

# **Steps (Buckinghamshire) Step On**

**Promoting Positive Behaviour**



**Trying to understand some  
people's behaviour is like  
trying to smell the colour 9**



# Why 'Steps'?

Steps is not an acronym but was drawn from Norfolk Children's Services inclusion statement.

*'The process of taking necessary **steps** to ensure that every young person is given an equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.'*



# Steps principles are all about understanding...

- The importance of ethos and policy
- The importance of consistency
- Internal and external discipline
- The importance of relationships
- Conscious and subconscious behaviour
- How experiences and feelings affect behaviour
- The language of de-escalation
- The need for planning
- Punishment and consequence
- 'Duty of Care' around harm
- Appropriate physical intervention strategies
- The importance of restorative approaches and conflict resolution



# Course structure

**Before a crisis:** promoting positive behaviour

**During a crisis:** managing harm or the risk of harm

**After a crisis:** reflecting, repairing and restoring

In the context of behaviour management, a crisis is linked to **harm** which can come from the behaviours of service users.

This harm may be **actual** harm or **foreseeable** harm.

## Harm can be:

- harm to self
- harm to others
- damage to property
- loss of learning (educational context only)

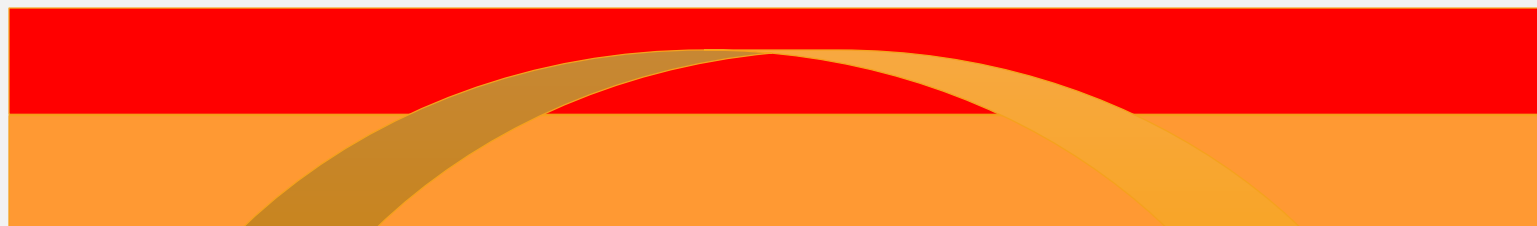


# Before a Crisis

**The importance of developing a culture to promote and develop positive behaviour**



# PROGRESSION



**Harmful behaviour**

**Difficult behaviour**

**Escalation**

**Emotional recovery**

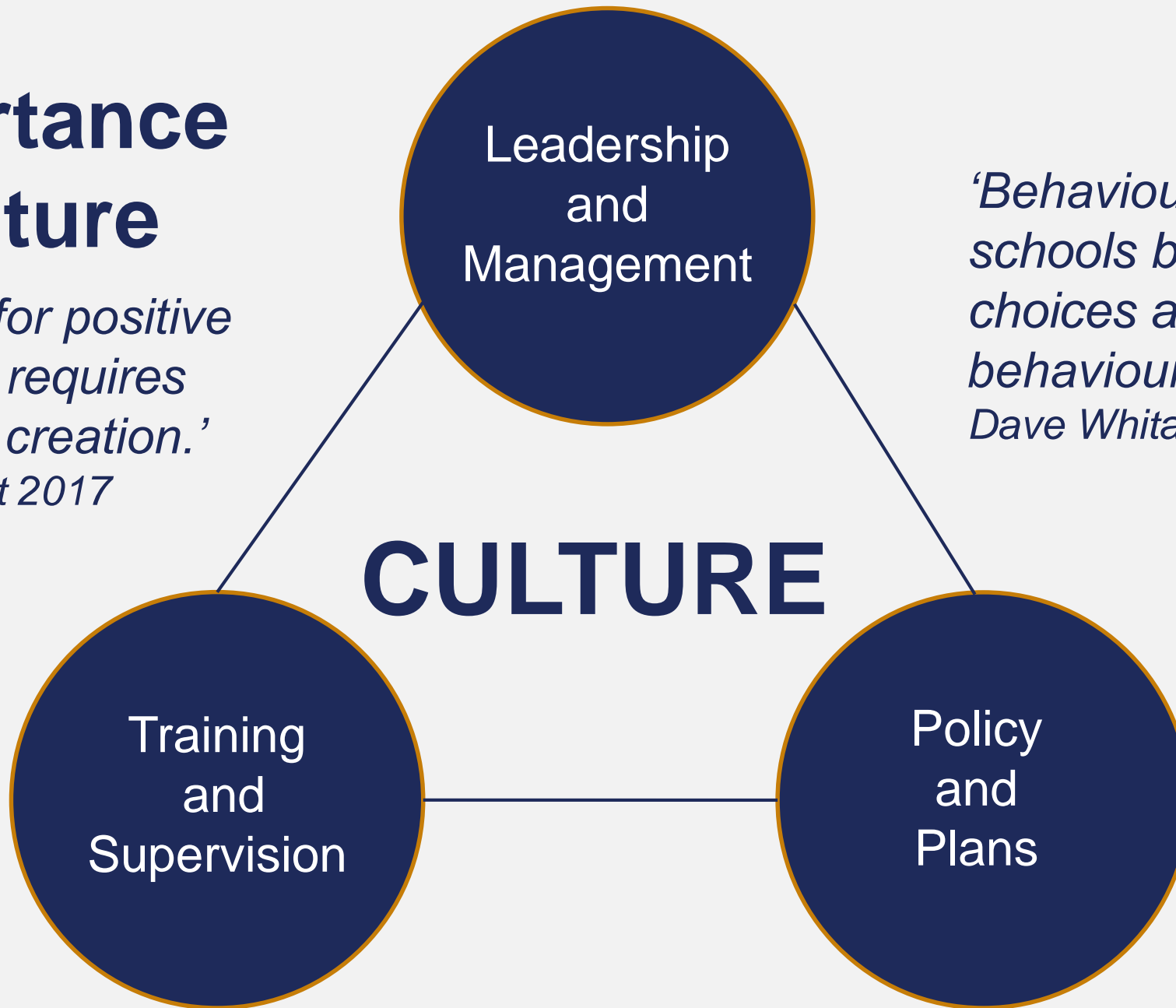
**Pro-social  
behaviour**

**Reflect  
Repair  
Restore**



# Importance of culture

*'A culture for positive behaviour requires deliberate creation.'*  
Tom Bennett 2017



*'Behaviour management in schools begins with our choices as adults and our behaviour as professionals.'*  
Dave Whitaker 2021





**So what about discipline?**



# Discipline definitions

1. The practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour, using punishment to correct disobedience.
2. Train oneself to do something in a controlled and habitual way.



# Guidance

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools  
Ref. DfE-00023-2014 (2016)

*'The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the powers and duties for school staff. It is for individual schools to develop their own best practice for managing behaviour in schools.'*

*Updated Guidance: Behaviour in Schools 2022*

# Discipline

External discipline = controlling behaviour

Internal discipline = teaching behaviour



# External and internal discipline

**External discipline** is a necessary component to keep individuals safe. However, if it solely imposed through rules and suppression this may only achieve a short term change.

**Internal discipline** is created when individuals internalise 'what and why' rules and 'ways to behave' are important. This internalisation leads to ownership of behaviour - responsibility and self-discipline. This ownership is necessary for long-term success.



