

**BERRY STREET  
EDUCATION MODEL**  
Curriculum and Classroom Strategies

**Trauma-informed  
Behaviour Strategies:**  
*Re-imagining student behaviour  
intervention through a systems-informed  
perspective*

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**Abstract**

The impacts of childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences can have devastating consequences on students' learning and wellbeing. This article discusses the implications of these impacts of severe trauma and how schools can respond. It explores how change in school leadership practices and systems can support affected communities. It also discusses the importance of integration with community services and how schools can navigate the challenges of intergenerational trauma. The article concludes with a call for community-driven approaches to address the uncertainty and awareness of trauma-affected students' advancement.

**A PRIMER ON HEALING SCHOOL SYSTEMS**

Jack Greig, Brent  
Teacher Learning

International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies (2016) 7(2): 218–239  
DOI: 10.18357/ijcysf.72201615719

**TRAUMA-INFORMED FLEXIBLE LEARNING: CLASSROOMS THAT STRENGTHEN REGULATORY ABILITIES**

Tom Brunzell, Helen Stokes, and Lea Waters

**Abstract:** This study explores the implementation of the first of three domains, increasing regulatory abilities, within a trauma-informed positive education (TIPE) approach with flexible learning teachers as they incorporated trauma-informed principles into their daily teaching practice. Trauma-informed teaching approaches have particular relevance for flexible learning settings, and can help meet the complex needs of students who have experienced violence, abuse, or neglect. This paper proposes that redressing trauma-affected students' regulatory abilities should be the first aim in this developmentally-informed TIPE pedagogy. Drawing from research with nine teachers

(Greig, Bailey, Al

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## Trauma & *a world that's good and safe*

**Simple:** Single, overwhelming, possibly life threatening event (experienced or witnessed).

**Complex Relational Trauma:** Multiple events, chronic and/or prolonged, occurring during developmental years (abuse, neglect, war).

**Vicarious:** Hearing about traumatic events, or exposure to aversive details.

**In Utero:** Experiencing pregnant person's traumatic events, through high levels of cortisol (stress hormone).

**Intergenerational:** Passed between generations, psychosocial, epigenetic factors.


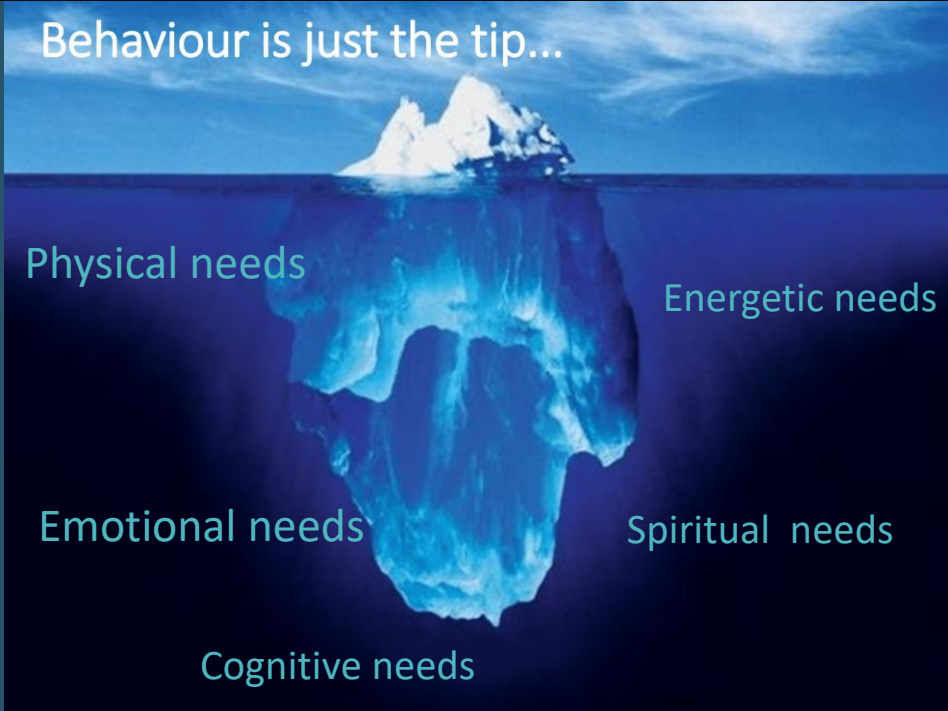


Photo via Shutterstock

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Behaviour is just the tip...



