

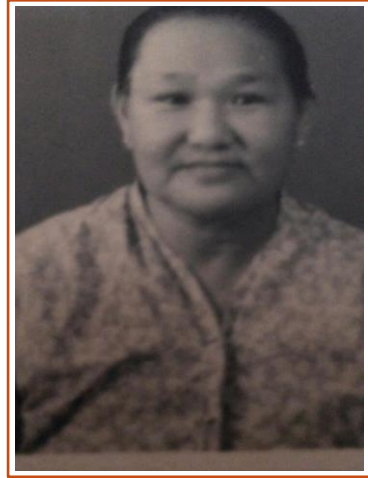
# Trauma Responsive Care Model:

An Aotearoa New Zealand  
Research Informed Practice  
Model For Children who have  
experienced trauma

Presented by: Andrea Greer  
International Childhood Trauma Conference, Melbourne  
2025



## Relationships Matter?



*My grandmother's foster mum*



**Relational  
Neuroplasticity=  
Legacy of hope &  
transformation**



## Research question

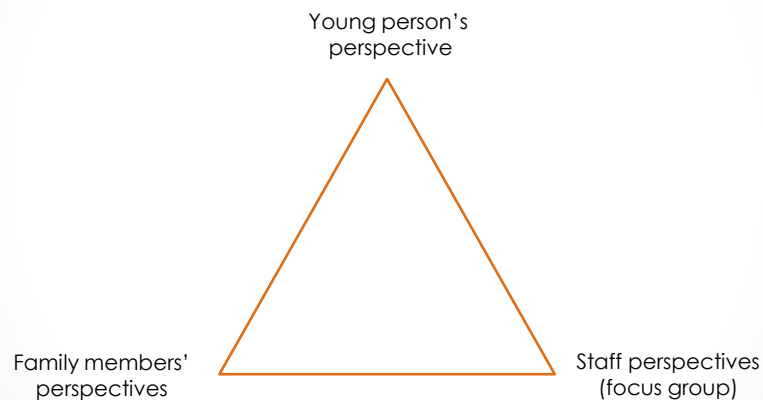
- > Does the quality of relationships with staff have a positive impact on outcomes for children who reside in group home settings?

# Research approach

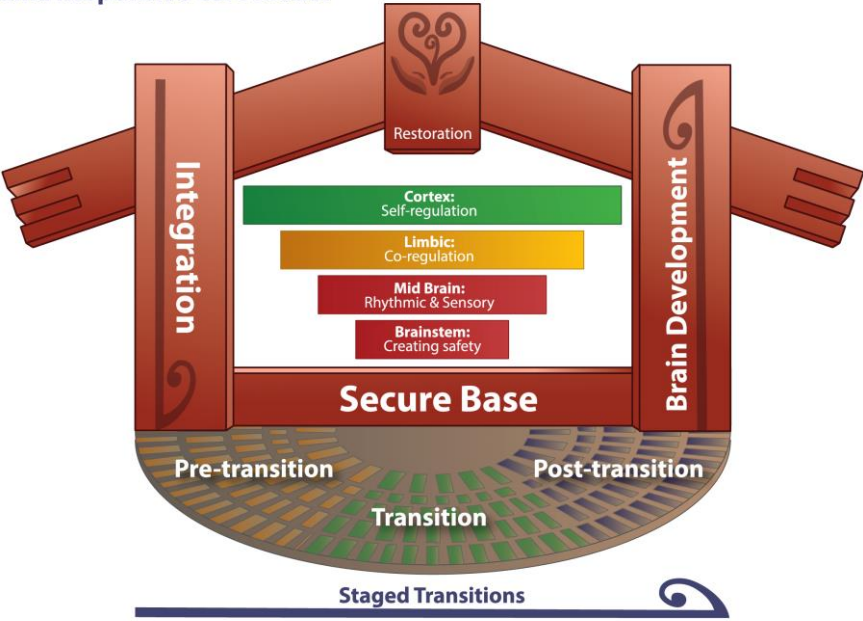
> Practice-based research covering:

- three care and protection supervised group homes
- children's experiences living in these homes
- children's voices

