

February 2023

We will keep the promise

Take 5 and grab a cuppa

Welcome to our 2nd edition of The Promise newsletter – keeping you updated on the changes and improvements we are making to #keepthepromise. This month we are focusing on Trauma Informed Practice and our plans to be more Trauma responsive.

The Promise makes it very clear that organisations with 'responsibilities towards care experienced children and families and those on the edge of care need to embed trauma informed practice across their work and workforce'. Although there is always room for improvement, we are making significant progress in this area. I hope that this edition demonstrates some of that progress and you find the links and resources informative and provide you with a moment to reflect and consider how your practice is moving toward being more trauma informed. Thanks to all those who contributed, it's greatly appreciated.



"One day you'll see how hard it was and how brave you were."

This month's highlights from The Promise Enablement Team

We have been busy over the past month continuing our discovery of care planning and assessment frameworks, reaching out to other professionals and agencies, as well as spending time with CrossReach's practitioners and young people to gather their insights.

We were lucky to spend time with Joe Gibb at Glasgow Clyde College Cardonald Campus, speaking with the HNC Social Services cohort about The Promise and what it means for us at CrossReach. Ruth and Kirsten will both be on the Scottish Residential Child Care Workers podcast with Joe in February sharing the exciting work that is going on at CrossReach to #KeepThePromise.

Our young people have told us that there are barriers to friendships for care experienced young people and have connected with Autumn Roesch-Marsh to consider how we can support the children and young people we support to develop life long friendships. We are looking forward to beginning some research alongside Autumn to explore the barriers and enablers to friendship for care experienced young people. Moving forward this month, we will be focusing on creating spaces to bring together young people at similar stages in life to create opportunities to connect and develop social networks.



Our family inclusion officer Kerry gives us a peek in what she's been up to

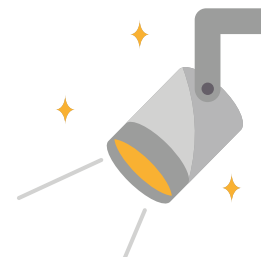
As family inclusion officer, this month I have begun my journey building relationships with our day pupils' families. I have connected over the phone and where possible face to face with families to introduce myself and begin to find out what supports are in place, what works, what doesn't work and what could work going forward. I have received great feedback from our families and the majority of them feel really positive about this new home link from our education service. I have met up with class teachers and support staff to gain an insight into what life is like for our day pupils at school and how we can improve our service to help support our families and their young people.

'At all stages in the process of change, what matters to children and families must be the focus. Organisations will be able to demonstrate that they are operating from their perspective rather than the perspective internal to the 'system'

Plan 21-24 p. 14

Spotlight on Good Practice

How are we embedding Trauma informed practice across our Children and Family Services?



Daisy Chain



Adults at our Daisy Chain service which uses play-based interventions to improve the lives and life chances of children under 8, have been completing Trauma skilled Practice Level 1 through the Turas online learning platform. (Alongside this they have training days that focus on attachment and trauma, allowing a space to discuss different ways of responding to families they support and how that translates into practice.

Miriam, the Team Leader at Daisy chain says: 'Being trauma informed allowed us to understand the importance of allowing space for our children to express their feelings in a group, without repercussions of shame or consequence. We endeavor to provide them with loving boundaries for them to feel safe and held, visible, and important. Within our one-on-one support with parents, our family support staff ensure they work with a strengths-based approach. Spending time to not only support physical needs but taking time to listen and support emotional needs. Letting them know that their wellbeing is just as important as the children's.



If you would like to access Turas training platform click on the link above

We at Daisy Chain endeavor to remain attuned to the individual needs of our families.

Perth Prison Visitor Centre



At our Perth Visitors Centre, children can get their hands on glittery sensory boards, play doh and bean bags, as well as Buddy the Polmont puppy and his paw prints to follow up through the prison to the visit room. The beanbags provide a sensory experience for children to bury, throw or hide in and the sensory boards can help calm and regulate children's hands and brain.

Finnescroft Farm Residential Service

Gillian Bridges is a Service Leader at Finniescroft Farm, one of Crossreach's residential services for children and young people. Four young people aged between 17-20 call Finniescroft home. A priority for Gillian is ensuring that young people experience trauma informed care at Finniescroft is creating space to reflect, discuss and learn as a team. 'We are fortunate enough at Crossreach to have an incredibly comprehensive and thorough training program for our practitioners which includes a 5-day Therapeutic Crisis Intervention course as well as a 3-day Play, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy training package.

However, for training to be effective and beneficial for our practitioners then it is integral that we create a culture of reflection and understanding if we are to really unpack the complexities of supporting young people who may have experienced complex developmental trauma. Embedding trauma informed practice is also about ensuring that adults feel safe and contained, providing quality supervision is a component of this however it's also about supporting our work force to identify when they are feeling frustrated and depleted and how they can support their own mental wellbeing, after all you can't pour from an empty cup."