# How can we *control* behaviour?

- Through dominating and imposing
- By demanding obedience
- By telling them what they must not do
- Through punishment
- By taking away all pleasurable experiences
- By shaming, belittling, embarrassing and humiliating
- By suspending



# How can we *teach* behaviour?

- Through building positive relationships
- Through explicit teaching
- By positive role modelling
- Through consistent practice
- By using scripts and positive phrasing
- Through establishing routines
- By giving explicit specific praise

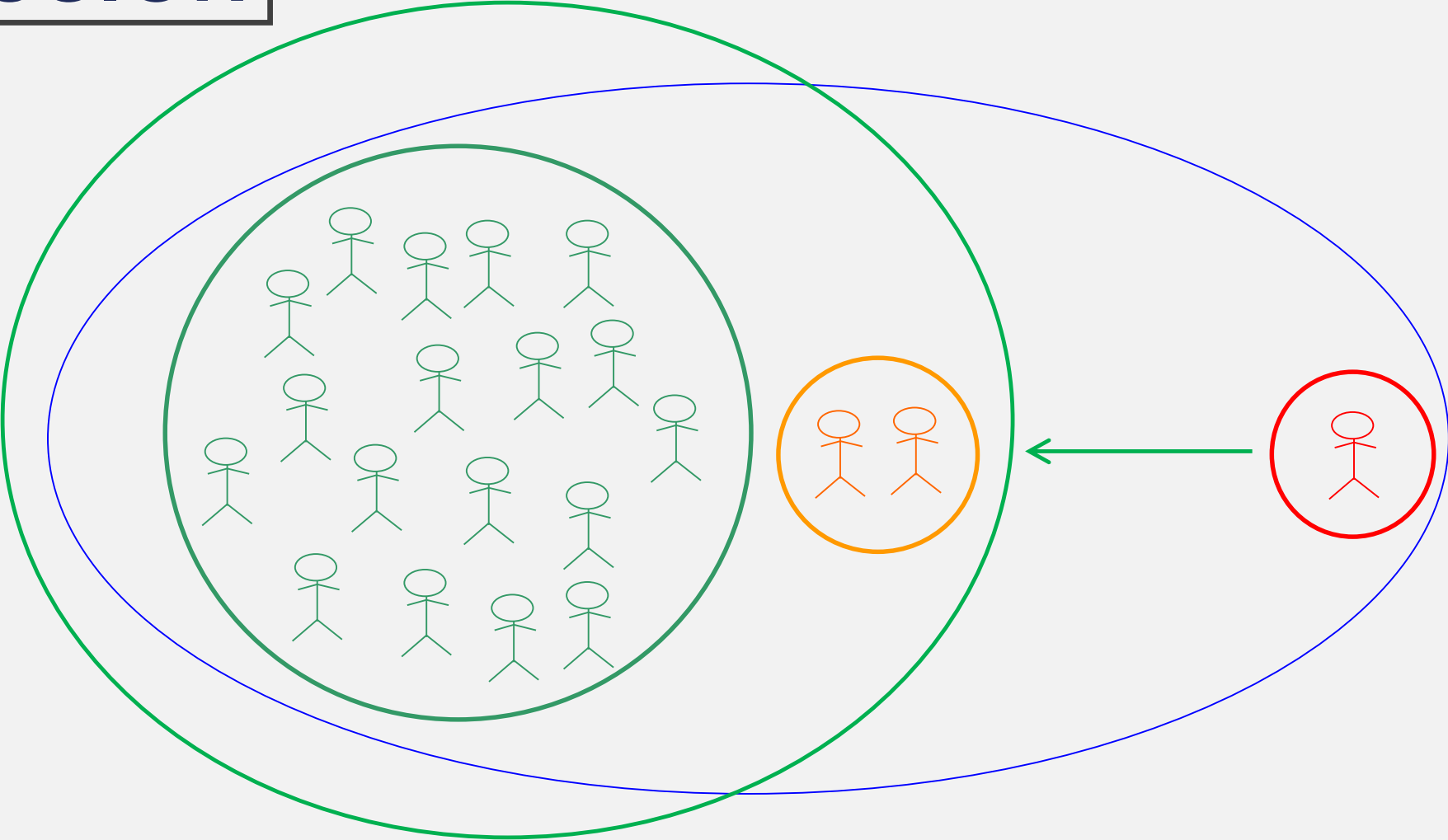


# Thinking about Inclusion





# INCLUSION

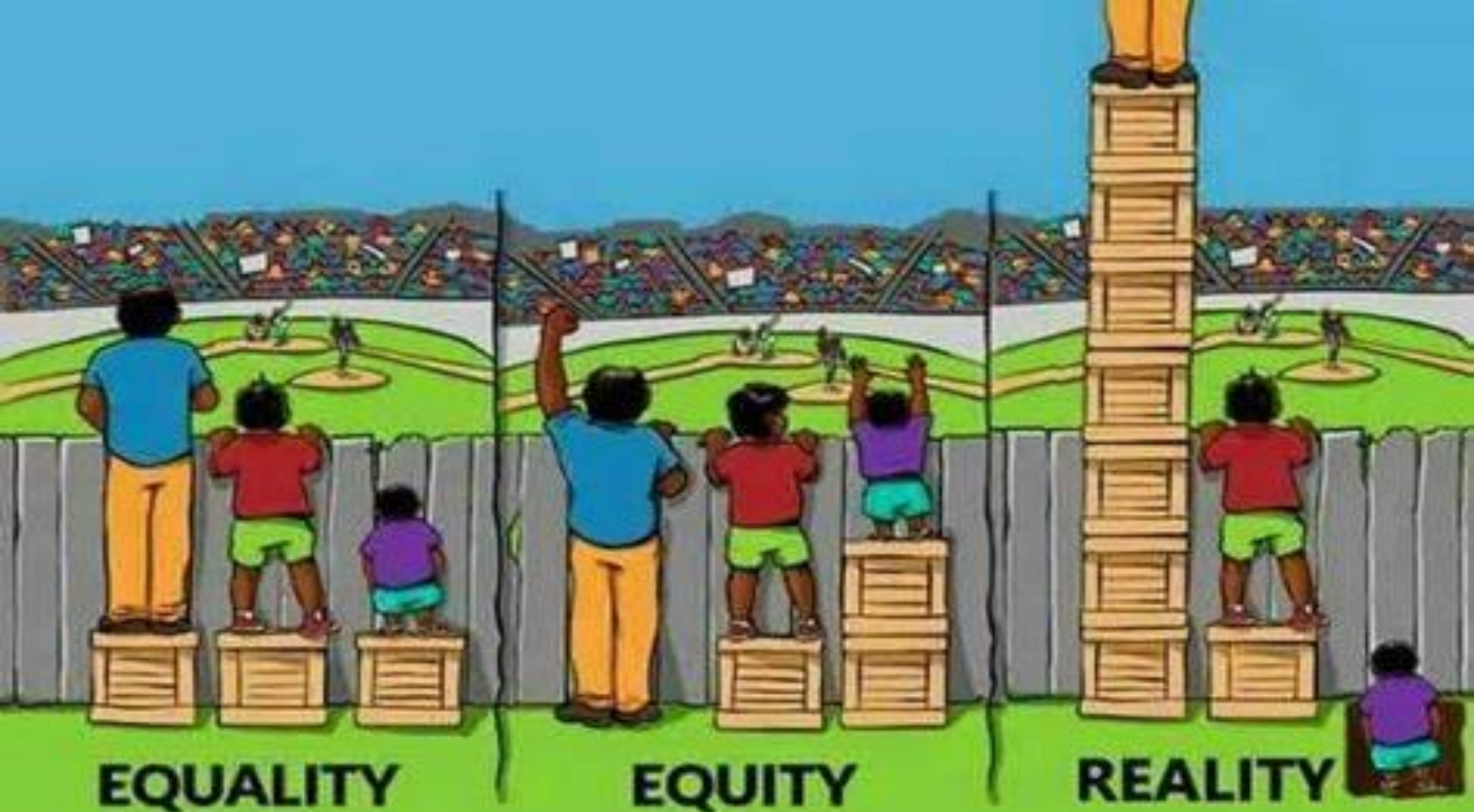


# Understanding inclusion

*‘Providing an inclusive setting that promotes equality of opportunity does not mean that all children should be treated the same, but that the unique skills and abilities of each child should be recognised and developed, and that inclusion is not optional: children have defined entitlements in this area and settings have legal responsibilities.’*

EYFS





**EQUALITY**

**EQUITY**

**REALITY**

# The importance of consistent practice



# Inconsistency arises from having...

Different beliefs and values

Different agendas

Different actions

Different responses




# Consistency arises from having...

Shared beliefs and values (a common purpose)

Shared agendas

Shared actions

Shared responses



Does our process for staff induction support this?