Physical needs

Energetic needs

Emotional needs

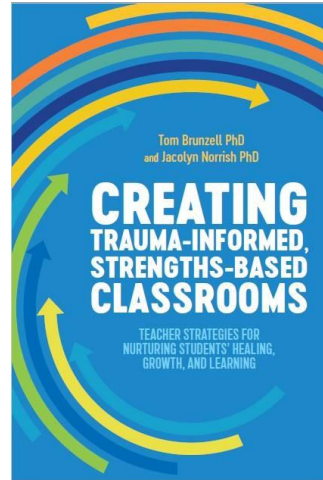
Spiritual needs

Cognitive needs

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**BOTTOM-UP** (*physical*) regulation  
**TOP-DOWN** (*thinking*) regulation

*A journey  
towards  
integration  
between body  
and mind*



(Brunzell & Norrish, 2021)

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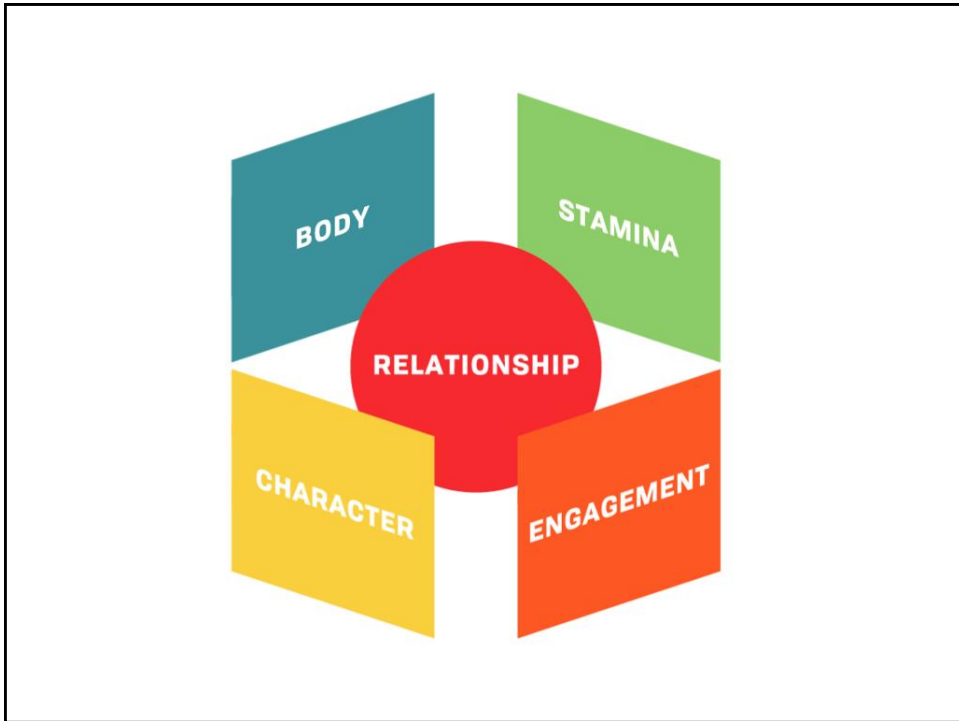
*INTEGRATION to make the **choice** for learning*

(Brunzell & Norrish, 2021)



CAPACITY	WILLINGNESS
<p><b>Bottom-up regulation:</b></p> <p>Body regulation Nurturing physical rhythms for the body when learning</p> <p>Noticing my body Emotional awareness and emotional literacy</p> <p>Predictable routines Strategies to self-regulate proactively when hitting a speedbump</p>	<p><b>Top-down regulation:</b></p> <p>Ability to persist Proactively seek support and coach oneself to stay on-task through strengths-use</p> <p>Focused thinking and learning Promotes healthy development of the brain's architecture</p> <p>Environments wherein students set higher expectations for themselves</p>