# Data collection



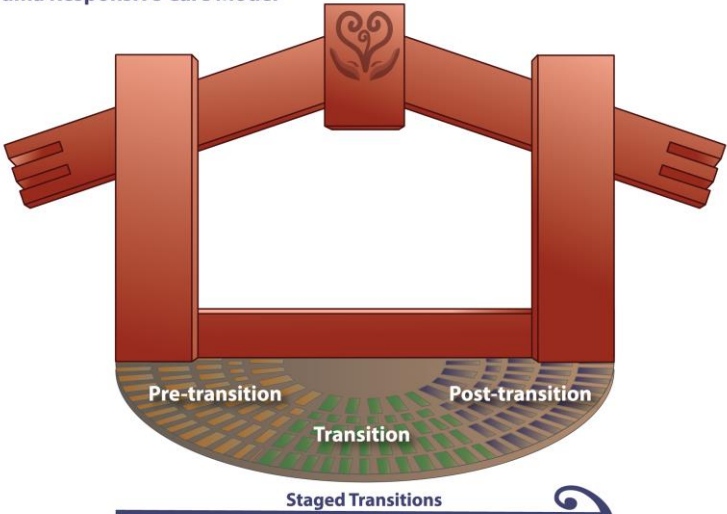
Trauma Responsive Care Model



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Importance of staged transitions

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## Research findings

### > **What the children say:**

- I want to have a say on where I live
- I want to visit the home with someone I trust.

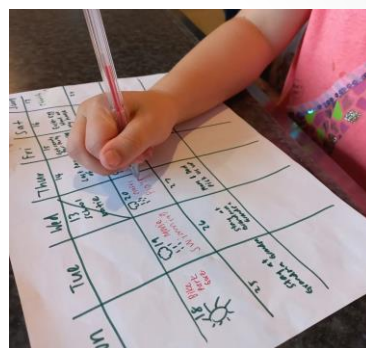
### > **What the literature says:**

- staged entry into the home helps create safety and increases placement success.