Do all staff access the same development opportunities?

Do we revisit our practice in the light of new experiences?

# Why is consistency so important?

Consistent approaches and responses to behaviour ensure a 'certainty' and 'predictability' for children, young people and service users.

This certainty establishes safe and understood boundaries around behaviours.

Establishing expectations of adults around consistent practice also empowers everyone to 'get it right' and embeds an understanding of 'we all have a responsibility'.



# Planning for positive behaviour





# Policy and plans

A setting's behaviour policy should meet the needs of the majority of individuals within the setting.

In addition, a positive behaviour management plan for identified individuals may be required.



## POSITIVE INTERVENTION PLAN

Name:	DoB:	Plan date:	Version of plan: Review date:
Brief description of presenting difficult / harmful behaviours:		Positive behaviours we wish to see / have:	
Differentiated measures to promote / support positive behaviours:			

	Positive behaviours we will see:	What we will say / do:
	Difficult behaviours we will see:	What we will say / do:
	Harmful behaviours we will see:	What we will say / do:
Post incident recovery & debrief measures:		
Signature of plan co-ordinator:		Date:
Signature of parent / carer:		Date:
Signature of child / young person / service user (if appropriate):		Date:

## POSITIVE INTERVENTION PLAN

Name:	DoB:	Plan date:	Version of plan: Review date:
<b>Brief description of presenting difficult / harmful behaviours:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joe becomes frustrated when other children have the toys he wants to play with – he often grabs/snatches these or will sometimes bite or scratch</li> <li>Joe sometimes displays defiant behaviours and runs away from adults when they are giving him an instruction</li> <li>These behaviours are more frequent if Joe arrives tired or anxious.</li> </ul>		<b>Positive behaviours we wish to see / have:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joe able to share toys with other children</li> <li>Joe responding calmly if other children try to take his toys or share with him</li> <li>Joe able to listen calmly to adults, particularly when an instruction is being given</li> <li>Joe able to self-regulate when he is feeling tired or anxious.</li> </ul>	
<b>Differentiated measures to promote / support positive behaviours:</b> <p>Joe will be sat near the door so he can exit, or be supported to exit, to his safe space.</p> <p>Joe will have 1:1 support (Mrs Smith) but all adults must also be active in supporting him to help develop his independence and lessen dependency on one adult. Joe will be taught how to share.</p> <p>If Joe arrives tired or anxious, offer a favourite teddy or toy.</p> <p>Joe will have a box of ‘special toys’ which he has chosen himself (agreed limited number). He especially likes cars which can help to calm him when he plays with them.</p> <p>Joe will have a visual timetable and ‘Now and Next’ board.</p> <p>Joe will have a safe space to go to. This is to be called ‘Joe’s Pit Stop’.</p> <p>Joe has a ‘social story’ called ‘When My Engine Revs Too Fast’.. about how to clam when he is angry, likened to a car whose engine is racing too fast, it needs to slow down and have a Pit Stop.</p>			

<p><b>Positive behaviours we will see:</b></p> <p>Joe playing safely alongside/with other children.</p> <p>Joe sharing toys.</p> <p>Joe following adult instructions.</p>	<p><b>What we will say / do:</b></p> <p>SCRIPT: Nice playing with ... Joe.</p> <p>SCRIPT: Good sharing with ... Joe.</p> <p>SCRIPT: Good listening Joe.</p>
<p><b>Difficult behaviours we will see:</b></p> <p>Joe will constantly ask 'but why' whilst frowning.</p> <p>Joe will start to moan and will pace the floor.</p> <p>Joe will drop to the floor and will start to cry.</p>	<p><b>What we will say / do:</b></p> <p>SCRIPT: First we will... and then we will...</p> <p>USE: 'Now and Next' picture board.</p> <p>SCRIPT: Oh dear, what's happened? I can help. Let's...</p> <p>SCRIPT: Use you words. I can help.</p>
<p><b>Harmful behaviours we will see:</b></p> <p>Joe will hit, hair pull, scratch children and adults.</p> <p>Joe will bite himself and others.</p> <p>Joe will run away,</p>	<p><b>What we will say / do:</b></p> <p>SCRIPT: Kind hands. Use your words.</p> <p>SCRIPT: Bite your chewy. Here's your chewy. I can help.</p> <p>SCRIPT: We can run together. You can run, it's safe to run'.</p> <p>USE: Use 'open mittens' to guide and escort Joe to his Pit Stop or outside where he can run safely.</p>
<p><b>Post incident recovery &amp; debrief measures:</b></p> <p>Joe has a social story that can be read to him once he has calmed. This reminds him how he can calm himself.</p> <p>Joe will be talked through the class 'Thinking Book' to remind him of the impact of his behaviour on others and to support him to develop pro-social behaviours.</p>	
<p>Signature of plan co-ordinator: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Signature of parent / carer: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Signature of child / young person / service user (if appropriate): _____ Date: _____</p>	

# The importance of positive relationships



# Being prepared to learn

*‘Children learn better when they have an emotional attachment to the person imparting information or knowledge.’*

Curran 2008

# Building connections

*'Our success as an educator is more dependent on positive, caring, trustworthy relationships than on any skill, idea, tip or tool.'*

