



achieving for children

Champions for children and families

AfC Virtual School

The impact of Neglect on Looked After Children

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AfC Virtual School
'Together we can achieve!'

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What we do...

- Champion the educational needs for looked after children wherever they are educated
- Track and monitor each looked after child as though they are part of one school
- Work alongside schools and Social Care Professionals to ensure their needs remain high on the agenda

Who do we work with?

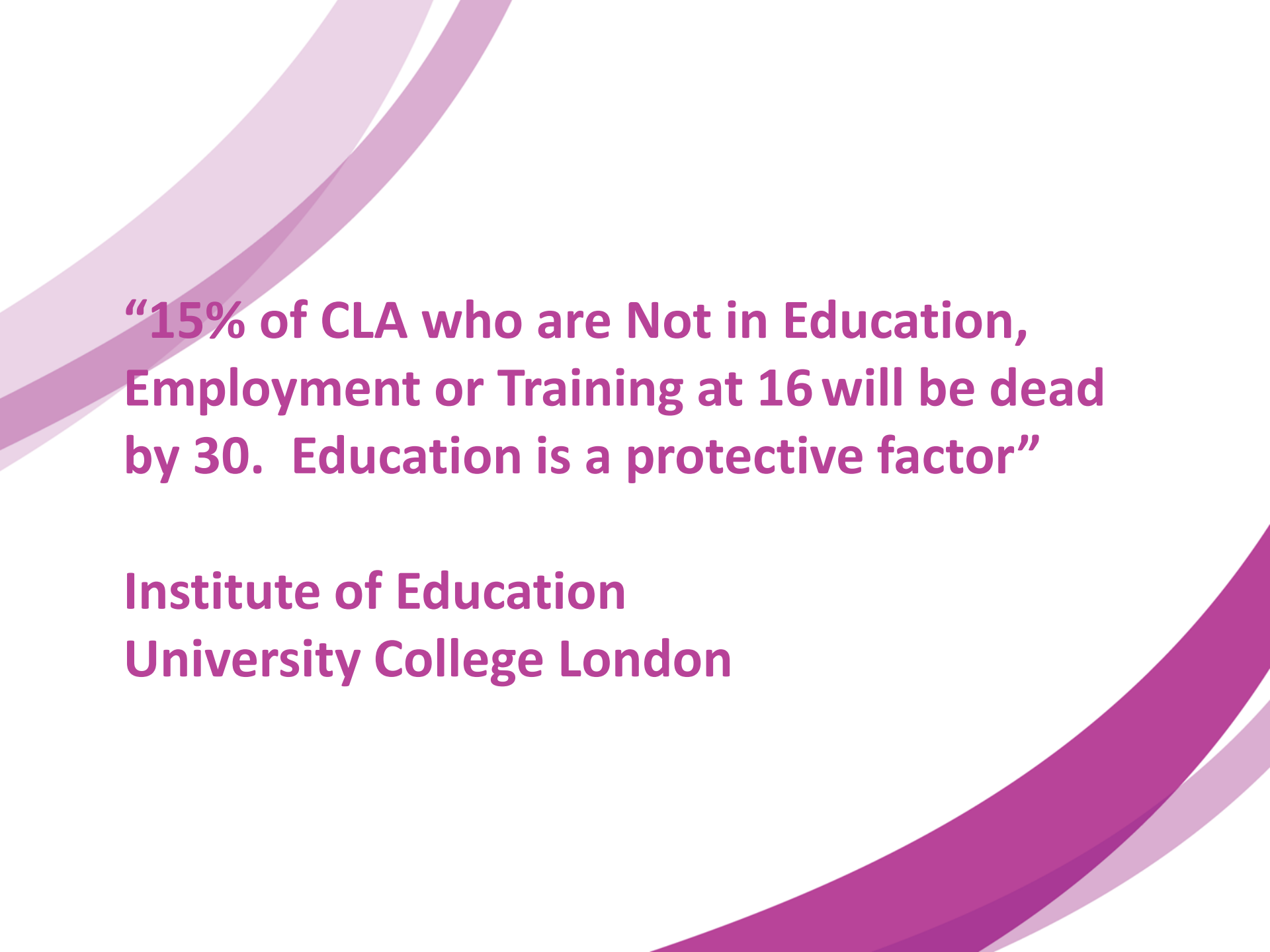
- Looked After Children from Pre-School to age 25. Pupil Premium Plus for these children comes to the Headteacher of the Virtual School
- Previously Looked After Children (as of 1 September 2018). Pupil Premium Grant for these children goes to the Headteacher of the physical school.

Why do Looked After Children
under achieve?

