

ACE Awareness, Children's Rights & Trauma Informed Training

J3MS CONSULTING LTD

SUMMARY REPORT

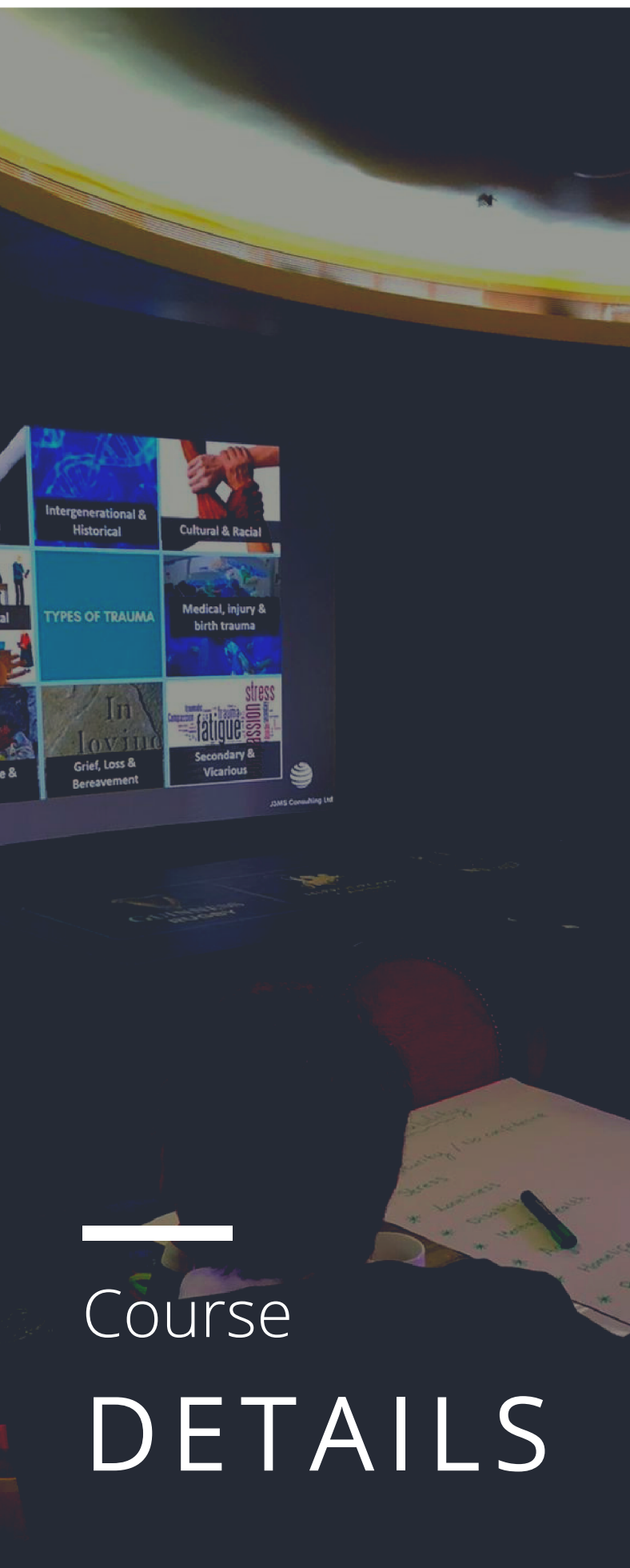


J3MS Consulting Ltd

JAN 2021



Children's Commissioner for Jersey
Promoting and Protecting Children's Rights



Course

DETAILS

CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER FOR JERSEY 'ACE AWARE AND TRAUMA INFORMED TRAINING' CLOSING REPORT

Context and scope of training

In spring 2020, J3MS Consulting Ltd were commissioned by the Children's Commissioner for Jersey to design and deliver training on Adverse Childhood Experience, becoming trauma informed and the rights of the child.