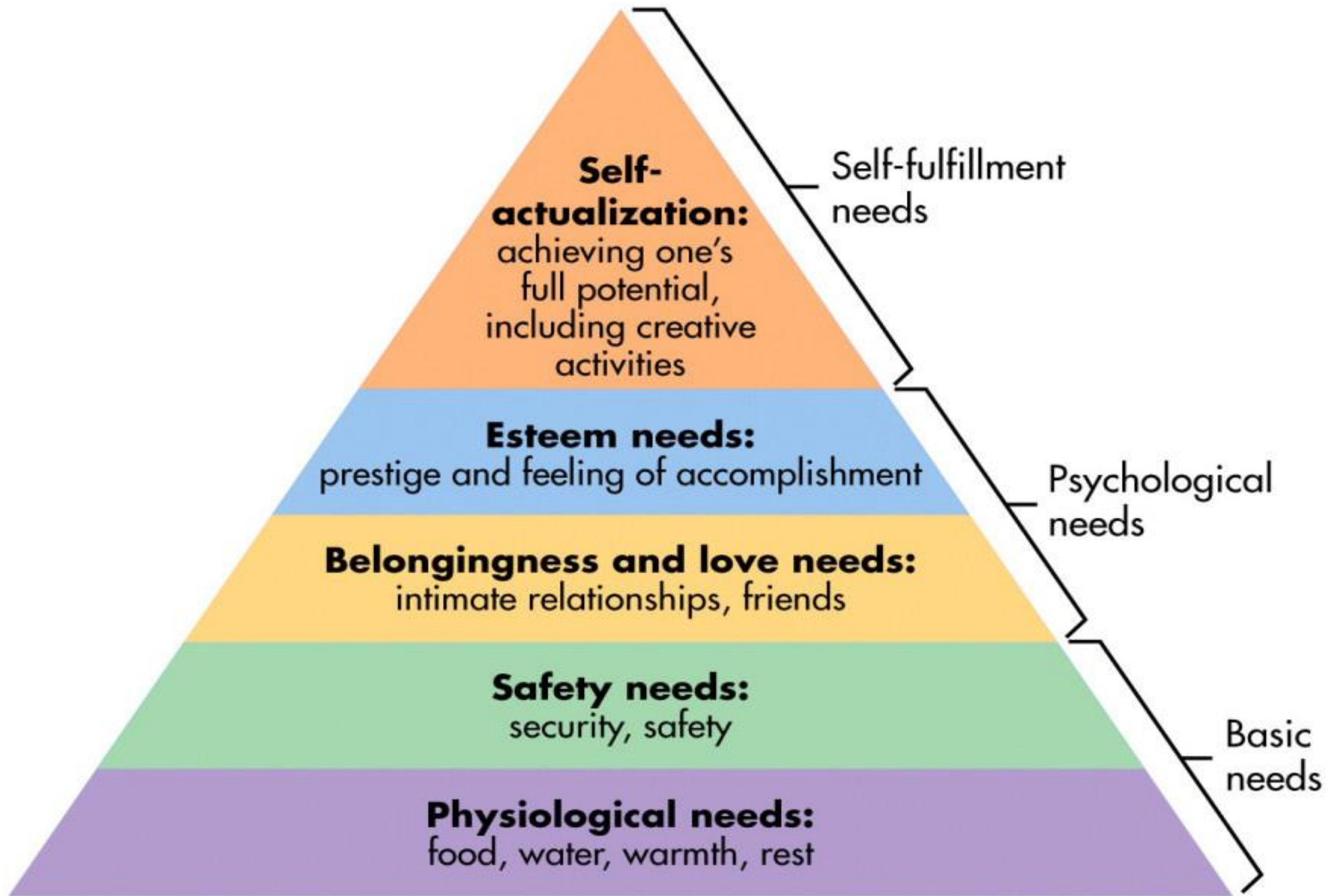
Jensen 2014



# Building relationships

Make a list of how you build positive and trusting relationships with your children.





# **Behaviour analysis: Understanding behaviour**



## **Analyse:**

Examine (something) methodically and in detail, typically in order to understand, explain and interpret it.

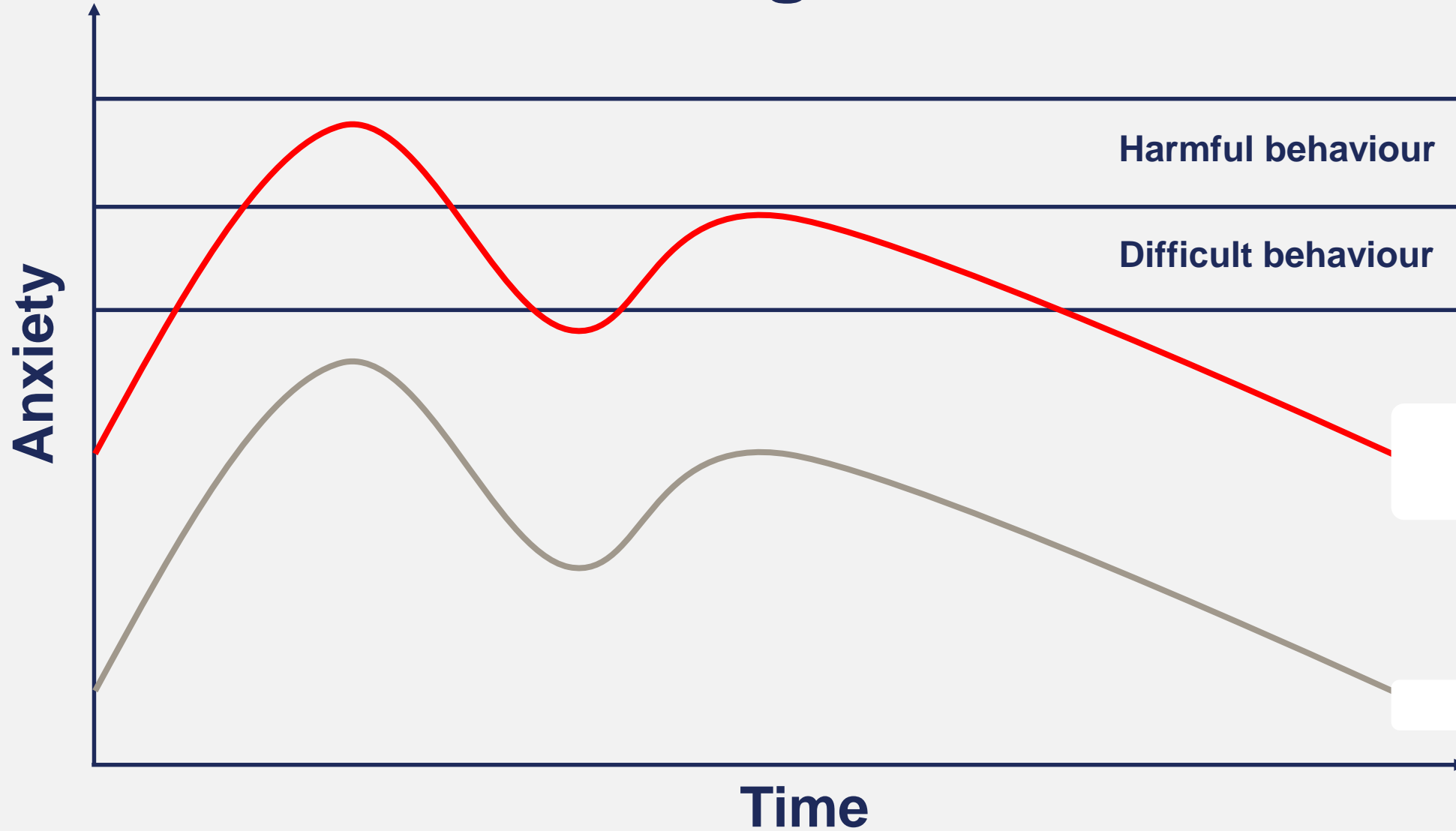
## **Moralise:**

To comment on an issue of right and wrong, typically with an unfounded air of superiority.


Dictionary definition



# Behaviour tracking



# Behaviour tracker



								X		
			X							
				X					X	
		X								X
					X					
X	X					X	X			
Arrival	Registration	Assembly	Literacy	Playtime	Numeracy	Lunch time	PE	Music	Quiet reading	Home time

# The roots of negative behaviour

Negative experiences can create negative feelings.

Negative feelings can create negative behaviour.



