

# Vital CPD webinars on child mental health, child trauma and effective interventions

Presented by Trauma Informed Schools UK and Centre for Child Mental Health

Conversations That Matter: From racial trauma and discrimination in schools and communities, to respecting and celebrating difference and diversity.  
Policy to implementation

Directed and Produced by Trauma Informed Schools UK and Wellbeing Education

Webinar  
Helping Children Heal from Painful Life Experiences  
Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

Webinar  
Attachment Play: the science, psychology and a wealth of interventions for one to one sessions in schools (aged 4 to 11)  
Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

Webinar  
Key Causes of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Difficulties  
Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

Webinar  
Working with children who've been sexually abused by a member of their own family. Rising up from tangled recovery.  
By Dr Valerie Sinason, child psychiatrist

Whole school implementation of trauma informed practice to promote mentally healthy and safe environments for all

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CCMH THE CENTRE FOR CHILD MENTAL HEALTH

# Section one: Working with traumatised children and young people



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

Please note that this webinar includes some film footage that viewers may find distressing.

This webinar is essential viewing for anyone working or living with children or young people who have experienced abuse or neglect. Firstly, Dr Sunderland will define the concept of developmental trauma. She will then explore how developmental trauma impacts on the brain, which without relational interventions, can leave a whole raft of blocks to quality of life – e.g. compromised reward neurochemical and memory-processing systems in the brain, an overactive threat response system, poor emotional regulation, blocked trust, seeing relationships as being about power and control, low self-esteem, re-victimisation as a defence against unbearable pain.

Dr Sunderland will then discuss how to enable child professionals, foster carers, adoptive parents and school staff to be aware of the very particular unmet emotional needs in children who have experienced abuse or neglect. She will also explore how emotionally available adults can gain the trust of these vulnerable children, responding in ways that heal in times of intense emotion and to behaviours that challenge. Dr Sunderland will then discuss how to meet those needs, including key relational interventions that aid healing and recovery and support the process of repair in the brain (known as neuroplasticity and neurogenesis).



**Presenter: Dr Dan Hughes (expert clinician, prolific writer, and founder of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy).**

In this webinar, Dan demonstrates his amazing model of relating to children and young people, called PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy). PACE brings a wonderful sense of psychological safety for even the most defended of children, meaning that profound human connection that heals can become a reality.

For the past 20 years, Dr Hughes has specialised in working with children and young people who have considerable difficulty establishing and maintaining good relationships, due to the level of betrayal, trauma, abuse and neglect they have suffered. In the webinar he will demonstrate how PACE can bring transformational change to so many of these children, as well as empowering their carers to be emotionally available and to stay regulated under stress.

PACE is informed by strategic and structural family therapy, Ericksonian hypnotherapy, psychodynamic principles, psychodrama, interventions congruent with Theraplay, and narrative work. In this webinar Dan will use a wealth of actual case examples to demonstrate PACE.



**Presenter: Dr Valerie Sinason**

In this webinar, Dr Sinason talks about working with children who have experienced incest, which she defines as '*the diminishing of a child through toxic violation and hurt, by an adult who is supposed to be caring for them.*'

Through moving case material, Dr Sinason addresses the agonising inner conflicts of those who have suffered in this way. She addresses the central dilemma: how can they rise up from 'the tangled roots' when they love the person who is also hurting/raping them?

It is easy for professionals who work with these children to focus on the cruelty and the betrayal, with many believing they are helping 'rescue' this child from a 'bad offender'. In so doing they so often unwittingly silence and shame the child who loves his or her abuser, an extremely common occurrence. Dr Sinason will discuss how too many children go through a Section 47 enquiry with no one ever being curious as to what they feel towards the person who hurt them or helping them to process the ambivalence.

Dr Sinason also addresses a phenomenon she has seen so many times in her work: '*The child understands the vulnerability and splits in the toxic parent more than most of the professionals involved. The child is the professor of the disturbance in the family.*' Delegates will also learn about Fairbairn's (psychoanalyst) concept of the 'moral defence', namely, '*This is only happening to me because I am bad.*' Dr Sinason will address what to do/say when children take the burden of their parent's abuse onto themselves – to allow a child to survive and to keep their love for their parent alive.

## Section one: Working with traumatised children and young people



**Webinar**  
**Blocked Trust and Blocked Care**  
Connecting with highly defended children/ teenagers and supporting their parents/carers.