The training sought to achieve four main objectives:

- An increased awareness of what Children's Rights are and why they are important.
- A broad understanding of trauma caused by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and its impact across the life course.
- An increased understanding of brain development and the impact of toxic stress.
- An appreciation of what is meant by taking a Trauma Informed Approach with practical skills to show you what you can do.

The training was specifically designed as a pilot to be delivered to an audience of mainly police officers in Jersey.

The training was initially scheduled to be delivered in person to learners in April 2020 by J3MS Consulting Ltd but due to COVID-19, both the method of delivery and the date of delivery was re-evaluated as the pandemic took hold and travel restrictions were put in place. The course was eventually delivered virtually to a multi-disciplinary group on 4th December 2020.

Pre training consultation:

As part of taking a trauma informed approach to training, J3MS Consulting Ltd designed and circulated a pre-training survey to establish baseline understanding and awareness of the 3 main elements of the training from a core group of key stakeholders that were selected by the commissioner. The purpose of this was to ensure that the content of the training addressed the issues front-line practitioners were experiencing, making the training meaningful and relevant to them.

In total, six responses were received from stakeholder agencies:

1. Office of the Children's Commissioner
2. CYPES – Children's Services
3. Law Officers' Department
4. Probation and after care services
5. A firm of specialist family lawyers
6. Judicial Greffe

Overall, the feedback gathered in this exercise can be summarised as below:

- All contributors felt they had a fairly good understanding of children's rights, ACEs and a trauma informed approach.
- All contributors felt they were all using these elements to some extent in their daily practice already.
- All individuals felt that there was an opportunity to improve their confidence and application of a trauma informed approach. No stakeholder was 100% confident in understanding of all elements of the training objectives.

Trauma informed training delivery model



Delivery OVERVIEW

....."I would suggest that this is definitely beneficial or would be beneficial to Response and Public Protection units"

Pre- and post-training questionnaire:

As part of the evaluation of this training pilot, we requested that all those attending the training completed pre- and post-training questionnaires.

The purpose of this was to establish the baseline understanding across all attendees with regards to the 3 main themes and establish shifts in understanding and attitudes as a result of this training.

In essence, this evaluation is critical to establish if the training has achieved the desired training outcomes.

Intended audience:

Initially this training was designed to be delivered face to face and to a policing audience, however, as the training date was confirmed, an invitation was extended to other agencies which included youth services and children's services. The training class size was limited to 20 attendees attending physically in one location rather than joining the training remotely.

Senior leadership engagement:

Our vast previous experience of delivering this training across the UK has identified that senior leadership awareness and support is essential if organisations are seeking to embed any of the elements included in the training in a meaningful, sustainable way. In order to address this, prior to the delivery of the one-day training course, J3MS Consulting Ltd provided an online 2 hour briefing session to a number of senior leaders in Jersey. Those attending included the Children's Commissioner, the Chief of Police for Jersey, the director of Education, representatives from Probation services, CYPES and the Jersey Government Criminal Justice Policy Department.

Delivery of trauma informed training online in a trauma informed way during a pandemic- the challenges:

As a result of the pandemic, we were unable to deliver the training in our usual tried and tested trauma informed way. To ensure as many delegates were able to attend, we developed a hybrid approach with some delegates joining in person (socially distanced in a single venue) and up to 9 individuals joining online.

An **introductory email** was sent to all single points of contact and requested to be circulated to those attending the training from their organisations.

A **suitable location** was identified by the police representative and to comply with COVID 19 safety requirements, the room was set up in a **cabaret layout** but adhered to the social distancing between attendees.

The room was ventilated during breaks which unfortunately resulted in the training venue being very cold for attendees.

The room layout and COVID-19 distance requirements resulted in some difficulties for the training team, who were delivering virtually.

In particular, interaction and communication between attendees and the trainers was very challenging as, although each individual had their own microphone and therefore was able to communicate, that communication was controlled by a central audio technician.