# Roots and fruits

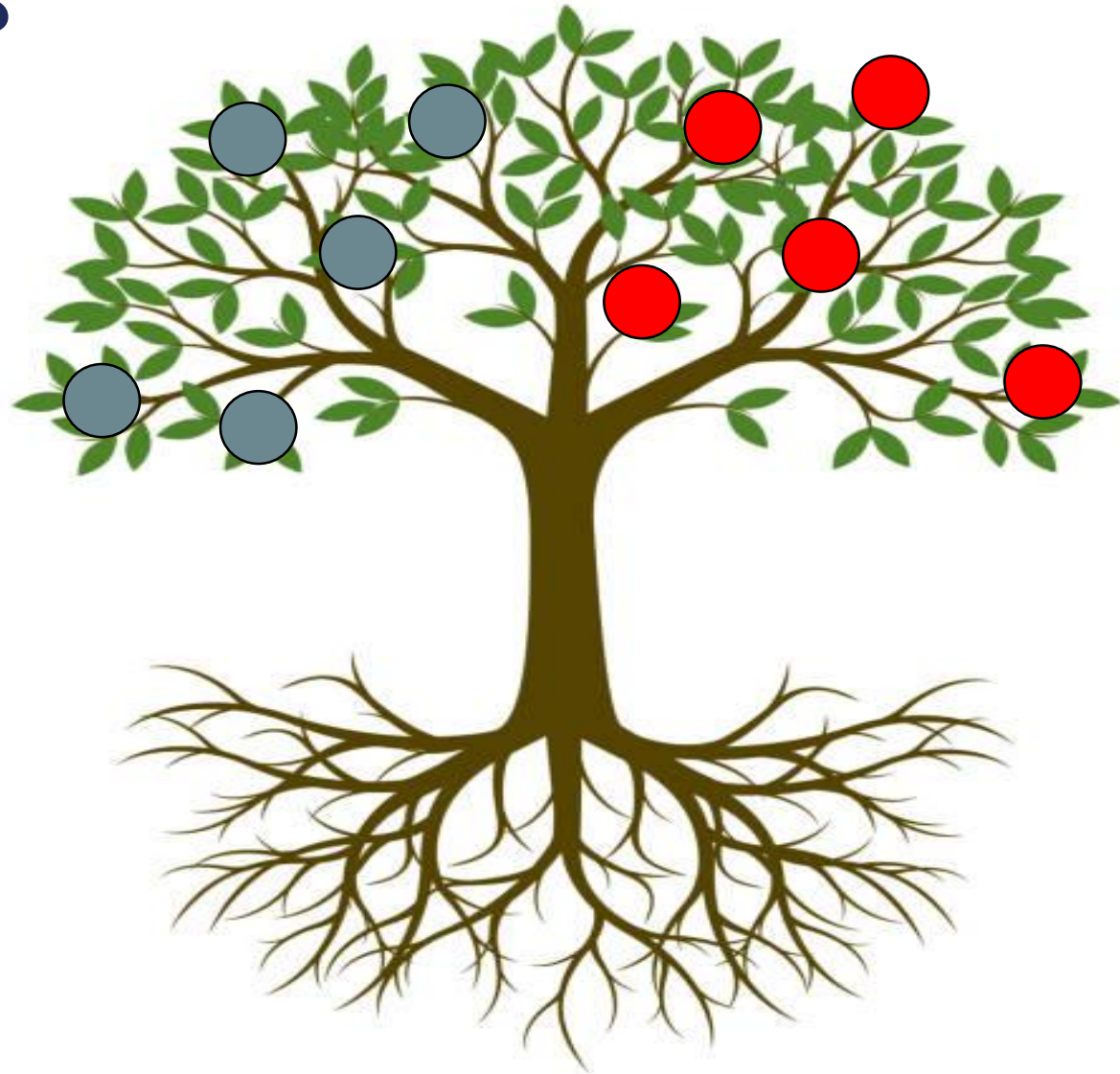
behaviour



feelings



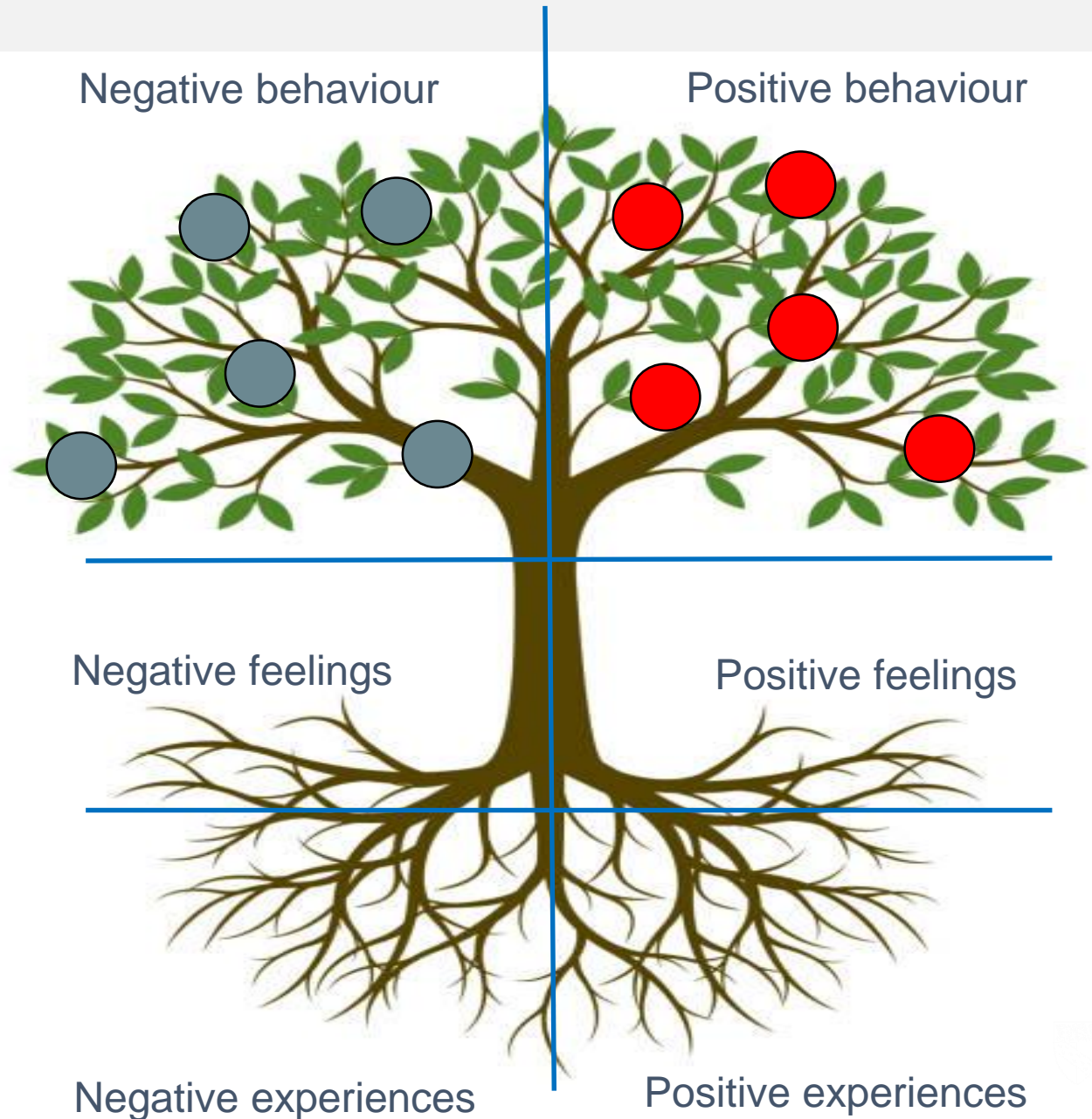
experiences





# Roots and fruits

Think of a child, a young person or a service user who is currently struggling with their behaviour and complete the 'roots & fruits' analysis.



## Negative behaviour

Snatching toys  
Running away  
Biting & scratching  
Refusal

## Positive behaviour

Sharing toys  
Listening to adults  
Kind to others  
Following instructions  
Able to self-regulate