## Practical ideas to support transitions



Video introduction

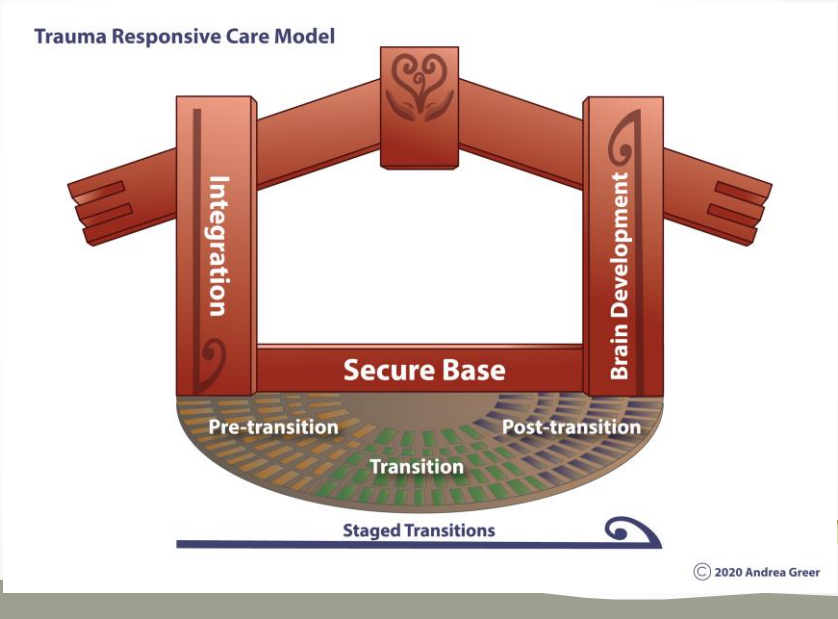


Visual Calendars

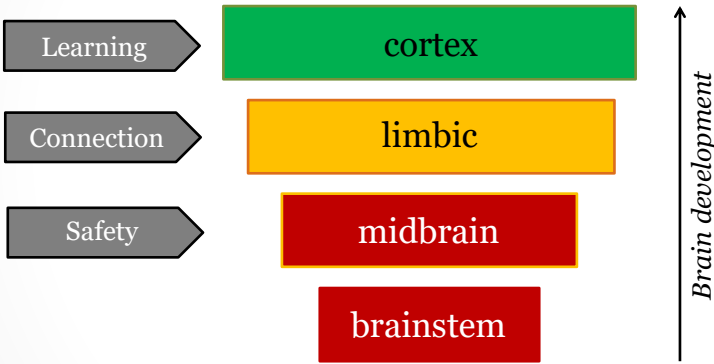
**& Social stories**



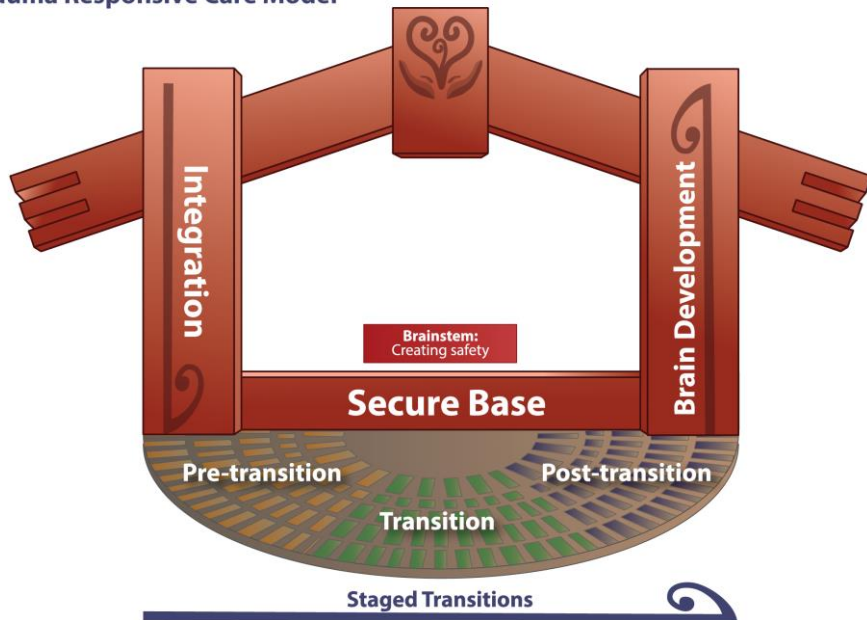
# Be the secure base



## Bottom up approach to creating a trauma responsive practice



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## Research findings

### > What the children say:

- I want to know you care about me
- I like it when you listen and acknowledge my feelings.

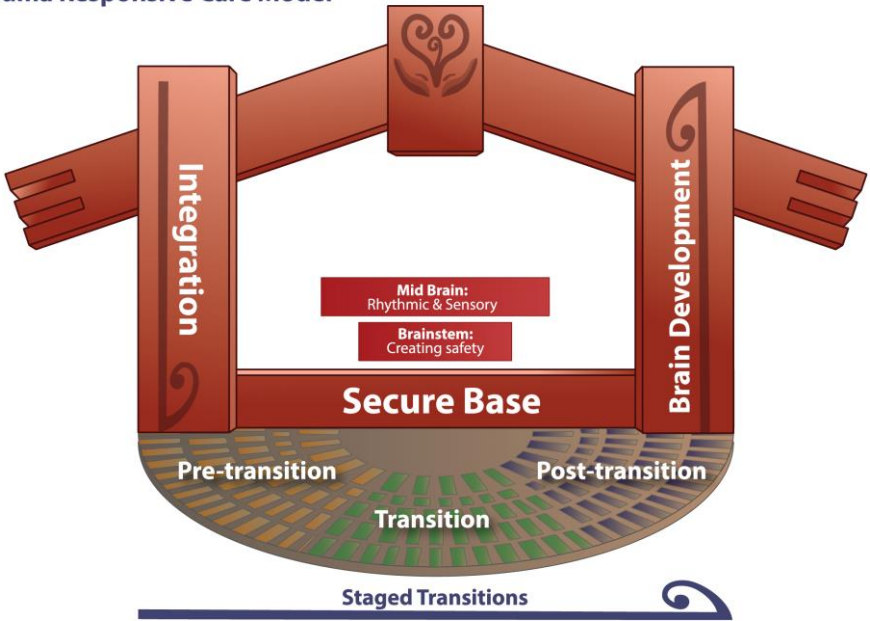
### > What the literature says:

- Our neuroception is constantly scanning for safety or threat cues. Be aware of your non-verbal cues like tone of voice, body posture, facial expressions.