This had an impact on the length of some of the initial exercises and the ability for the trainers to facilitate group activities as effectively as they would ordinarily do.

Despite these hurdles and, thanks to the herculean effort by our Police single point of contact, hotel staff and the AV expert, all attendees stayed for the whole day of training and those who submitted post training feedback reported significant positive shifts and benefits from undertaking this training.

Training Content :



Training content is split into two distinctive parts with the morning session focused on providing new information or refresher to ensure that understanding within the room is at the same level in readiness for the afternoon part of the training.

The trainers recognise the existing experience of learners and the training seeks to empower and facilitate the attendees to move from working in an **instinctive** way to working in an **intentionally** ACE aware, trauma informed and children's rights way.

The morning session focuses on the need to understand and recognise the impact trauma and adversity has on neurological development and behaviour and accept this as an **evidenced based explanation** of behaviour they are confronted with and not an **excuse**. This enables attendees to make the shift more easily to applying a trauma informed approach and not viewing it as a 'soft option'. The importance of children's rights and the interface between the UNCRC articles, ACEs and trauma informed approach, is also introduced to learners .

The afternoon training session focuses on **operationally applying the theory** learned in the morning session. It explores in detail what a trauma informed approach means, and how and why it should be applied operationally. The training demonstrates how this approach can enhance a learner's application of their statutory powers to help them **solve problems** better and support children and young people to recognise and manage their own behaviour and emotions, thus **developing their resilience**.

Protective factors are also identified and discussed and the day concludes with a video of Ian Wright's life experience which consolidates all of the elements that were discussed over the course of the day.


Throughout the course of the training, there are a number of participatory **interactive group exercises** and open source videos which are used sparingly but effectively to enhance learning and understanding.


86%

of learners who
completed post training
feedback
would recommend the
training to others

The below is a high-level summary of the content of the training day.


Children's rights, Adverse Childhood Experience and becoming Trauma Informed training





- Introduction and aims
- Why this important in a Jersey context
- Child rights introduction
- ACE introduction and prevalence
- What is trauma and how does it impact on neurodevelopment
- Difference between ACEs/trauma and vulnerability
- Neurodevelopment in teenagers who have had no trauma
- Risk, trauma and early intervention
- Categories of stress and trauma
- Introduction to protective and resilience factors
- Self care- self aware
- The story of hope

- Welfare check
- What is a trauma informed approach
- Interface of UNCRC elements, ACEs and being trauma informed
- Taking a trauma informed approach to self care and trauma
- Transactional analysis and the importance of communication
- Trauma informed decision making
- De-escalation exercise
- The cost of late intervention
- The identification of resilience and protective factors
- Ian Wright video
- Review of aims
- Close


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*"Under the circumstances
it was a really good
training session"*

**"We want you to
come to Jersey"**

Evaluation:

18 individuals from 3 organisations submitted the pre-training questionnaires.

One individual from social care submitted two pre-training questionnaires.

The organisational spread of submissions was 7 from social care, 9 from police and 2 from Youth Services.

Despite significant efforts to encourage responses via the organisational points of contacts, only 8 individuals submitted post-training questionnaires. This was most likely due to a change in Covid restrictions with individuals facing huge work challenges, immediately following the training session.