## Negative feelings

Lonely Confused Ignored  
Under threat Sad

## Positive feelings

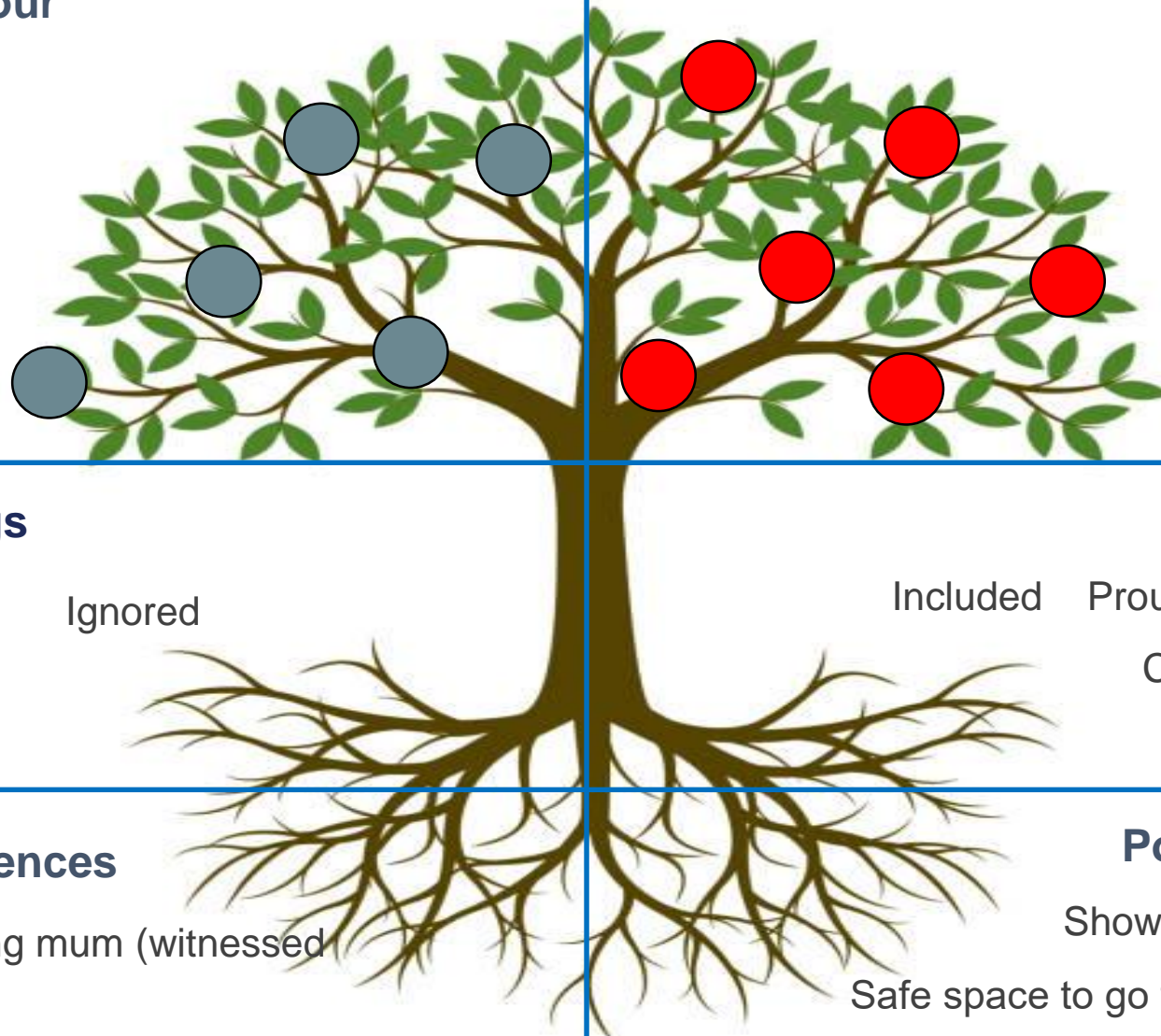
Included Proud Welcomed Safe  
Confident Understood

## Negative experiences

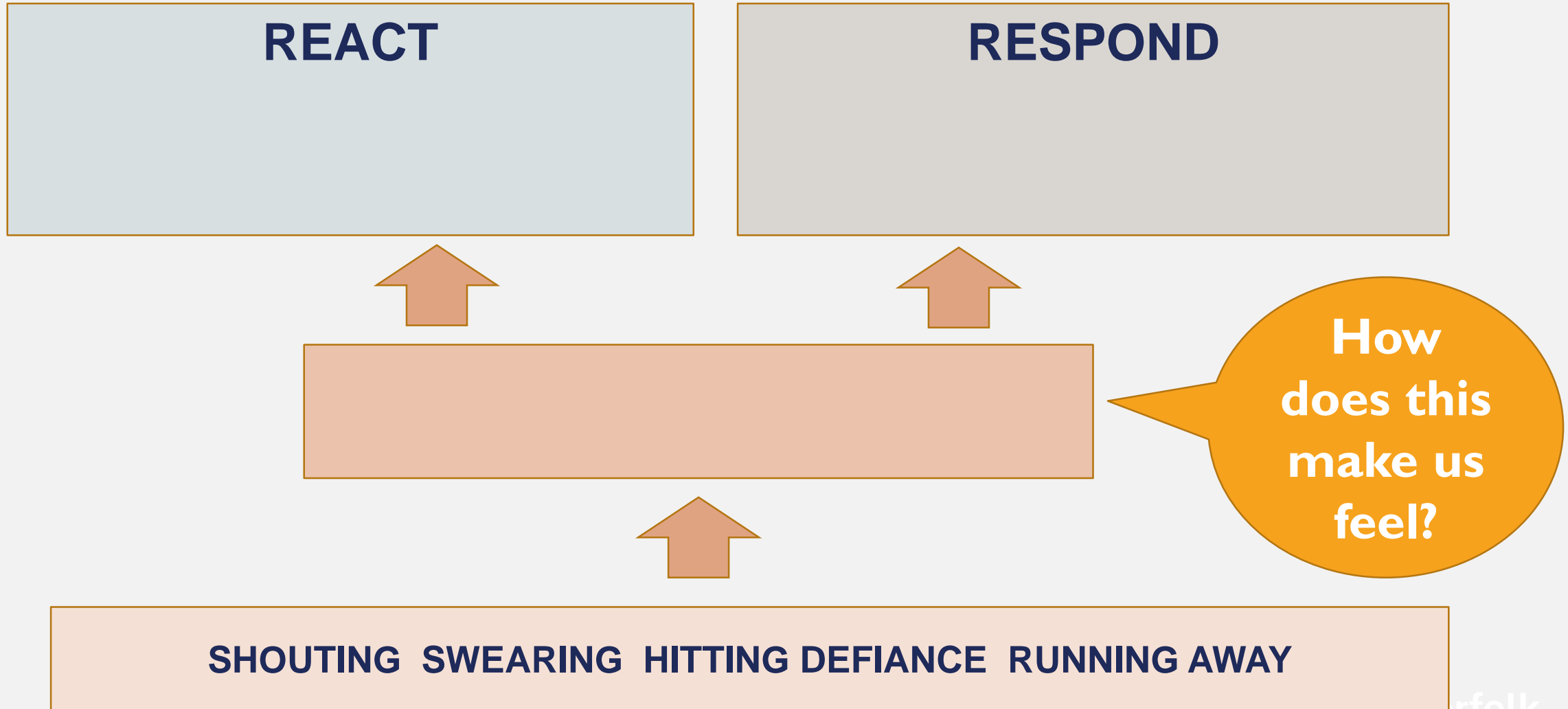
Anxiety when leaving mum (witnessed domestic abuse)  
New sibling New to setting  
Little experience of sharing Poor sleep patterns

## Positive experiences

Shown/taught how to share  
Safe space to go to 'Now & Next'  
Routine established to leave mum  
Adults listen and are patient



# Adults: react vs respond



# React vs respond

## REACT

shout punish improvise  
argue bribe be inconsistent

## RESPOND

use scripts stay calm  
follow the plan be consistent



ANGRY SAD HUMILIATED FRUSTRATED  
DISEMPOWERED CONFUSED

SHOUTING SWEARING HITTING  
DEFIANCE RUNNING AWAY

# Conscious and subconscious behaviour

## **Conscious behaviour:**

Behaviours that are the result of thought or planning.

## **Sub-conscious behaviour:**

Behaviours that are evident without any thought or planning.



# Conscious behaviour: behaviours that we choose

Behaviours that are the result of thought or planning.

## **How does the behaviour serve the individual?**

An individual who uses disruption when faced with a difficult task may choose to shout out continuously if they believe it will serve them by being taken out of the activity.

They may then learn that shouting is an effective strategy to use in other situations where, for example, they are asked to do something they don't want to.



# Subconscious behaviour: behaviours that choose us

Behaviours that are evident without any thought or planning.

## What is causing the anxiety?

An individual who has been exposed to uncomfortable experiences may have the feelings associated with these experiences triggered by an event, sound, smell or touch within your setting. This may lead to a subconscious response and is typically of a 'fight' or 'flight' nature.

Subconscious behaviours can arise from conscious behaviours where the conscious behaviour has become habitual – the 'default' 'go-to' behaviour that has been learned.

Subconscious behaviours may be driven by a diagnosed condition. For example, fidgeting, stimming, tics, swearing, defiance.