National Key Data

- The number of looked after children has increased steadily over the past seven years.
- **14%** achieve expected grade outcomes at 16 compared with 58% of all children.
- They are **twice** as likely to be Permanently Excluded
- **Three times** as likely to have a Fixed Term exclusion.
- 38% of care leavers are **Not in Education Employment or Training**
- Only 8% access **Higher Education** compared to 50% of general population
- They represent 27% of the **Prison Population** although they are **only 0.1% of the greater population.**
- **60% of female prisoners** have a care history.

Oxford University REES Centre Research/DFEE National Data



**“15% of CLA who are Not in Education,
Employment or Training at 16 will be dead
by 30. Education is a protective factor”**

**Institute of Education
University College London**

Why this data for Children Looked After?

- Their lives are characterised by instability: they spend **too much time out of school**.
- **School changes:** young people in care who changed school in Yr. 10 or 11 scored **over five grades less at GCSE** than those who did not.
- **They have unmet emotional, mental and physical health needs that impact on their education.**

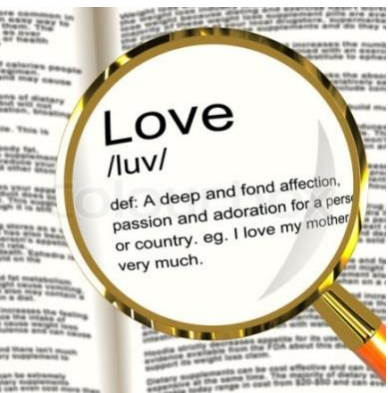
Early experiences, attachment and brain development

Attachment Theory

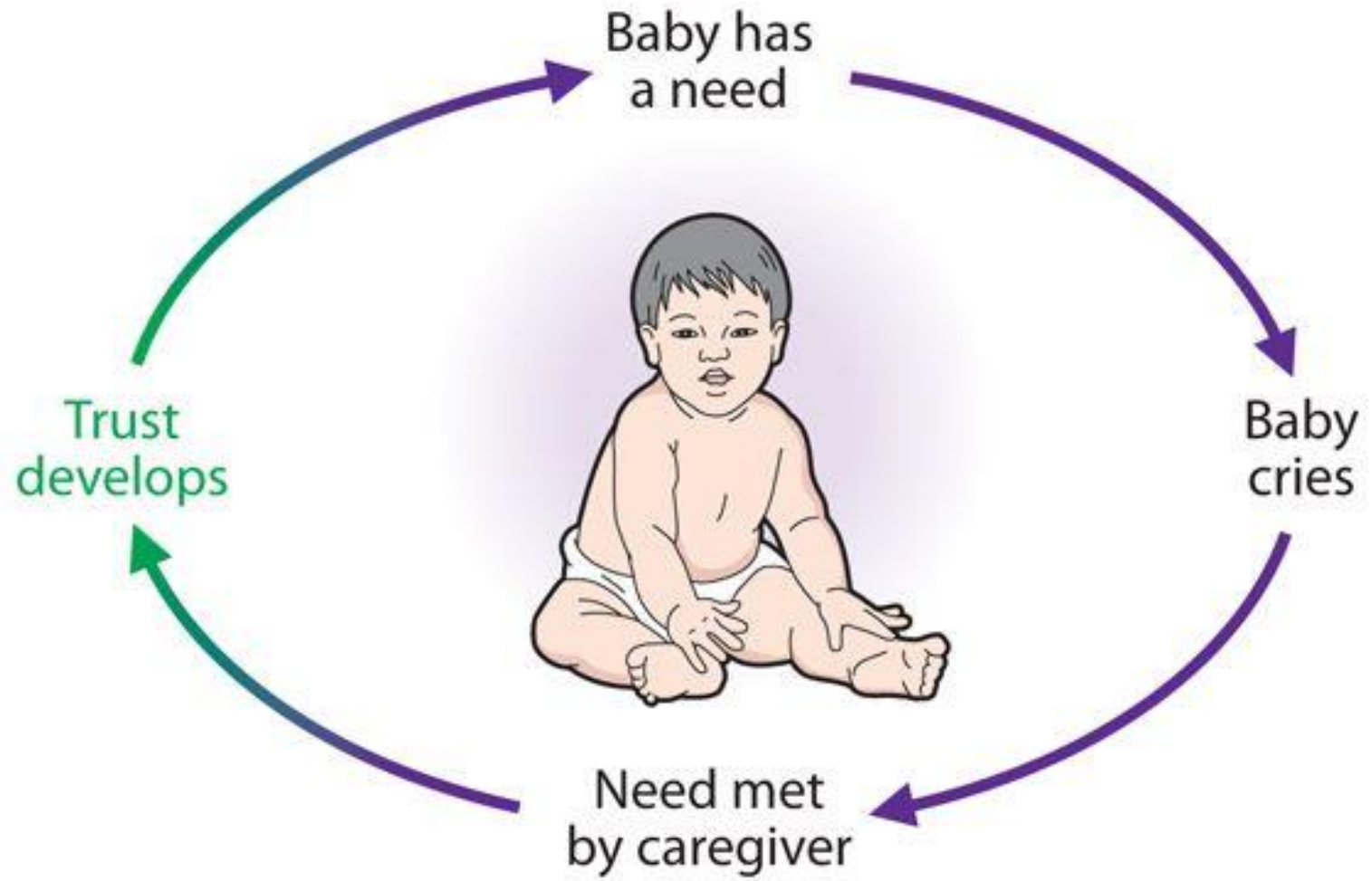
“lasting psychological connectedness between human beings”