**Presenter:** Dr Dan Hughes  
In conversation with Dr Margot Sunderland and their team

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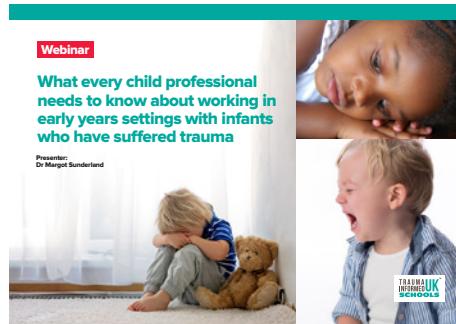
### Presenter: Dr Dan Hughes

In this webinar, Dr Hughes addresses how to relate to a child or young person who doesn't trust anyone. He will explore how to enable them to make that essential shift from avoidant, anxious or disorganized attachment to secure attachment.

*Blocked trust* results when children and young people have been catastrophically let down, hurt and betrayed by the people who are supposed to care for them. As a result, some will just feel emotionally numb. Some will re-victimise, treating others as they themselves have been treated. Others will retreat from the social world, relating to technology rather than people. Sadly, blocked trust often leads to these children being intensely disliked so receiving the responses of hate and rejection they know so well.

Dr Hughes will offer theory, practice and moving case material to show how to reach out and connect with these children and young people.

*Blocked care* happens when the parent or carer no longer enjoys being with a child with blocked trust, due to just too many rejections, angry and/or indifferent exchanges. As a result, their brain systems responsible for feelings of nurturance and care shut down, so they no longer seek out lovely connection with the child but instead respond out of duty. Viewing their child's behaviours as bad or selfish, as well as seeing themselves as parenting failures. With moving illustration, Dr Hughes will discuss how to help parents to re-ignite their love, affection and care using the vital healing process of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy).



**Webinar**  
**What every child professional needs to know about working in early years settings with infants who have suffered trauma**

**Presenter:** Dr Margot Sunderland

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### Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

This webinar is a must for anyone who works in early years settings. It addresses the latest neuroscience and psychology on the impact of trauma on infants, with a focus on presenting symptoms, prevention, and intervention.

The presenter first explores *traumas of omission*. These happen when the infant has missed out on vital relational experiences key for language development, learning and the capacity to love in peace. It also refers to a lack of sufficient caring comforting and playful interactions which research shows establish stress-regulatory systems in the brain – key for the capacity to feel calm and at ease and for social joy and an energised engagement in the world. She then explores *traumas of commission* including separation traumas, parental still face and misattunement, parental unprocessed trauma, intrusive parenting, shaming discipline, witnessing or being a victim of violence. With all of this, there is central focus on both evidence-based prevention and intervention. The presenter will discuss how the latter can be highly successful due to the brain's neuroplasticity at this young age.

Finally, the presentation is designed to empower practitioners to support parents who are struggling to connect with their infant /s and parents who want to parent differently to how they were parented.



**Webinar**  
**How to interrupt the trajectory from ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) to long term mental and physical ill-health, personal and societal misery**

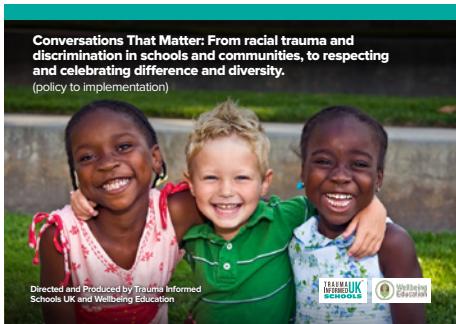
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### Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

This webinar takes adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) as its central theme. Dr Sunderland will explore the impact on quality of life, when people suffer multiple ACEs with no protective factors (known as social buffering) in their lives. Then, most importantly, Dr Sunderland discusses the wealth of research showing how one emotionally available adult (vital protective factor) can interrupt the trajectory from ACEs to long term physical and mental illness, early death and for some, involvement in the criminal justice system. She addresses exactly what an emotionally available adult has to do, to say and how to be on a consistent basis in order to be truly emotionally available.

The webinar includes moving case studies and specific practical interventions to support the recovery process of children and young people who have known the shock and agony of traumatic life experiences.

## Section two: Practical interventions, tools and techniques for working with vulnerable children and young people



**Presenters:** Dexter Dias QC (prominent human rights lawyer – crimes against humanity, terrorism, war crimes, human trafficking, modern slavery, and genocide); Expert trainers – psychotherapists, Senior Educators in equality, diversity, and racial trauma, as well as experts by lived experience

The aim of the webinar is to raise awareness of issues related to racial trauma, inequality, intersectionality, discrimination, power, positioning and social injustice. The objective is to support attendees to promote anti-discriminatory practice and implement anti-oppressive practice in their schools and organisations and to ensure that all staff are truly trauma-informed and culturally competent.