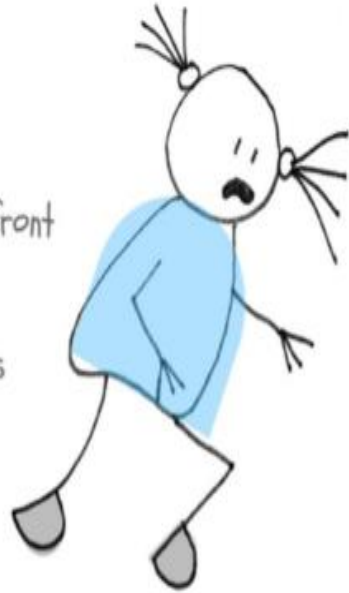




# What Survival Looks Like in School

## What I look like in Flight ...

- × Run away
- × Keeping SUPER busy
- × Not coping in free time
- × Need to be first or at the front
- × Bumping into people
- × Avoiding tasks and activities
- × Baby talk or silly voices
- × Hyperactive, giddy & silly
- × Hiding under tables



## What I look like in Fight ...

- × Hot & bothered
- × Angry & aggressive
- × Controlling
- × Lie or blaming
- × Shouty & argumentative
- × Pushing away friends
- × Demanding
- × Inflexible



## What I look like in Freeze...

- × Not interested, bored
- × Confused, forgetful
- × Talking about something else
- × Hard to move through the task
- × Not listening
- × Staring into space, daydreaming
- × Clumsy





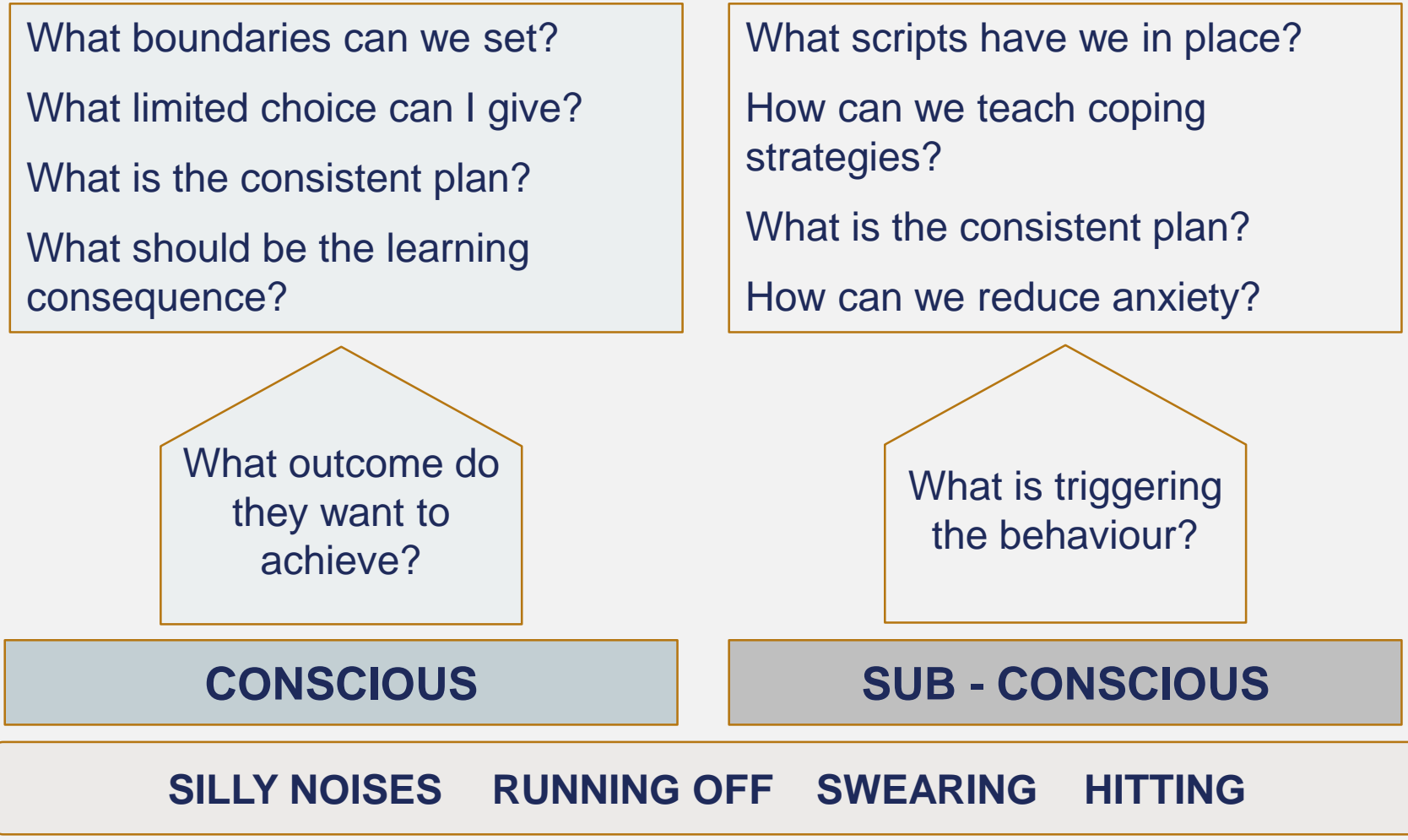
# Conscious and subconscious behaviours: Understanding the difference

It is important to understand the difference between conscious and subconscious behaviours.

This helps prevent a default, which can sometimes happen, to , 'They did that deliberately' and also helps us to consider responses to best manage the behaviour.



# Responding to conscious / subconscious behaviour



# Responding to behaviour



# The power of positive language

*'Words are the main currency of our trade.'*

L. Freeman Dhority

# Language activity: negative vs positive

Negative phrasing  
No choice or open choice  
Empowering behaviour  
Punishments

Positive phrasing  
Limited choice  
Disempowering behaviour  
Consequences



# Negative phrasing

Stop being silly

Don't throw the pen

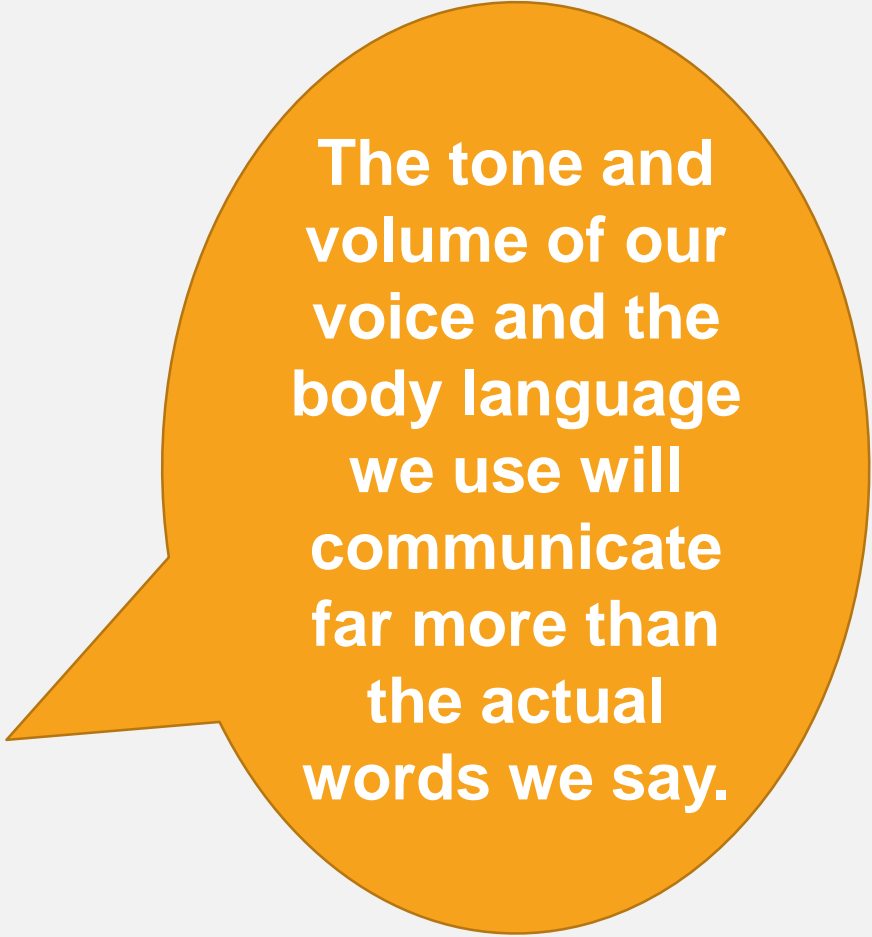
Stop running

Don't talk to me like that

Calm down

I've told you not to do that

Don't shout out the answer



The tone and volume of our voice and the body language we use will communicate far more than the actual words we say.