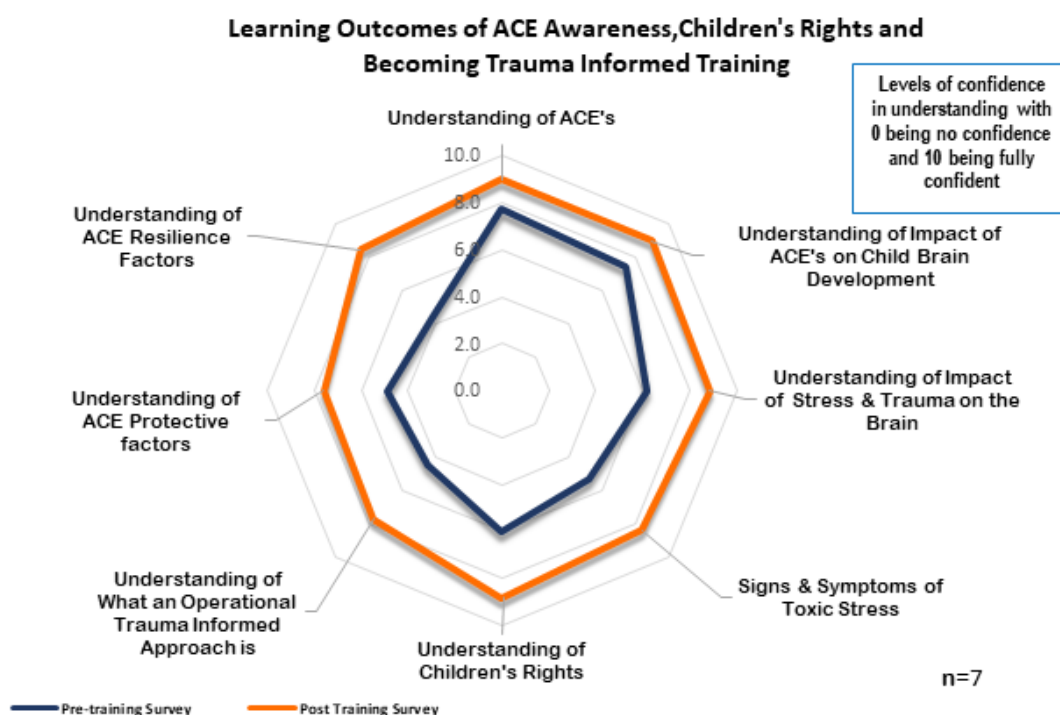
The organisational spread of these submissions was 1 from social care, 1 from Youth Services and 6 from police.

Results:

Disappointingly, the return rate of post training questionnaire feedback is the lowest we have ever received following our training. We do, however, understand the need to operationally prioritise time and tasks and we appreciate that the proliferation of COVID-19 within Jersey at the time of training, along with the impact of the pandemic on individuals both professionally and personally may of had an influence on return rates.

The quality and number of pre- and post-questionnaires has resulted in our evaluation having to be based on only 7 pre and post training questionnaires which could be could be accurately linked.