The webinar brings together a range of deeply moving voices to reflect and articulate in dialogue about the complexities relating to structural inequalities, institutional racism, and systemic discrimination. The presenters also discuss their own experiences of racial trauma when they were schoolchildren, and what schools and organisations can do differently. Additionally voices of children and young people who themselves have suffered repeated microaggressions talk about the impact these have had on their lives. Additionally, Dexter Dias QC (prominent Human Rights lawyer) discusses the origins, history and psychology of racism including the horrific macro-aggressions he has dealt with in the courts. He then discusses prevention and intervention.

Overall, the webinar brings awareness in ways that will touch the hearts and minds, inspiring action for social change, with a wealth of ways of doing so.



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

Without organising painful memories into narrative form, too many children and young people are held hostage to frightening emotions and debilitating mental health issues, often for years and sometimes for life. It really doesn't have to be this way. This presentation is about how we can support children and young people to tell their story about key events in their life, to someone trained in active listening. The webinar will focus on the power of using images and art media as a hugely effective and psychologically protective way of collaborative sense-making.

Case material will be used throughout to illustrate the healing power of sandplay art, emotion cards and big empathy drawings as communicative tools. The interventions discussed are all evidence-based, namely mentalisation-based treatment (MBT) (Peter Fonagy), emotion-focused counselling (EFC) (Leslie Greenberg), Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) (Dan Hughes), psychological formulation (British Psychological Society, Clinical Psychology Division).



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

This webinar is all about optimising the skill set of the emotionally available adult, through active listening skills and creative interventions, key to the healing process.

Many children and young people are desperate to be listened to and to talk to someone about painful events that have happened to them. They are also very discerning. They seek out adults who are naturally 'talkable to'. So, in the webinar, Dr Sunderland will address in detail how to become 'talkable to', what brings connection with a child/young person, and what to avoid ensuring against misattunement and misconnection.

In attending you'll also learn the difference between active listening and passive listening, how to express empathy, and you'll hear how to make creative interventions when appropriate, using puppets, sandplay, big empathy drawings, therapeutic stories. These are all designed to empower children and young people to safely reflect on key events in their lives and to think psychologically a key skill in being able to live life well.

**Webinar**  
**Using arts and imagery in therapeutic conversations with vulnerable children**  
(poetry, music, sandplay, art, sensory play, puppetry and emotion cards)

Presenters: Margot Sunderland, Ellie Baker, Sonya Anjari and Tracy Godfroy

**Presenters:** Ellie Baker, Sonya Anjari, Tracy Godfroy, Margot Sunderland

This webinar, presented by four senior child and adolescent psychotherapists, offers a wealth of creative ideas and interventions to support work with vulnerable children. The presenters will demonstrate how the use of images and the arts are powerful communicative tools. Saying to a child 'Can you show me?' rather than 'Can you tell me?' brings psychological safety as well as ease of expression, when everyday words so often do not do justice to what children want to say. Literal words can misrepresent and underplay, and frequently offer only approximations to any lived experience. With the use of symbols and images, children can stand back and reflect instead of simply reacting.

So, presenters will explore many ways that children and young people can be enabled to share what they want to talk about, what they need witnessed, and what needs to be grieved and protested about, as well as what needs to be delighted in, laughed about and savoured. Without help to talk about key life events, all too often, children are left simply reacting, with all manner of fallout in terms of behaviours that challenge, physical complaints, learning difficulties and mental health problems. It doesn't have to be this way. Research shows that with a trained practitioner, the act of collaborative sense-making is highly preventative of long-term mental and physical ill-health. The webinar aims to demonstrate the power of this.

**Webinar**  
**Helping Children Heal from Painful Life Experiences**  
Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

**Presenter:** Dr Margot Sunderland

This webinar is all about helping children recover from painful life events that were not made sense of and worked through at the time. When this vital processing doesn't happen, children are held back with fall out in terms of both physical and mental health. Evidence-based research will be discussed to identify what needs to happen in a child's relationship with a trusted adult in order for that child to heal from painful life experiences.

Specific focus will be given to practical evidence-based interventions to help children heal. These include active listening techniques, helping the child to know what they are feeling, how to support them to safely experience and think about the core feelings underneath their defences, how to tell the story of their painful life events, how to help them make sense of what happened and vitally how to provide them with ongoing corrective emotional experience that leads to memory re-consolidation.