Playfulness

• Playfulness in interactions can diffuse conflict and promote connection
E.g. Maintaining a relaxed 'lightness' and can involve making a joke (though this has to be done carefully)



Acceptance

• Accepting needs and emotions that drive behaviour (not necessarily the behaviour) without judgement



Curiosity

• Being curious to where a behaviour has come from (in your head or out loud.)



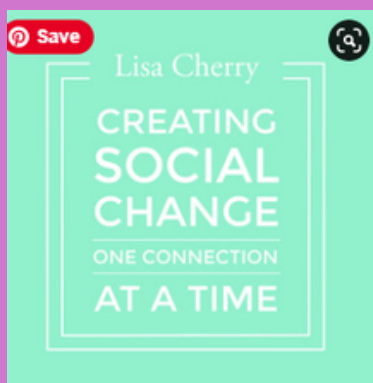
Empathy

• Really connecting with how they are feeling and showing compassion



P.A.C.E is an approach developed by Dr Dan Hughes aimed at supporting recovery from developmental trauma. However, it can be a useful attitude to adopt with anyone who is emotionally dysregulated

Check out some of these podcasts if you fancy learning more about trauma informed practice



An Interview With: Michelle Howard

We caught up with Michelle Howard who is Crossreach's Quality Assurance and Development Service Leader within our Care and Education services. Michelle is responsible for delivering formal training across these services and has been the driving force of CrossReach's Care and Education's Practice Model which offers a philosophy of care for our workforce.



Can you describe Care and Education's journey to becoming more trauma responsive?

For me, the biggest shift in last few years is the focus away from the young person's behavior and starting more to focus on how an adult understands themselves and how this then impacts their assessment of what a child needs or is expecting and ultimately shapes their response to becoming more trauma informed. I'm really proud of the systems and processes that we have put in place to reflect this shift as we know that for practitioners to develop their reflection and self-awareness skills can take time and support. We have access to external consultants who facilitate both 1:1 and group spaces for reflection. In addition, we have created reflective spaces for our managers, mentors, and new starts to acknowledge the idea that practitioners are at different stages in their developmental journey. We also know that practitioners accessing high quality, reflective supervision is an integral part in developing their practice and becoming more trauma responsive. We have revised and developed our policies as a result of this. It's also so important that we cultivate cultures of learning in our services. It's cultures that really make the difference, because from our reflection of becoming a trauma informed organisation it is so much more than our practitioners attending a training course. It also requires us to create the space for us to reflect how training might influence our practice and then how do we go about embedding this as individuals and as a collective. We also know part of being trauma informed is also about cherishing and nurturing relationships at every level and between every level too.

You have played a significant role in developing a philosophy of care for practitioners also known as the Practice Model. How does the practice model tie in with embedding trauma responsive practice?

Trauma informed practice is not the just what we do, it's the how we do it and the practice model provides practitioners with a clear expectation of how children and young people should be supported across all our services. The practice model has been developed with the idea that children shouldn't experience a 'roulette of care' when we look after them but that they are surrounded by adults who are able to support a young person's recovery from trauma through loving and caring relationships. The development and embedding of the practice model is a significant investment in the learning and development of our workforce which we hope in turn will promote the longevity, consistency and relationships between our children and young people and the adults who care for them.

"It's cultures that really make the difference, because from our reflection of becoming a trauma informed organisation it is so much more than our practitioners attending a training course"

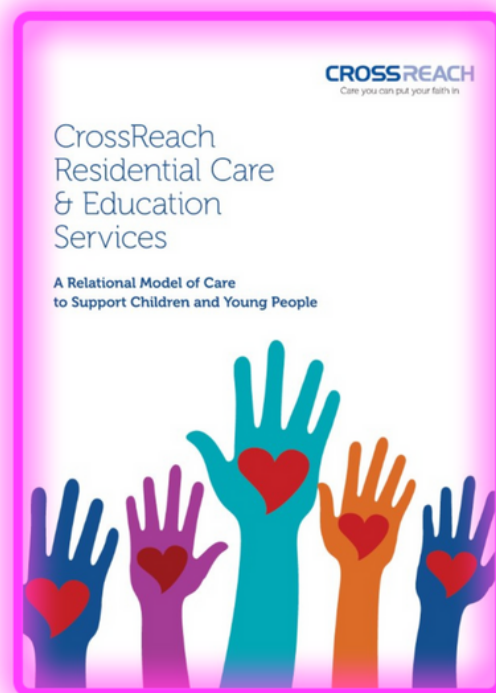
An Interview With: Michelle Howard

You are responsible for delivering training of our Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) program, which is a prevention and intervention model designed to teach adults how to help children learn constructive ways to handle crisis, can you explain how TCI aligns with trauma responsive practice?