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## Research findings

### > What the children say:

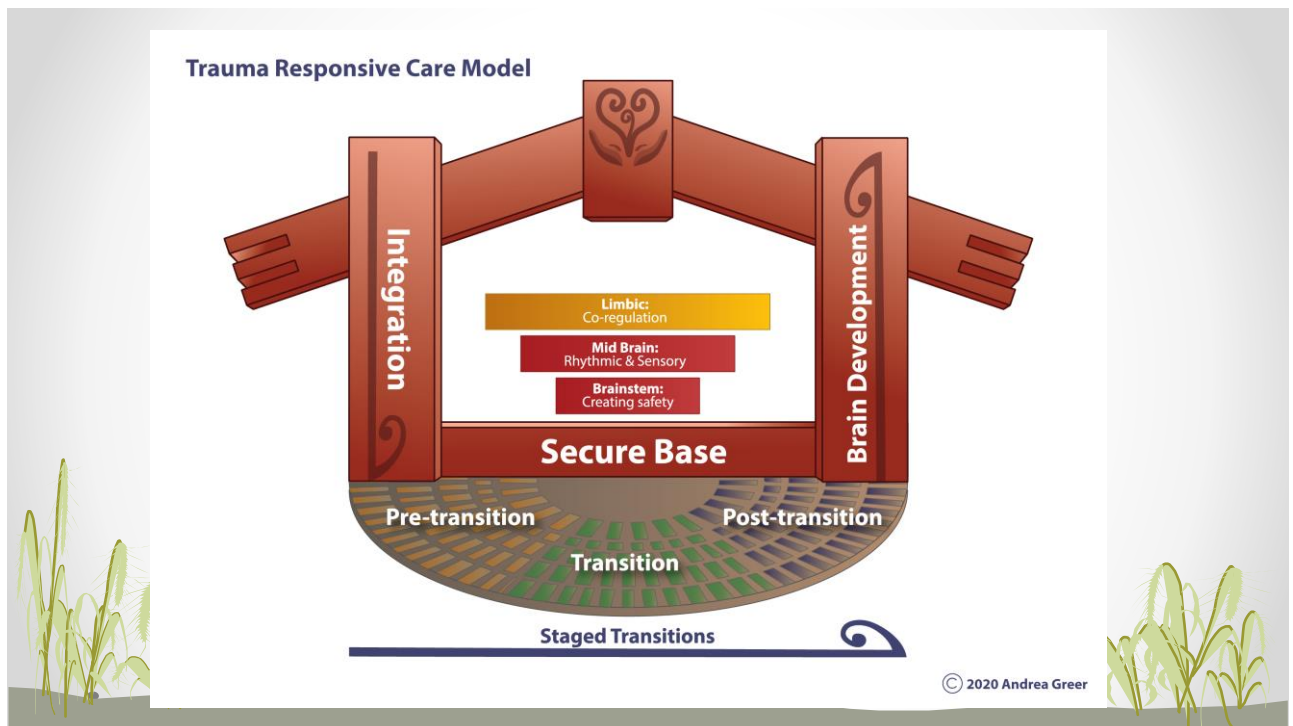
- I want to feel at home
- I want a space to help me with my big feelings

### > What the literature says:

- Trauma is not remembered, it is re-lived. We need to work with the bodily sensations to allow for healing and re-connection with the body.

## Creating a sensory space





## Research findings

### > What the children say:

- I want you to support me when I am having big feelings

### > What the literature says:

- Children need experiences of co-regulation in order to develop self-regulation skills

## Ideas for offering co-regulation

- Pause
- Tune in to yourself then tune into the child
- Breathe together
- Move together
- Validate emotions

*Being with children in their big emotions is not rewarding, it is re-wiring.*

## CO-REGULATION

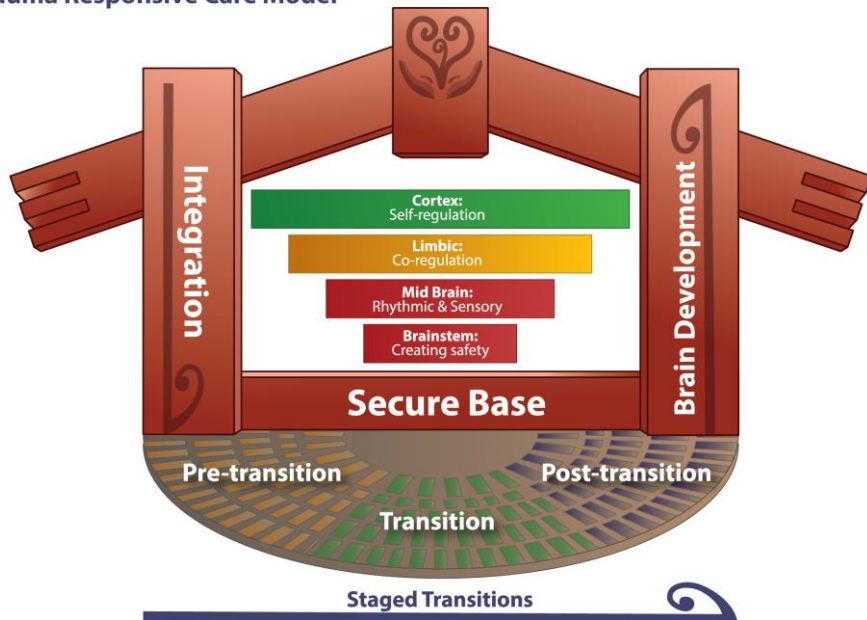
It is completing the stress cycle in the presence of a safe and attuned adult.