The webinar is enriched throughout with moving film footage and case material, designed to empower delegates to feel confident – to relate to children and young people in ways that alleviate their distress long term.

**Webinar**  
**Attachment: What Every Teacher and Child Professional Needs to Know**  
Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

**Presenter:** Dr Margot Sunderland

This webinar explores the neuroscience and psychology of attachment, and why it matters that all professionals who work with children are thoroughly grounded in this knowledge for prevention of mental ill-health and intervention. Bowlby didn't have the neuroscience and psychological research to support his profound model. We do now. So, this webinar is underpinned by over a hundred cutting-edge research papers on attachment (all available at the back of the webinar booklet).

The webinar focuses specifically on how securely attached children develop effective stress-regulatory systems in the brain and body that enable them to emotionally regulate well. With insecure attachment, children suppress or repress their feelings, so stress-regulatory systems are not established. This leaves them in chronic stress states, with all the fallout of mental/physical ill-health symptoms now and in later life. That said, with an emotionally available adult, it is never too late for a child or adult to move from insecure to secure attachment and in so doing establish effective stress-regulatory systems.

With powerful film footage, Dr Sunderland will also unpack the emotional responsiveness needed to ensure secure attachment and how professionals who work with children can provide this or support parents to do so.

Finally, Bowlby's term 'internal working model' will be explored in light of the fact that professionals working with children can bring such positive change to a child or young person's negative views about self, others and the world.

# Section three: Working with parents and the impact of parental mental health on child mental health



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

The webinar is a vital resource for child professionals, and for parents who want to support their children to flourish. It will empower attendees with a wealth of practical ideas, tools, and techniques to support a child's communication skills and social, emotional and cognitive development.

With delightfully engaging adult-child footage throughout (of children aged from 3 months to 12 years), the webinar demonstrates many specific practical interventions on how to be and what to say to engage infants and children in attachment play, proven to develop both mind and brain and to enhance confidence, social skills, language and learning. The underpinning neuroscientific and psychological evidence of benefits for brain/body/mind and long-term mental health, is explained throughout (fully referenced).



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

This webinar is specifically designed for parenting practitioners and people working directly with parents in schools or organisations. It offers a wealth of hands-on tools, techniques and interventions to support optimum parent-child relationships.

When parents have not been consistently parented themselves with empathy, attunement and playfulness, why should they know how to parent in this way with their own children? Yet when this lived experience so vital for child wellbeing is missing, habitual negative ways of relating can all too easily set in, resulting in parents and children having an entirely preventable miserable time together, often for years. But with vital practical knowledge about the art and science of relational interactions, it's never too late to change the direction of a parent-child relationship into wellbeing for both parties.

Dr Sunderland will demonstrate how to stay connected in the difficult times, how to stay regulated in the face of behaviours that challenge, how to give boundaries in a non-shaming way, how to connect with social joy, and how to relate in ways that develop children's emotional and social intelligence. The webinar is illustrated throughout with film footage of effective relational interventions between parents, children, and young people. The webinar is also informed by over 800 research studies (neuroscience and psychology) on the long-term impact, for better or worse, of parent-child interactions on the child's developing mind and brain.



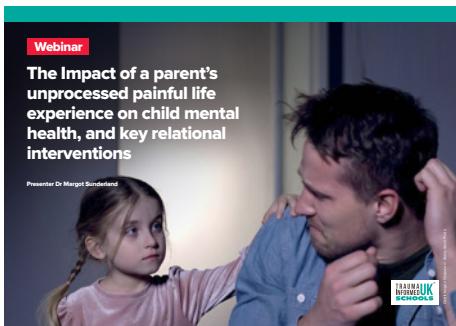
**Presenter: Dr Dan Hughes**

If you are working to support parents in a school or other setting, this webinar will give you a wealth of skills that you can pass on to parents in terms of lovely ways to be with a child/young person which bring meaningful connection, and in the difficult times, how to be and '*the words to say it*'. Dan beautifully models empathically attuned responses in the face of common stressful parent-child interactions and challenging behaviours, when a parent's first instinct may be to move into anger and control.

The webinar is designed to teach practitioners how to help parents to develop the art of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy) as a consistent mode of relating. This can be so effective in enabling a child or young person to move from insecure to secure attachment. This doesn't mean perfect parenting as it doesn't exist, but rather supporting parents in the relational art of repairing both attachment ruptures and moments of misconnection.