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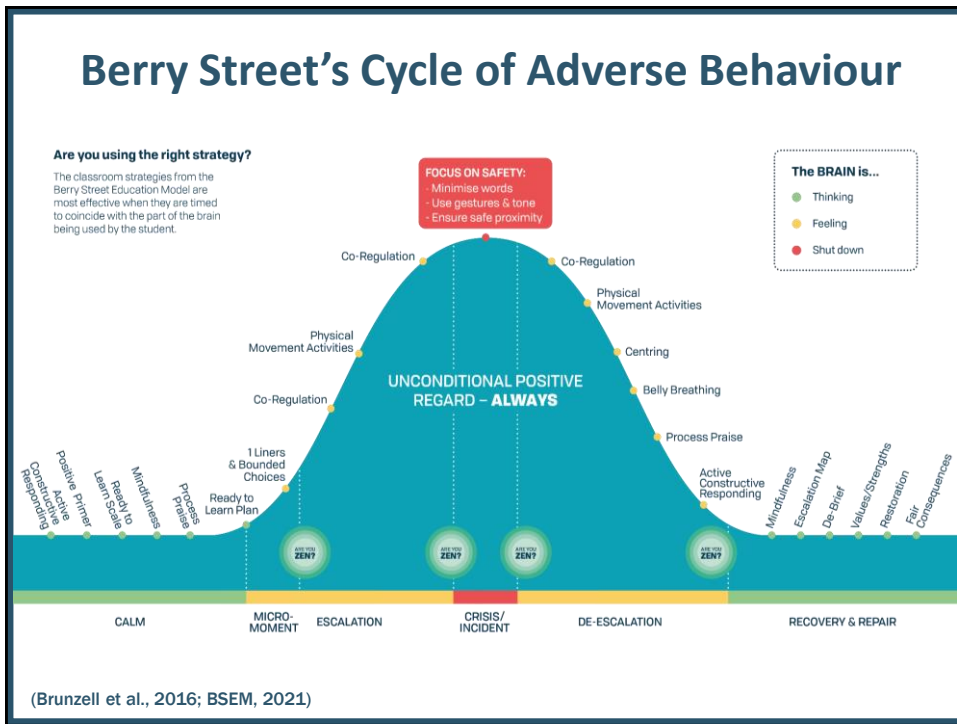
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What's **RIGHT** with this student?

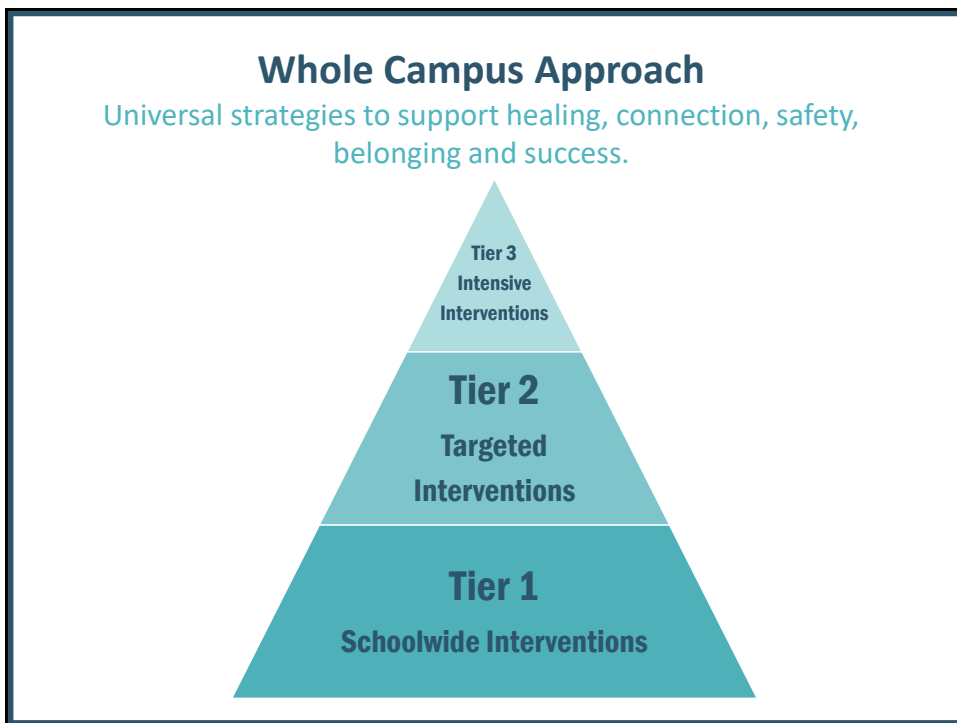
What **unmet needs** does this student have?

