



Sparkle in the Light

Resiliency Enabling Approaches for Children & Young People – REACH Practitioner Training for Schools & Educational Settings

What is REACH?

The REACH Course is a modular learning curriculum, equipping practitioners with the psychological knowledge and skills they require to embed effective trauma informed, resiliency enabling approaches in their schools and settings.

Delivered in six 'bite-size' modules, REACH teaches 100 different learning objectives relating to the key knowledge and skills needed to develop an awareness not only of adversity and trauma, but also of the approaches that are vital in supporting young people to do well, despite their risk factors.

In particular, the course explores the five 'Roots of Resilience' – and numerous associated research-based protective factors - that we can help vulnerable children to tap into, in order to maintain their strength and stability during adverse events, nourishing them from the inside out.

These protective factors are also known as 'positive childhood experiences' (PCEs) that can mitigate the effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and foster the resilience of children affected by adversity. The course teaches simple trauma informed techniques for addressing the often-hidden effects of trauma and toxic stress.

What others have said about REACH:

"Of all the training I've done in recent years, this feels like it could make a real difference...I think you have done a fantastic job of making it as interactive as possible. I am in awe of your ability to keep us all engaged for so long! It's been an excellent course and I was singing your praises to our head this afternoon back in school. She asked me if I would recommend the course for one of our other Teaching Partners (from KS1) and I had no hesitation in giving a resounding YES!" - Teaching Partner

"It has been such a pleasure to be on this course, I can't tell you how much I have enjoyed it. I think this is potentially the most impactful training that I've had over the years - so much food for thought!" - Teaching Partner

"Just wanted to say a massive thank you for the resilience training...it was both amazing and informative...your passion for enabling children and adults shines through....I have learned valuable skills that will help me move forward in helping the most vulnerable children and gain a better understanding of the work I do....if only this could be rolled out to all staff and pupils!" - School Counsellor & ELSA

"I have found the course truly enlightening and really worthwhile. I am really looking forward to sharing my newfound knowledge with my colleagues and helping students in the process." – Teaching Assistant

REACH Course Details

Module One: 'Roots & Wings': Adversity, Stress & its Impact – Why REACH? - This introductory session will enable participants to gain an up-to-date understanding of stressful or adverse life experiences & their impact upon child development. In particular, we will make reference to the pioneering research of Dr Jack Shonkoff, Dr Nadine Burke Harris, Bonnie Benard & Ann Masten. This session will also introduce the rationale for responding to children through the lens of resilience and why resiliency research is essential in informing our approach to vulnerable students.

Module Two: 'The Hidden Wound' - Trauma, Promoting Safety & Emotional Regulation - We will look at the definitions of trauma and the signs and symptoms of developmental trauma. We will then consider the importance of addressing safety needs in children and young people. Participants will explore psychological models for promoting feelings of safety and reducing dysregulation, and practice key trauma informed skills. In particular, we will draw from the seminal research of Dr Bruce Perry, Dr Bessel van der Kolk, Dr Stephen Porges, Dr Dan Hughes, Dr Dan Siegel & Dr Peter Levine.

Module Three: 'Behind the Mask' - Building Trust & Nurturing Relationships - We will consider why it is so important to focus on building trust with vulnerable children & young people. Participants will learn psychological techniques for addressing children's unmet attachment needs, including how to support stable relationships through the use of nurturing relational approaches and attuned interactions. We will refer to the pivotal work of Marjorie Boxall, Marion Bennathan, Heather Geddes, Louise Bombèr and Hilary Kennedy (AVIGuk).

Module Four: 'Super Hero Strengths' - Empowerment & Engagement - In this session, participants will examine cognitive-behavioural, strengths-based approaches based on the influential work of psychologists Martin Seligman & Christopher Peterson, as well as Renee Jain, author of the resiliency programme 'Go Strengths'. Drawing from resilience experts such as Robbie Gilligan and Nan Henderson, we will learn why it is essential to tap into the strengths and interests of disengaged or disaffected students to support more positive behaviour.

Module Five: 'Finding Your Element' – Meaning, Connection & A Sense of Belonging - This session will explore the power of meaning and connection in mitigating exposure to risk. We will examine the ground-breaking work of Johann Hari in relation to the concept of social recovery from addiction. We will also explore a variety of approaches for developing social skills in children, such as 'Circle Time', 'Circle of Friends' and 'Brick Building' ('Lego') group work. We will conclude by practising our own music and movement 'circle'!

Module Six: 'A Monster Calls' – Expressing Emotions, Cross-Cultural Coping Skills & Using the Expressive Arts Therapeutically - In this final session, participants will learn specific techniques for supporting students to deal with feelings based on the important work of John Gottman. The course will conclude by introducing ways to use the expressive arts (e.g. drawing, sand tray, clay, 'Lego', puppets, music, writing, dance, stories etc) safely and effectively to support children and young people therapeutically.