Dan Hughes will also discuss how to support parents to create a family atmosphere which is calm and enriching for all, as opposed to one repeatedly blighted with stress, arguments, people being in separate rooms/on their devices or in states of cold withdrawal.

# Section four: Mental health, psychiatric diagnoses and medication



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

*'The parent cannot keep their child from the truth, only from the verbalisation of that truth.'* (Armstrong-Perlman 1998)

A parent's unaddressed and unprocessed painful life experience can be a major contributory factor in child mental health issues. This webinar will also explore exactly how a child can be affected by a parent who:

- has mental health problems
- uses power over interactions (even if he or she is warm and kind at other times)
- doesn't respond to the child's feelings/ crying
- repeatedly misattunes when the child is developing a self.

The webinar will also challenge genetic fundamentalism, for example, '*Breast cancer runs in the family*' – showing how it is the transfer of toxic stress (epigenetics) not genes themselves that can result in the intergenerational transfer of particular mental and/or physical illness.

This webinar is not about criticising parents, but instead will give both professionals and parents a real insight into how children can be affected by the 'atmosphere' of the parent, and most importantly how to support parents with evidence-based prevention and intervention. Actual parent-child relationships will be referred to throughout, meaning the webinar will move hearts as well as minds.



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

Many courses on child mental health have a key underlying message, namely, to spot the symptom and refer on. For anyone working with vulnerable children, this is entirely inadequate as both an intervention and a knowledge base. With such simplistic thinking about the human mind, brain and the process of healing and recovery, we will fail far too many children leaving them with misdiagnosis or on medication they don't need, proven to be damaging to developing brains, minds, and bodies. If mental health leads, pastoral teams, child psychologists, and emotionally available adults are going to work effectively with vulnerable children, they need to know a great deal more about mental health.

So, this webinar covers key knowledge about the history of psychiatry which provides vital context for current-day mental health interventions and treatment, including understanding of psychiatric diagnoses, and the explosive birth of psychopharmacology. Knowing all this, brings essential understanding and key competencies to the work of any child mental health professional. The webinar also covers what child professionals need to know about current concerns at the heart of the mental health profession today including the stigma of psychiatric labels, their lack of scientific validity and diagnostic inflation.

Overall, the webinar aims to replace a feeling of pseudo-competency with competency for child mental health practitioners when reflecting on mental health problems, causes and interventions.



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

In the press and on social media, so much is written about mental ill-health and its symptoms but remarkably little is written on its causes. In some circles, myths abound: '*It's faulty genes*' or '*It's a biochemical imbalance in the brain*.' There is no scientific evidence for these opinions. In fact, all those who have done their neuroscience homework no longer adhere to genetic fundamentalism, knowing that genes can be turned off or on by life experience (a mechanism known as epigenetics).

Dr Sunderland will address the evidence for one of the commonest causes for mental ill-health, namely unresolved traumatic experience. In light of this, she will discuss the mass movement away from the medical/disease model of mental ill-health to a trauma-informed model. This means seeing people with problems rather than patients with illnesses.

Dr Sunderland will also discuss other key contributory causes of mental health problems including early life stress, living with a parent with mental health issues, stress-inducing parenting choices. Most importantly, she will address prevention as well as intervention. Finally, she will explore two established frameworks for making sense of mental health problems and for recovery, namely Psychological Formulation and The Power Threat Meaning Framework (British Psychological Society, Clinical Psychology Division). Through moving case material, she will demonstrate how these can be applied to creative art interventions with children.

## Section four: Mental health, psychiatric diagnoses and medication

**Webinar**  
What every child mental health professional needs to know about giving psychiatric drugs to children and young people  
Presenter Dr Margot Sunderland  
Director of Education and Training Centre for Child Mental Health London  
TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOLS CCMH & CBT

### Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

Every child mental health professional needs to know about the effects and side effects of psychiatric drugs administered to vulnerable children and young people. In this webinar, particular focus will be given to the use of psychostimulants such as methylphenidate for ADHD, antipsychotics for teenagers diagnosed with bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, teenage psychosis, and then antidepressants given to children and young people who are suffering from depression and/or anxiety. (At the moment in the UK there are over 200,000 children aged 5 to 16, who are taking anti-depressants.)

Parents are often told, '*Well there are only two choices, leave your child behaving/feeling this way or take medication.*' This is so often not the case and relational options are not considered. The presenter will explore other non-medical interventions that can be more effective than prescribed psychiatric drugs without the side effects. Audio and film footage of teenagers talking about what it is like to take these drugs is included.