***We are bolstering their ability to meet their own needs in healthy ways—AND to make the best choices they can.***

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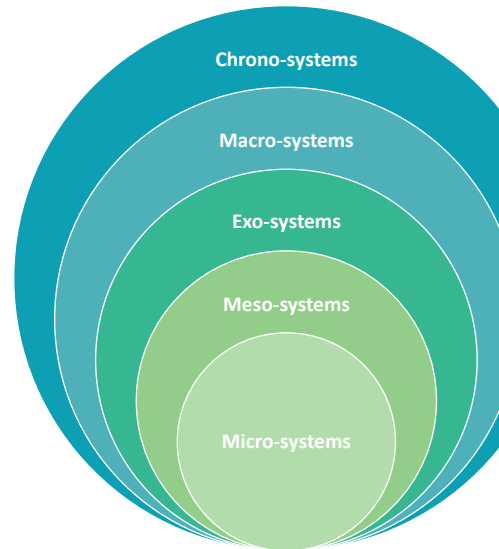
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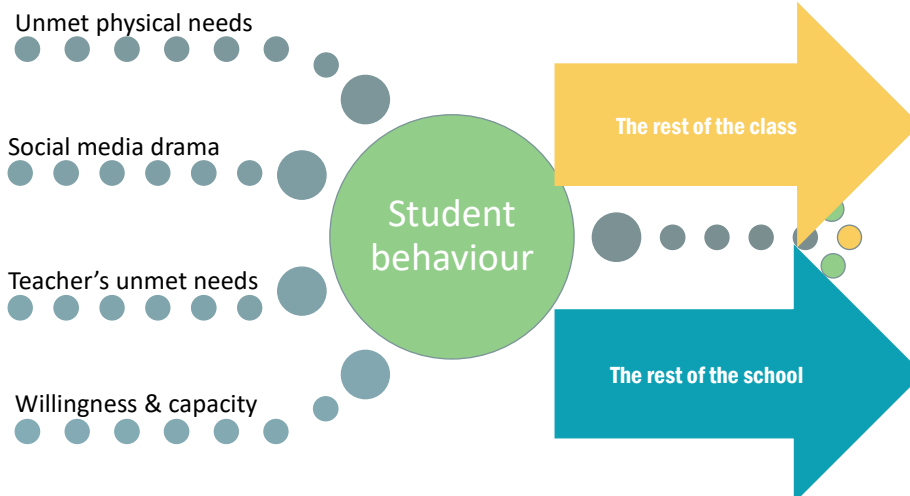
## Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory (1979)

- Unfolding over time  
(*chrono-system*)
- Social and cultural values  
(*macro-systems*)
- Education systems, environment  
(*exo-system*)
- Connections to micro-systems  
(*meso-systems*)
- Family, peers, school  
(*micro-system*)
- Individual student



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## Understanding adverse behaviour within a *SYSTEM*



(Kern et al., 2019)

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# A developmental approach to becoming a Trauma-Informed School

Stage	Indicators	Activities
Trauma-Awareness	Staff understand trauma basics	Whole school trauma training
Trauma-Sensitive	Staff use appropriate language. Behaviour considered through a trauma lens.	Create a team to lead this work Encourage the use of Trauma language and awareness
Trauma-Responsive	Change in our approach to students and each other. Students have spaces that support regulation.	Address staff wellbeing Engage community partners Build knowledge and skill Utilise PLT's/ CoP's
Trauma-Informed	All staff use trauma informed approaches in all interactions.	Change policy (Behaviour) Change systems (Community engagement/Behaviour)

Adapted from: ***The Missouri Model*** for Trauma Informed Schools

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## The Eucalypt Way

Trauma-informed education for Australia

The Eucalypt Way provides educators with a pathway to understanding the impacts of trauma on learning and engagement of children and young people, and provides practical steps to support healing and growth.

The eucalypt has been chosen as our metaphor for this work, because the species has evolved over millennia to suit the diverse Australian landscape. Eucalypts hold flammable oils and are vulnerable to heat and fire, and they also have powerful properties that support their recovery from trauma due to unique mechanisms that allow them to survive and to thrive.

