



# Teaching about Trauma:

(to normalise common responses to trauma & reduce anxiety)



Theme:	Strategy:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TRAUMA</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Teach about trauma</p> 	(a) Use traditional tales like Little Red Riding Hood / the Three Little Pigs etc. to teach about trauma without describing it to the children as trauma. With older young people you could use a story line from a TV soap, which are often trauma based – e.g. play a clip as a stimulus.
	(b) For example, after reading Little Red Riding Hood, you could talk to the class about what life might be like for Little Red Riding Hood after she experienced that with Granny & the wolf.
	(c) Discuss how scary that would have been for Red Riding Hood, & all the elements that made it so. Explain that when we live through something scary like that we all experience changes in our brain that come about to protect our brains from how dangerous & scary that experience felt.
	(d) Discuss that Little Red Riding Hood may find school really difficult after that happened. She might find it difficult to: (i) concentrate in class (ii) follow instructions (iii) remember what she needs to do (iv) complete her work. She might: (a) start saying something & forget midway through the sentence what she's talking about, (b) have more arguments with friends than usual, (c) say & do things that get her into trouble with adults, (d) feel scared because she doesn't understand why these things are happening (e) feel shame because she can't do things like others / that she could do before
	(e) Little Red Riding Hood would need adults to help her begin to understand what happened to her. To tell the story of what happened (the narrative) until it makes sense in her head & she has created a cognitive memory that she can refer to later.
	(f) Once this has happened she will be able to think about it without being overwhelmed by the emotions she felt at the time, when she was so scared.
	(g) Discuss how adults at our school are here to be helpful. Sometimes we all might have experienced things that have scared us and that change our brains like Little Red Riding Hood.
	(h) This is normal. It happens to everybody when something scary happens. It's how our brains protect us from things that are really scary to us & that we can't manage on our own.
	(i) You might come back to this in a second session & refer back to Little Red Riding Hood story & discussion. Covid 19 is scary – discuss their concerns... we might be worried about: (A) getting sick, (B) someone we love getting sick, (C) money at home if someone is not working, (D) what's going to happen, (E) how long this will go on for.
	(j) You may want to move on to use a different traditional tale or alternative stimulus to discuss some/all previous points - to reinforce messaging
	(k) In this session the class discussion could move on to the fact that there may be other things that WE worry about – use WE rather than YOU to reduce emotional load of the discussion (as WE suggests everybody - & normal. YOU could be 'only me' - who's abnormal/bad/stupid)
	(l) Always reinforce the message that adults at school are here to be helpful. Also, that children who have experienced something that makes them feel unsafe/scared/very anxious experience the above
	(m) It doesn't last forever – talking to adults can help <a href="#">Contents</a>