**Webinar**  
The Muddle between Trauma and Psychiatric Diagnosis (ADHD, ASD, Bipolar, Borderline, Anxiety and Depressive Disorders)  
Presenter Dr Margot Sunderland  
TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOLS CCMH & CBT

### Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

Many children and young people who have suffered traumatic life experience are given a psychiatric label and sometimes medication without anyone ever asking what has happened to them in their life or hearing their story. Being wrongly diagnosed then often results in yet more suffering for the child as they now have a label that is incorrect and are left to live with the fallout from their trauma without appropriate intervention to help them heal.

In this webinar, Dr Sunderland will look at how easy it can be to mistake the behavioural, relational and emotional manifestations of trauma with one or more of the following: ADHD, ASD, Bipolar, Borderline, Anxiety or Depressive Disorder. Very moving case material will be used to illustrate when such a misdiagnosis has taken place and how it could have been avoided.

Dr Sunderland will also speak of the allure of giving children a diagnosis as it's easy to 'spot symptoms' but it fails to look at the wider social context of children's lives and the social causes of emotional distress. She will explore how it is all too easy to end up thinking about disorders rather than thinking about how children may have been betrayed, abused, neglected, terrified, or suffered traumatic grief.

**Webinar**  
Trauma Informed Alternatives to Psychiatric Diagnosis: Hearing People's Stories  
Presenter Dr Lucy Johnstone  
Key author The Power Threat Meaning Framework  
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### Presenter: Dr Lucy Johnstone (British Psychological Society, Clinical Psychology Division)

This webinar is a must for anyone who works in the helping or teaching professions, and, more generally, for anyone who cares deeply about child and adult mental health and the alleviation of human suffering. Watching the webinar will bring attendees up to date with current alternatives to psychiatric diagnosis when helping people in ongoing emotional distress.

Dr Johnstone will explore the appeal of psychiatric diagnosis for some people whilst presenting concerns about the medicalising of distress – about seeing *patients with illnesses* rather than people with problems. Additionally, Dr Johnstone will focus on how we can help people who have been stuck in the psychiatric system for years; with an endless cycle of medication and diagnosis and no one ever hearing their story.

As an alternative to psychiatric diagnosis, Dr Johnstone presents the British Psychological Society's (Clinical Psychology Division) Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF) acclaimed by psychiatrists and psychologists internationally. This trauma-informed model shows how, given the person's traumatic past, and the meaning they gave to the bad things that happened, their mental health issues make perfect sense. Dr Johnstone will describe how PTMF is a superb model when working relationally with people, backed by a mass of evidence-based research.

There will also be a focus on the need to be honest with people about what medication can and cannot do, and the impact on mind, brain, and body, with specific reference to the use of psychiatric drugs with children and young people.

## Section four: Mental health, psychiatric diagnoses and medication



Webinar

**Meeting the emotional needs of young people in schools who feel depressed, anxious and worthless**



Webinar

**Meeting the emotional needs of young people in schools who feel angry, unmotivated and alienated from schoolwork**



### Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

Dr Sunderland addresses the key causes of depression and low self-esteem in young people including the central role of unmet emotional needs, as described by Maslow. Dr Sunderland will explore how schools and other settings can meet the needs of young people, for psychological safety, belonging, connectedness, self-worth and finding purpose and meaning. This will be discussed through the lens of the latest neuroscience and psychological research as relevant to the mental health of young people. Most importantly, Dr Sunderland explores the underlying causes of why so many young people want to die and how settings can implement a psychologically informed suicide prevention policy, so no young person is left suffering an agonising state of emotional distress.

Secondly, Dr Sunderland explores how to support young people who suffer from anxiety – again by addressing underlying causes through trauma informed interventions, rather than focusing solely on behavioural or cognitive interventions that often don't work over-time. The vital role of psychoeducation for young people as a protective factor against depression and anxiety will also be explored.

### Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

Dr Sunderland will explore what schools can do to help vulnerable young people who are unmotivated and alienated from school and schoolwork, to re-engage with life and learning and enjoy fulfilling non-power-based relationships. She will discuss ways that schools can prevent disaffection and for some, the 'school to prison pipeline' by addressing young people's unmet emotional needs, enabling them to move from blocked trust to trust, and to form secure attachments with adults at school.