The TCI course I deliver is based upon an evidence and theory based syllabus of best practice which takes into account the impact of trauma on healthy development. It provides practitioners another lens to view behaviour from, a lens where all behaviour is communication. TCI is also very explicit around the importance of supervision for our practitioners to mitigate the impact vicarious and secondary trauma. TCI requires a 'whole systems approach' in order for it to be effective and a central component to this is both young person and family inclusion.

Finally, what developments would you like to see in the future for CrossReach in terms of being a trauma responsive organisation?

I honestly believe in the power of providing space for reflection and I would like to see continued collaborative working with external consultants as I think they can be a great investment in our training, knowledge and understanding. Additionally, I would love to see an improved quality assurance system to ensure congruence in the care and support we provide as well as increased access to safe, facilitated, reflective spaces.



If you would like to know more about CrossReach's Care and Education Philosophy of Care please contact Michelle:
michelle.howard@crossreach.org.uk

Promise Champion

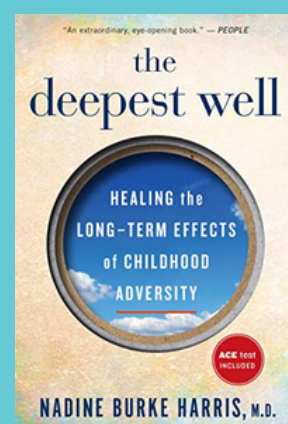
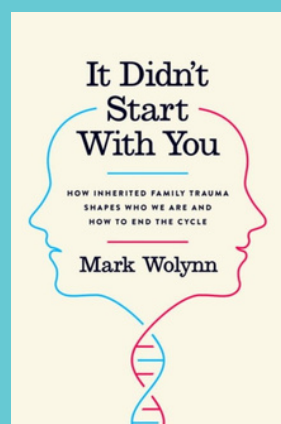
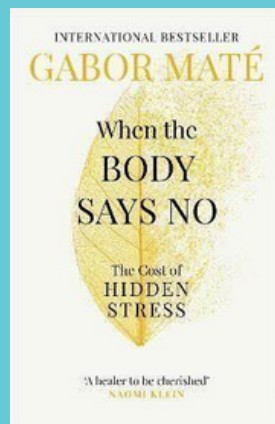
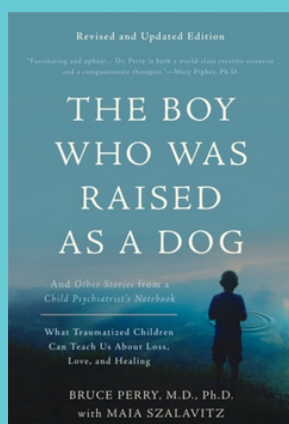
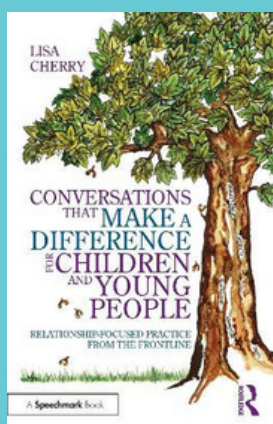
Who has embodied the promise this month. Great relational practice, challenging the status quo, ensuring that children's voices are heard?



We know at CrossReach that our workforce is our greatest asset, we also know that individuals and teams go above and beyond to ensure our children, young people and families feel safe, loved and respected. Do you have something extra special that you would like to share about how individuals or your teams are keeping The Promise? We would love to hear - get in touch with Ruth or Kirsten to let us know!

Ruth.Forster@crossreach.org.uk

Kirsten.Callaghan@crossreach.org.uk



If you are inspired to know more, these books are a great place to start



The Beacon House developmental trauma modules are available for our workforce, just ask your supervisor for more information



The Church of Scotland
Social Care Council

Operating as CrossReach, Scottish Charity No: SC011353

Ruth.forster@crossreach.org.uk
+447702442860
www.crossreach.org.uk



News and events happening across Scotland to #keepthepromise



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

The Scottish Children's Reporter whose primary function is to receive referrals for children and young people who are believed to require compulsory measures of supervision and then decide whether the child or young person would benefit from a children's hearing has a dedicated section on their website. The section has news and updates as well as the SCRA's plan to #keepthepromise

The STAF summit will be held on Wednesday 8th March at The Studio in Glasgow. The theme of the 2023 Summit is around the role and importance of housing for care leavers in Scotland and how the pledges of The Promise surrounding housing are carried out in practice. This will be really informative if you are supporting you people who are at a stage where they are moving towards interdependent living



STAF have recently carried out an internal review of their trauma informed approaches. Find out more about what they learnt from this process and bring some ideas into your own service as to how your service can become more trauma informed

We hoped you enjoyed the latest edition of The Promise newsletter. Thank you for taking the time to read and helping CrossReach to #keepthepromise so that all children grow up loved, safe, respected and can realise their true potential

THANK YOU

 The Church of Scotland
Social Care Council
Operating as CrossReach, Scottish Charity No: SC011353

Ruth.forster@crossreach.org.uk
+447702442860
www.crossreach.org.uk