### LEARN

All staff and leadership engage in learning

Examine the impact of chronic stress on:

- child and adolescent development (bodies, brains and nervous systems)
- capacities to feel safe, to relate, and to emotionally regulate
- learning and achievement
- social interactions
- resilience
- health and well-being
- parenting and caring

Explore:

- First Nation's perspectives
- prevalence of trauma
- intergenerational trauma
- equity, access and inclusion

### APPLY

Identify, support and lead trauma-informed processes

Plan and implement strategies to help:

- learners and staff understand emotional regulation
- learners and staff feel safe and supported
- develop a consistent, team approach

Develop processes for:

- behaviour, case and crisis management

Inform and collaborate with:

- families, communities, support organisations

Examine and review:

- organisational planning documents to align with trauma-informed education

### SUSTAIN

Support personnel to lead trauma-informed processes

Implement:

- policies and organisational planning documents aligned with trauma-informed education

Collaborate and advocate with:

- local education providers
- education system leadership
- community

Continuous learning through:

- trauma-informed inductions for new staff
- refreshers and ongoing learning for all staff
- advanced learning for leaders

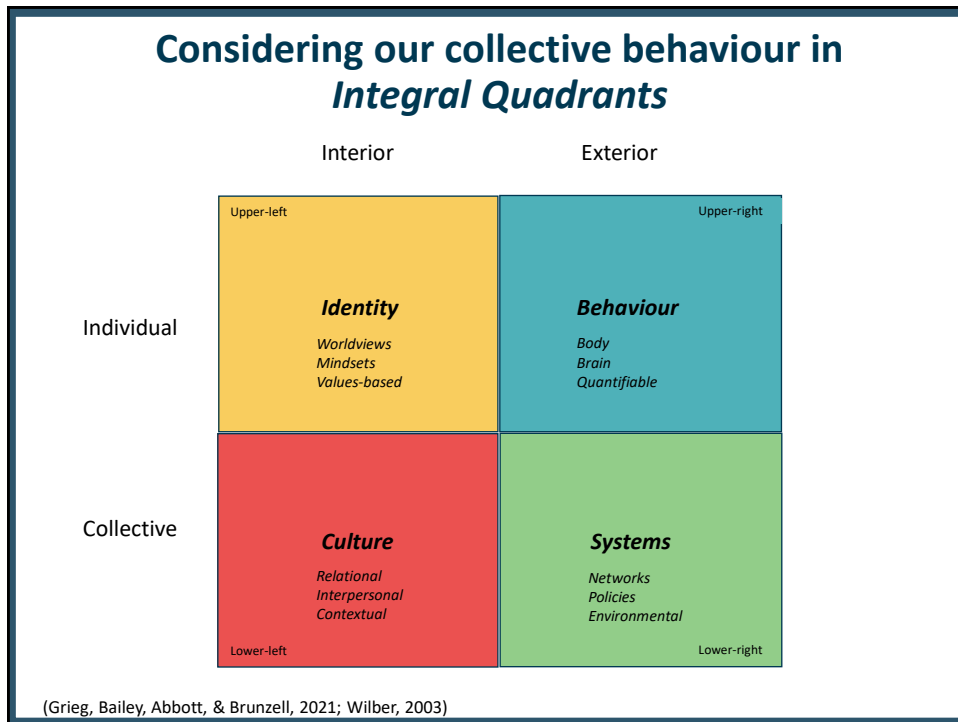
Unconditional Positive Regard supports an atmosphere that nurtures trauma-informed education.

Unconditional Positive Regard is for every person, in every practice.


Hosford, J., Braxell, T., Brown, M., Clewley, C., Edwards, L., Mungrin, G. (2022). The Eucalypt Way: Trauma-informed education for Australia. Berry Street Education Model & Trauma-Informed Education Queensland and University of Technology. Retrieved from: [www.berrystreet.org.au/the-eucalypt-way](http://www.berrystreet.org.au/the-eucalypt-way)


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*To support our young people:*

- We must create the conditions for our young people's *bottom-up* and *top-down integration* to increase their capacity for learning.
- We must utilise the *small* moments of rupture to increase a proactive self-intervention mindset.
- Systems take *time* to shift our collective interior and to acknowledge the non-verbal, somatic experiences of meeting our own needs in healthy ways.

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