Additionally, Dr Sunderland will address how to support young people who suffer from lethargy, boredom, and hopelessness. She will discuss the neuroscience of the brain's SEEKING system (Panksepp and Biven 2012), a system responsible for energised engagement in life, and how easily this system can be blocked by emotional pain, fear and/or un-mourned grief. She then offers interventions designed to unblock the SEEKING system.

Finally, Dr Sunderland addresses how to relate to young people locked in anger, so that they feel connected with, rather than vilified and rejected. She explores the key reasons why, for some young people, persistent anger is a lifeline in a life of so much hurt and shame, but how emotionally available adults can change all that.

# Section five: Mental health in schools: from theory to practical intervention and transformational change



## Presenters: Tanayah Sam in conversation with Dr Margot Sunderland

We are so privileged to have Tanayah Sam in conversation in this webinar. Tanayah has dedicated his working life to helping children and young people in schools turn away from the allure of crime or violence to complete their GCSEs and/or follow their particular dream in life.

From his own lived experience, Tanayah is in a unique position to do this work. He fired his first gun age 14; his father had given it to him. In year 8, he was a top student in maths and English. In year 9, he was violent in school and shouted at to get out of the classroom. He was, in his own words, still reachable then, and he had key teachers who meant a lot to him. But tragically, no teachers ever sat down and asked Tanayah to help them understand the dramatic change in both his learning and behaviour – no one took the time to listen to his story. Instead, Tanayah was excluded from school. He then spent years running with gangs, carrying guns and knives, and dealing drugs. He served time in 13 different prisons.

Tanayah explores the whole notion of criminal exploitation and how gangs and county lines are superb at meeting all of the vulnerable young person's fundamental emotional needs. He talks about how schools need to get far better at meeting those needs, so that gangs are not so alluring. He also talks of the essential importance of engaging vulnerable young people at school in meaningful relationships with key adults, who must themselves be culturally informed.

## Presenter Dr Margot Sunderland

At the moment schools are doing their part in addressing the child mental health crisis. But due to models of intervention that are not working, so many staff and parents are left angry, frightened, and hopeless and many children and young people remain in states of extreme distress. Lots of courses for Mental Health Leads in schools give the basic message, '*Learn to spot the symptom/ the disorder and refer on.*' To whom? CAMHS waiting lists in some areas are over 1000 days. Some children/young people take their own lives whilst waiting. Schools provide PSHE, but research shows that children/young people say this does not address the reality of their lives. They want to make sense of what has happened to them, not just 'manage their feelings' (PSHE) or be told they have a mental health disorder.

So, in this webinar the presenter argues that schools need to re-think their fundamental underlying models for mental health. She will demonstrate that children/young people don't heal by being given a psychiatric diagnosis and medication or lessons on '*how to manage your feelings*'. She will evidence the fact that schools need to take on board the tsunami of evidence-based research out there on how children heal from painful life experiences, with entirely do-able tried and tested whole school approaches to make this happen. She provides relational models that are time preserving not time consuming. People are drawn to be teachers because they want to change children's lives. This model will support them to do just that through the use of moving film footage throughout. This webinar will impact on hearts as well as minds.

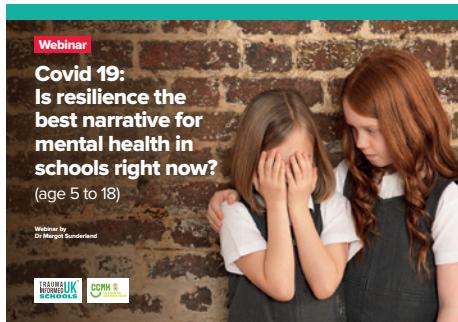
## Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland

*Available for whole-school purchase only.*

In this webinar, Dr Sunderland explores what we mean by mentally well and mentally unwell cultures. She draws on actual examples internationally of emotionally healthy and unhealthy cultures in schools, youth offending institutions and prisons. She discusses the key discernible features of any emotionally healthy culture, whether we are talking about families, schools, prisons or communities. Using powerful film footage, Dr Sunderland also discusses key research from psychology and neuroscience showing why people in unhealthy cultures become ill both physically and emotionally, burn out, feel hopeless and worthless, with some becoming violent.

With a specific focus on school cultures, Dr Sunderland then discusses many examples of good practice which ensure emotional health for all. To support this, she will introduce Trauma Informed Schools UK's (TISUK's) Implementation checklist for emotionally healthy school cultures, which is provided as a key training resource for this webinar. Using film footage and case material she explains, point by point, how schools can implement the checklist to ensure the wellbeing of both staff and students.

