

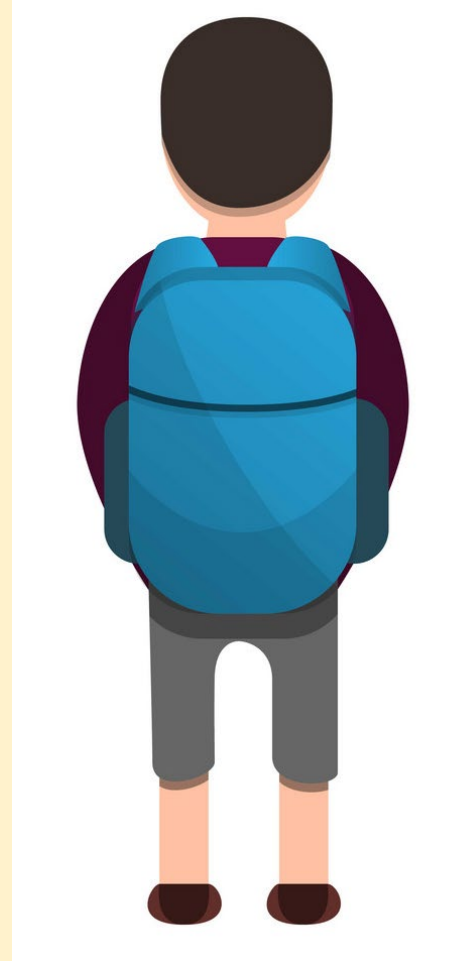
- Interpersonal
- Multiple exposures/types
- Longer duration
- Occurrence at an earlier developmental stage
- Limited or no support
- Insecure attachment with primary caretakers

Flipping the script on our understanding of trauma.

Boulders vs. Pebbles...