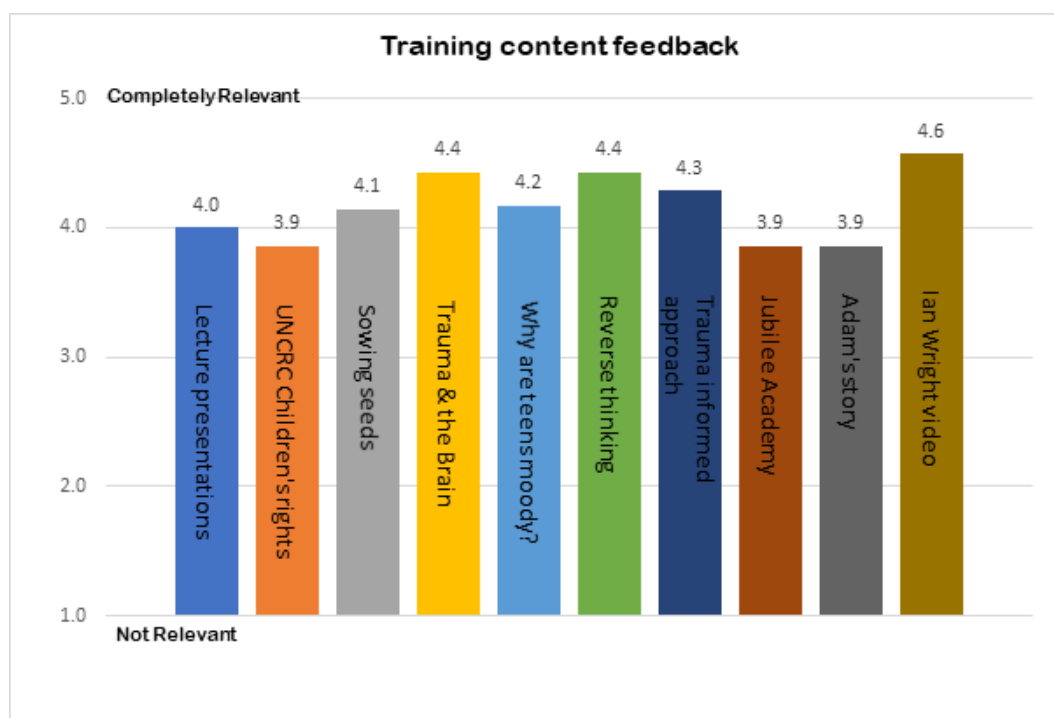
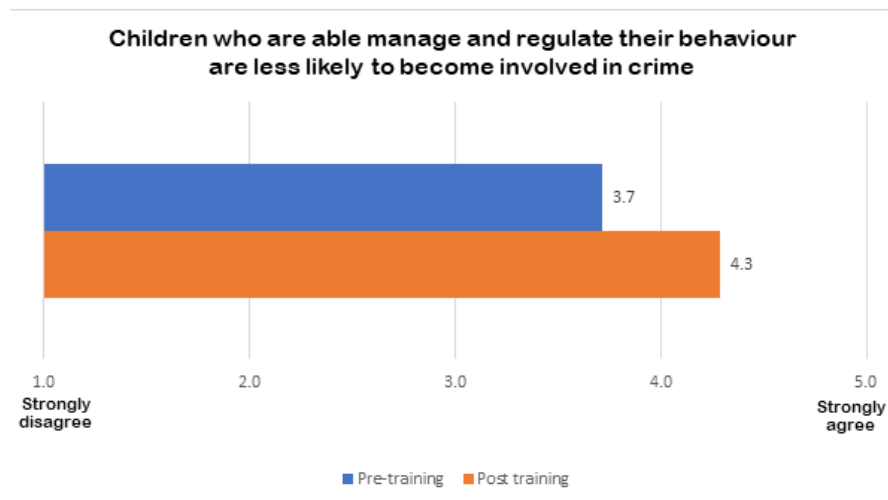
That said, the views which have been expressed reflect the 3 organisations of social care, youth justice and the police and provide a clear positive shifts in many elements of understanding and attitudes which are reflected in the below graphs.



One responder commented that whilst they “found the majority of the training interesting”, they did not see the relevance to their policing role. This is slightly concerning as and highlights the need for regular ongoing training to identify and address bias within the force for more established staff as well as including this training at induction stage for new staff to ensure that this knowledge filters through all members of an organisation.

The individual felt that early intervention was a soft option and “victims deserved to see justice” without recognising that a young person could be a victim too and behaviour is often the symptom and not the root cause. These views, amongst others expressed by this same individual towards young people in the scenarios were somewhat concerning and may present barriers to a change in culture if policing in Jersey is seeking to be more trauma informed.

There was positive affirmation that partnership working was vital and all responders apart from the one police officer mentioned above thought that the training was valuable and would recommend it to others. In addition, there was overwhelming positive feedback for the individual elements of the training day.



"Change nothing.
It was all beneficial"

"Delivered well under
COVID circumstances"

Conclusion:

Based on the feedback of those who returned feedback following the training as well as verbal feedback we have received, there is overwhelming support for this training to be rolled out across Jersey to all agencies who work with children, young people and their families.