Overall, the webinar is designed to inspire, support and galvanise staff and senior leads to work together to bring about an emotionally healthy culture for all.



**Presenter: Dr Margot Sunderland**

In this short webinar, Dr Sunderland will explore what messages we should be giving children and young people in schools about hardship, emotionality, and how to deal with stress and distress, so they feel seen, heard, and acknowledged in the reality of their lives. Dr Sunderland will address narratives, slogans, and mission statements in schools, that promote resilience, and the potential harm that these can do to the troubled children they purport to support. The Government's Wellbeing for Education Return initiative for Covid-19 pandemic, included over 40 references to the word resilience. Yet, during the pandemic, when Trauma Informed Schools UK (TISUK) delivered training to over 20,000 staff, we were repeatedly told that thousands of children and young people in schools didn't feel at all resilient. They felt anxious, depressed, hopeless.

The message that it's good to bounce back from adversity is arguably very much out of touch when the research (The Make it Count Campaign, Mental Health Foundation 2018) found that nearly half a million children in the UK said they have no one to speak to at school when they feel sad or anxious. As a result, many report having sleep difficulties, struggling with homework, getting into fights and/or socially withdrawing. Moreover, for those who contemplate taking their own lives (suicide is the leading cause of death in young people), the resilience message is at best meaningless and at worst a gross misattunement, fuelling further feelings of alienation from school and from life itself.



Very few schools have safe spaces for teachers to reflect and process the extremely stressful and painful experiences that happen to them in schools, and also to celebrate what's going really well. Access to supervision, safe spaces to discuss issues and problems, remains extremely low at only 8% of schools (Teacher Wellbeing Index 2020). So, staff take all this chronic stress home night after night and it's simply not fair to off-load on a distracted partner who may not be that good at active listening anyway. As a result, all too many teachers end up with stress related illness, secondary trauma, anxiety, depression and burn out. 52% of education professionals and 59% of Senior Leads have considered leaving the profession due to pressures on their health and wellbeing.

**Reflective supervision** enables school staff to have a regular reflective space to talk about their work in school with a trained psychologist or therapeutically trained senior educationalist who offers validating, empathic and non-judgemental listening and advice. This safe, confidential space empowers staff to talk frankly about the challenges of school life and provides support and new relational skills. It takes a trauma informed approach, the child at the centre but with a helicopter view starting with the staff member and then widening to think about the school setting as a whole and parent community.

It's not a therapy group but it's absolutely therapeutic to process emotionally charged stress inducing experiences, get support from the group, share ideas about how to resolve a situation, explore how a particular child has triggered a traumatic memory, talk about feeling impotent, overwhelmed, trapped, etc. and to know others feel this too. We have a wealth of neuroscience evidence that being listened to in this way has a profound impact on physical and emotional health. Without this support in schools which are essentially now front-line mental health services, we are guilty of emotional neglect for the very people who can make such a huge difference to the lives of our children.

## Contact details

**Trauma Informed Schools UK**  
[www.traumainformedschools.co.uk](http://www.traumainformedschools.co.uk)  
[info@traumainformedschools.co.uk](mailto:info@traumainformedschools.co.uk)

**Centre for Child Mental Health**  
[www.childmentalhealthcentre.org](http://www.childmentalhealthcentre.org)  
[info@childmentalhealthcentre.org](mailto:info@childmentalhealthcentre.org)

## Diploma in Counselling Teenagers

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## Diploma in Child Counselling

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**Both courses lead to eligibility to apply  
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## Senior Mental Health Lead Training Certificate in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (policy, practice and leadership)

TISUK is an approved provider for DfE funded Senior Mental Health Lead Training  
Devised and run by Senior Psychologists and Senior Educators

**5 day training (2 x 2 day modules and  
1 assessment day leading to the award)**

**Fees:** £700 payable in advance

- Become champions of mental health through the development of robust, visible, credible leadership.
- Understand the causes of mental ill-health, prevention and intervention.
- Be up to date with psychiatric diagnoses/ medication and trauma-informed alternatives.
- Learn therapeutic interventions for trained emotionally available adults in school
- Develop a PSHE curriculum informed by the latest research on effective child mental health interventions.
- Gain access to vital materials, resources and model policies for student, staff and parent wellbeing, tried and tested in 1000s of UK schools.

Regional online courses starting Spring and Summer term 2022

**Admissions:** Senior Mental Health Leads and staff identified and appointed to fulfil this leadership position within the school  
Contact info@traumainformedschools.co.uk for more info.