More obvious trauma, more obvious struggle, quicker to receive support

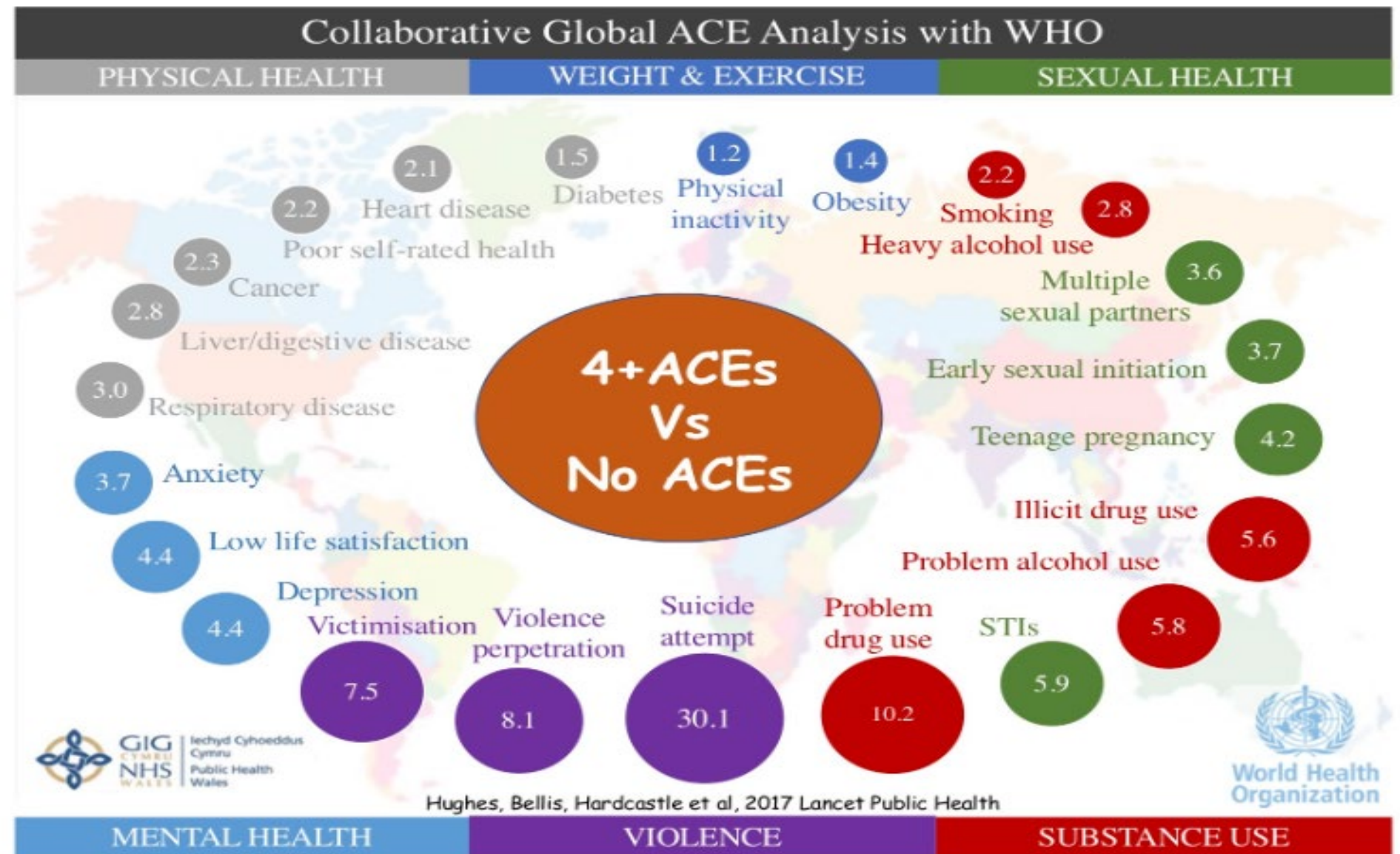


Less obvious, hidden trauma, less likely to receive support or more likely to be dismissed



The impact...

Results of the meta-analysis by Hughes et al., (2017), who analysed the data of an estimated 250,000 participants over 37 separate ACE's studies, which were all based on the original study by Felitti et al., (1998).



Why do teachers need to know more?

ACE's and Education

No ACEs:

97% had no learning difficulties or behaviour problems

3 ACEs or more

3x as likely to experience academic failure
5x as likely to have attendance problems
6x as likely to have behavioural problems

4 ACEs or more

Over 50% had learning needs
32x more likely to have behaviour problems.

Experiencing the pandemic will become an ACE (Trauma Informed Schools 2022)

Why is this important for Food and Nutrition?

Students struggling with Trauma responses are likely to:

- Be hypervigilant
- Will be concerned with safety
- May be purposefully difficult or reactive to perpetuate the cycle
- May struggle to communicate why



**WILL
AVOID
TAKING RISKS**

What do our students need?

- Trauma-informed approaches are not about making huge changes to classroom practice.
- TIP supports all learners, not just those who are experiencing trauma – as you don't always know who these students are.
- Not trauma detectives, our job isn't to diagnose and treat those students who are suffering, it is to teach in a way that is sympathetic to them.

Simple steps:

- Establish your role within the classroom
- Discuss what you will do to keep a child safe
- Have clear predictable routines for students
- Establish yourself as a safe individual
- Create an environment of respect
- Self calming techniques
- Instructions in order
- Clear language
- Plan for error
- High expectations
- Make learning fun
- Give students choice (homework tasks?)
- **Consistency**

Top Tips

Aim to give students a choice where possible, not only academically in the classroom, but also when discussing other areas of school life such as sanctions and rewards.

Smaller consistent traumas (complex) often have more damaging effects than one-off larger life-changing events (simple), due to the levels of support offered to a child. Remember that they may not recognise that their behaviours are linked to their trauma, and may often provoke adults to 'let them down', they're depending on you to follow through with your actions, both positive and negative.

Top Tips

Being in a hypervigilant state will affect a child's memory, it is important that instructions are delivered in a variety of ways and readily available to students, as they may find it hard to remember it the first time, this is especially important during practical lessons and where Health and Safety may place them at further risk.

Acknowledge their concerns. What can feel like the smallest detail to us can be something they may have consistently worried about, such as forgetting food ingredients, switching the dialogue from dismissive language such as, 'oh don't worry about that, it's fine' to affirmative language such as, 'I understand that you've been worried, it's ok, thank you for telling me, let's find a solution together' helps a child to feel that their emotional reaction is valid.

Closing thoughts...

We cannot solve or take their experiences away for them, but we can support them, one pebble at a time



An additional webinar to discuss the effects that trauma has on memory:

7th June 2023

Would be great to see you there!

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Questions?