# Positive phrasing

Sit quietly, thank you

Put the pen on the table

Walk in the corridor

Kind words are spoken here, please use them

Switch the computer off

Take some time in your quiet place

Stay seated in your chair

Hands up if you know the answer

*Please / thank you*

# The problem with 'choices'

## **No choice: (making demands)**

Get in here now!

Get out!

Do as you are told!

Give it to me now!

## **Open choice:**

What do you want to do?

Would you like to go inside?

Would you like to put your coat on?

Who would you like to sit next to?



# Limited choice

We talk here or in the library?

Put the pen on the table or in the box.

I am making a drink; orange or water?

You can sit on your own or with the group.

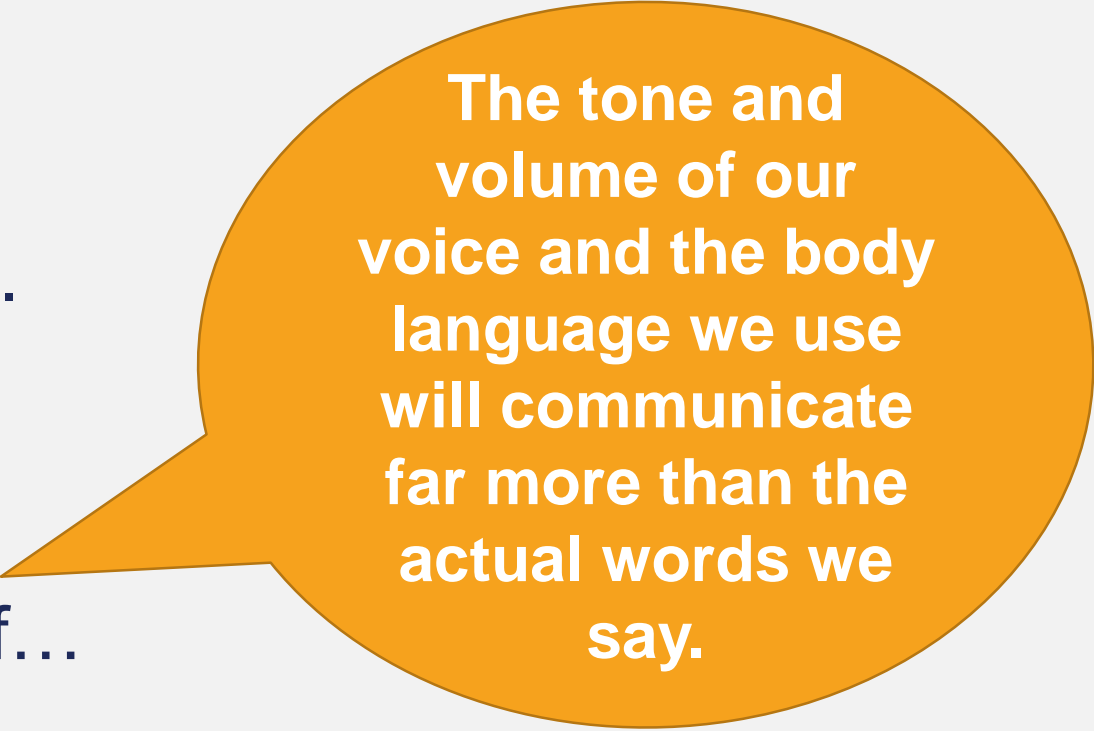
You can start your work with the words or a picture.

Shower or a bath? You choose.

Blue bucket or yellow bucket?

# Empowering the behaviour

Come back here, NOW!  
You are not allowed in there.  
You are beginning to annoy me.  
We are all waiting for you.  
Get down from there.  
Don't you dare swear at me.  
I will let you use the computer if...



The tone and volume of our voice and the body language we use will communicate far more than the actual words we say.

# Disempowering the behaviour

You can listen from there.

Come and find me when you come back.

Come back into the room when you are ready.

That's an interesting idea, thank you for sharing.

I can hear you are passionate about that.

Ask for help if you need it. I'm happy to help you.

# Positive phrasing: Using scripts

*'If we don't address the language we use by default then we risk the greatest inconsistency of all: managing poor behaviour with improvised responses.'*

Paul Dix 2017

# Developing scripts

*‘Words or actions prepared in advance to meet particular events.’*

Urwin & Higgs 2013

Scripts allow an intervention which does not impact on the time you spend with the rest of the group.

A script is a predictable and safe way to say to an individual ‘you own your behaviour’.

Scripts allow the time to remind the individual of a previous example of their ability to self-regulate.

A script removes the need to improvise when faced with challenging behaviour.

# De-escalation script

Individual's name

I can see something has happened

I am here to help

Talk and I will listen

Come with me and...



# De-escalation script for younger children

Oh dear, tell me what happened

I'm here to help you

Use your words (signing / symbols)

Tell me...

Come with me and we can...

Let's go over here and...

# Other language reminders

- “I’m worried...”
- Please and thankyou
- “If...” / “When...” / “Because...”



# **Punishment or Consequence**

# Punishment

Punishment is the authorities imposition of something undesirable or unpleasant upon an individual or group by enforcement, in response to behaviour that an authority deems unacceptable or a violation of some norm.

Dictionary definition



*‘Punishment hardens and numbs. It produces obstinacy, it sharpens the sense of alienation and strengthens the power of resistance.’*

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

*'Why attempt to crush behaviours  
with punishment when you can grow  
better ones with love?'*

Paul Dix 2017

# Consequences

A conclusion derived through logic.

Something that logically or naturally follows from an action.

Dictionary definition



I HATE CLEANING THE RUG,  
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASIER  
TO TAKE MY SHOES OFF.



## **Protective consequence:**

Removal of a freedom to manage harm.

## **Educational consequence:**

The learning, rehearsing or teaching so the freedom can be returned.



# Protective consequences

Increased staff ratio

Limited access to outside space

Escorted in social situations

No availability of minibus/car

Differentiated teaching space

Suspension



# Educational consequences

Completing tasks

Rehearsing expected behaviour

Restorative meetings

Assisting with repairs

Educational opportunities

Conflict resolution / peaceful problem solving

# Reflect, repair and restore



# Reflect, repair and restore

During the incident, the individual's behaviour may be influenced by anger, shame, frustration, disappointment etc.

For 'reflect, repair and restore' to be effective in changing behaviours, it is important to re-visit the experience with an individual who is calm, relaxed and reflective.



# A restorative approach

*'An approach to inappropriate behaviour which puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment.'*

Wright 1999



# More simply, a restorative approach involves

Exploring what happened (tell the story)

Exploring what people were thinking and feeling at the time

Exploring who has been affected and how

Exploring how we can repair relationships

Summarise what we have learnt so we are able to respond differently next time



# Restorative questions

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

How were you/Archie feeling?

How were the rest of the group feeling?

How can we make things better for Archie/you?

What can you do to help to put this right?

How can we make it OK for you to play/use the tools safely?

What could you do differently next time?

What do you think Archie might need?

.

# Reflect, repair, restore activities

Supported thinking book / area

Social stories

Role-play

Restorative conversations

Solution focused approaches

Small group activities

Use signs, symbols to talk about emotions

Complete a 'Roots and Fruits' tree

Actively teach and use 'peaceful problem solving process'

# Three levels of post-incident learning

## 1.The individual.

Educational consequences. Restorative meetings. 'Thinking Book'. Social Stories. PSHE books etc.

## 2.The witnesses.

Endeavour to talk to the peer group when the 'harmer' is not present. Give them scripts. Explain that; 'Ellie is still learning'. Praise them for not joining in. Reward as appropriate. Be aware that witnesses may need support to understand and manage how the behaviour of the 'harmer' has affected them.

## 3.The staff.

Debrief after incidents as a staff group or team. Review plans, construct plans, use Anxiety Maps and Roots & Fruits. Review consequence/reward systems.