Based directly on feedback received, we would make the following recommendations:

- This training needs to be delivered in person, not online.
- This training should be delivered in our established trauma informed way (see appendix 1) to maximise support to learners and to operationally model what a trauma informed approach is.
- This training should not be delivered in a hybrid way i.e. not a mix of in person and online training.
- Consideration could be given to delivering the training over 2 days as there is a lot of content. If this were to be agreed, anonymised case studies which have been experienced in Jersey could be used to make the training relevant to those attending and they can see how this approach is meaningful to them in their operational roles.
- This training should be delivered to a multi-agency audience to encourage cross organisational understanding, awareness and empathy.
- If this training is going to be delivered to other agencies, there should be stakeholder engagement to ensure that the examples used can be applied to all agencies so the training becomes even more relevant to all attendees
- Completion of the pre- and post-training questionnaires need to be incorporated within the training day and not after attendees leave the training.



Appendix 1.

Delivering trauma informed training in a trauma informed way during a pandemic.

Based on our previous experience, prevalence of ACEs and trauma in the general population, and best practice and research, this training would **normally** be delivered in the following trauma informed way.

Training would be delivered **face to face**, putting the learner at the heart of the training and ensuring that the core principles of being trauma informed are adhered to.

The benefit of this is not only to ensure that all learners are fully prepared for what can be a challenging subject matter and they are in the best position possible to take the training onboard, thus maximising value for money, but also to recognise that the cohort of learners which are being trained may well have experienced their own personal and/ or professional trauma and this approach seeks to minimise the risk of re- traumatising them.

We craft a **pre-training introduction** email which is shared with attendees by their single point of contact for the organisation informing them about the content of the training and to manage their initial expectations of the day. This allows individuals to self-select to opt out of the training temporarily if they are facing any personal or professional trauma at that time.

The selection of a neutral, non-work based location to deliver the training is particularly important as often, work related trauma may have occurred within the workplace where the training is delivered which, again, adds to the risk of re-traumatisation.

Sourcing a neutral non-work based **location** allows and empowers attendees to fully immerse themselves in all aspects of the training without any distractions or work related abstractions interrupting their learning. This also helps with removing inter-agency barriers and allows meaningful discussions and sharing of different perspectives within a safe environment.

The **layout** of the room in a cabaret layout is particularly important when delivering trauma informed training. Traditionally training to police specifically has been didactic with delivery in lecture format in lecture style. When seeking to embed learning which fundamentally is looking to change culture and values in a profession or across a number of organisations, much investment needs to be given to the ability to discuss, explore and assimilate new information and knowledge in smaller more intimate groups. This formatting also allows any learners who are adversely impacted by the subject matter to leave the training environment without drawing attention to themselves – which is critically important when it comes to not re-traumatising staff. Additionally, this approach also allows trainers to change the makeup of each group for interactive exercises which maximised cross pollination of views and experience.

Fidget toys are an important component when taking a trauma informed approach. They allow and empower learners the ability to reflect and consider all and any new information and knowledge and can help learners to focus better, enhancing the learning experience. People learn and assimilate information in different ways and whilst some people listen better when they are sitting still and 'at attention', others listen much better and for longer periods of time when they can do something with their hands. The use of fidget toys is not intended to replace breaks in a training day but are used to help keep learners relaxed, comfortable, attentive, involved, and productive. We can advise that the use of fidget toys with this cohort of learners when delivering this subject matter certainly achieved their aim and have been well used in every training session delivered pre COVID-19.

The concept of **self care** is introduced at the commencement of the training and is a golden thread which is explored on several occasions in depth throughout the training day. The recognition of the increased risk of and symptoms of stress is vital for the learning cohort, not only from a personal perspective, but they are more likely to encounter service users and peers in their work who have experienced ACEs and trauma during their lives.

The **post training checks** with staff following the training is vital in delivering trauma informed training. Proactive post training welfare checks on all attendees normalises self-care, reduces the risk of re-traumatisation and allows individuals to seek support from internal and external support mechanisms as well as from their individual supervisors.

This report was prepared by J3MS Consulting Ltd for the
Children's Commissioner for Jersey

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