This repeated over and over again develops the neural circuits in a child for

## SELF-REGULATION

Andrea Greer,  
Nurturing Relationships

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## Research findings

### > What the children say:

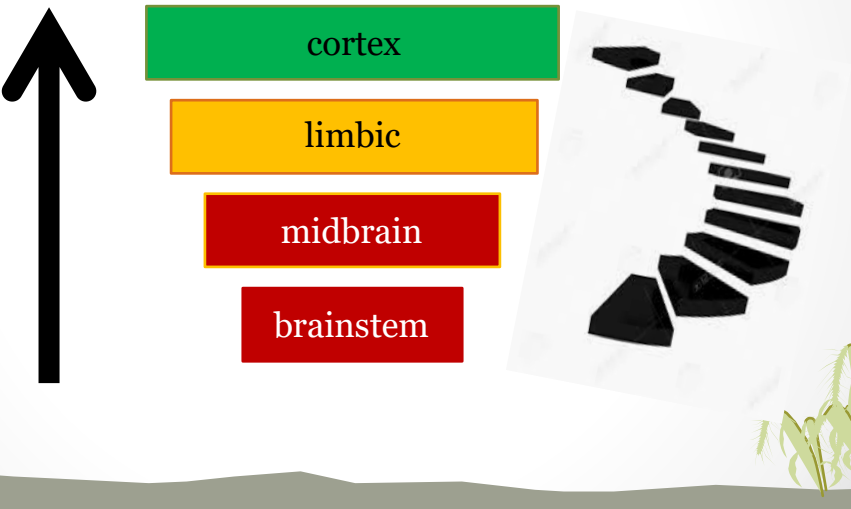
- I want to have a say in what goes in my plan
- I want to set my own goals.

### > What the literature says:

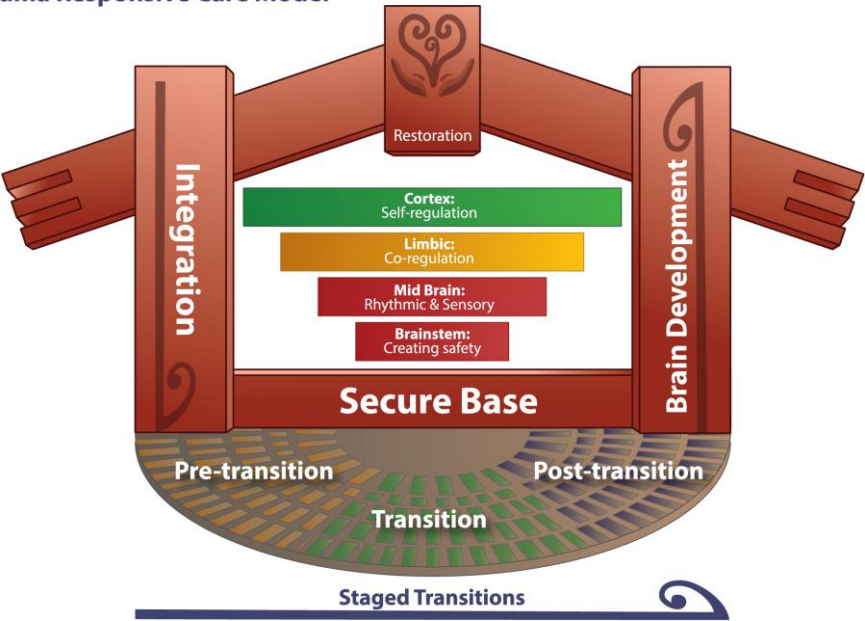
- Practise using the cortex when a child is calm.



Bottom up approach to supporting trauma responsive practice



Trauma Responsive Care Model







Thank you



nurturing  
relationships

Empowered villages transforming lives.  
Our Mokopuna thriving and flourishing.



<https://nurturingrelationships.thinkific.com/>

[andreagreer28@gmail.com](mailto:andreagreer28@gmail.com)