



Reframing the Assessment

A trauma informed assessment will result in a shift in how we view the child, the offending behaviour and the language used. We should carefully consider the language we are using in assessments, reports, plans and with other agencies to describe the child, as this can influence the support and outcomes the child receives.

Traditional Assessment	TrACE Informed Practice
What did you do?	What happened to you?
The child did not engage	The child is not at the developmental stage where they can articulate the problem. The child finds face to face contacts threatening. The trauma the child has experienced has impacted upon their social development.
The child lacks empathy The child lacks remorse	The child has not yet reached the stage where we would expect them to have developed empathy. The child has not had their own experience of being a victim validated.

<p>The child did not accept responsibility</p>	<p>The child has a reduced capacity to act differently.</p> <p>The trauma the child experienced has impacted upon their cognitive functioning and thus they have not yet developed the skills to reflect and have insight.</p>
<p>The child is attention seeking</p>	<p>The child is attachment seeking.</p>
<p>The child is manipulative</p>	<p>The child functions in survival brain.</p>
<p>The child fails to consider the consequences of his/her actions</p>	<p>The trauma the child has experienced has impacted upon his/her cognitive functioning. The child functions in survival mode and is unable to think about the future.</p>
<p>The child has difficulty controlling their temper</p>	<p>The child presents with stress related behaviour. The trauma the child has experienced impacts upon his/her ability to self-regulate.</p>
<p>The child's behaviour is problematic</p>	<p>The child's behaviour is a normal reaction to abnormal circumstances.</p> <p>The child's behaviour is communicating an unmet need.</p>
<p>The child would not provide any explanation for his/her behaviour</p>	<p>The trauma the child experienced has impacted on their cognitive functioning and they have not yet developed skills of reflection and insight.</p>

The child is chaotic	The child has not been provided with a stable base.
The child associates with an anti-social peer group	The child has not had consistent support of an emotionally available adult.
The child is hostile to the intervention process	The child has learned that adults cannot be trusted, and the world is not safe.
The child continues to be challenging	The child has not had opportunity to recover from the trauma they have experienced.
The child has a substance misuse problem	The child uses substances to alleviate feelings of hypervigilance/feelings of anxiety, resulting from the trauma they have experienced.
The child behaviour at school is problematic	The child needs to feel safe before learning is possible.