(John Bowlby, 1969, p.194)

Attachment is about **relationships**, and our *mental models* of relationships. A child’s first attachment is vitally important. The carers ability to **attune** themselves to the infant’s needs, and to **respond** appropriately, is important for the development of a secure attachment.



Infant Attachment Cycle



Our Inner Working Model



I am...

Other people are....



The world is...



Through consistent, sensitive and timely responses to their needs, the infant acquires a basic **trust**:

- ❖ in others as responsive
- ❖ in the world as a benign place
- ❖ and in themselves as able to communicate their needs



Newborn



1 Month



9 Months



2 Years



Adult

The neuroscience of attachment

Higher human brain
(thinking)



Mammalian brain
(feeling)

Reptilian brain
(primitive)

- Co- regulation – Self-regulation = Emotional regulation
- Neuroplasticity

Impacts of neglect on the brain

3-Year-Old Children



Normal



Extreme Neglect

© 1997 Bruce D. Perry, MD, Ph.D., ChildTrauma Academy

Attachment style and social competence

- Insecurely attached children tend to have **poorer quality friendships, reduced emotional intelligence & empathy and experience difficulties maintaining friendships** (Grossmann and Grossmann 1991).
- Insecure attachment style has been linked to **anxiety and social withdrawal** (LaFreniere et al. 1992; Lyons-Ruth and Jacobvitz 1999; Rubin and Lollis 1988).

Attachment Style and Emotional Regulation

Attachment is the foundation of emotion regulation

(Sroufe 1996).

ER has a mediating impact on academic outcomes and social competence

- ER is the foundation to accepting challenges at school.
- Children with insecure attachments have fewer coping skills, are less willing to take on potentially frustrating tasks, less able to discuss emotional topics without anger, and respond negatively to novel situations at school. (Kobak et al. 1993; Sroufe 1996).
- Overactive amygdala (fight fright freeze) = increased arousal and anxiety. (Blair 2001)

Attachment style and attention

- Anxiety impairs ability to control attention, executive functions, memory, and problem-solving, and increases task-irrelevant thoughts (Fincham et al. 1989; Ialongo et al. 1994). Egeland et al. 1993).
- Children with insecure attachment styles are more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD, or have ADHD symptoms regardless of being diagnosed (Clarke et al. 2002)

Attachment style and mental health

Insecure attachment is a risk factor for mental illness.

- compared to teenagers with secure attachment, teenagers with insecure attachment suffer greater rates of **maladjustment, suicidal thoughts, depression, conduct disorders, substance abuse, and eating disorders** (Allen and Land 1999; Hesse 1999; Lewis et al. 2000; Weinfield et al. 1999).

Attachment Style and academic outcomes

Security of attachment predicts academic achievement:

- Research has found that children with an insecure attachment style tend to **have lower verbal ability, math ability, reading comprehension, and overall academic achievement**, and exhibit **less curiosity** than securely attached children

(Granot and Mayselless 2001; Jacobsen and Hofmann 1997; Pianta and Harbers 1996; Weinfield et al. 1999)

Helping children to heal

- Our brains have plasticity - we can always learn new things (as long as we feel safe).
- Children and young people who have experienced neglect need to be provided with what they missed out on in their early years – **a safe base** from which to explore and learn.
- The pre frontal cortex develops through **safe, meaningful and genuine interactions with sensitive, responsive, caring and consistent caregiving.**
- How do we ensure children have access to this in their schools and care placements?
- All children need positive relationships (secure attachments) to thrive.
- Traumatized or neglected young people need **positive relationships to heal.**

Can we overcome the
impact of neglect and
achieve positive
outcomes for looked
after children?

		Richmond (since 2016)	Kingston (since 2016)	RBWM (since 2017)
% Average School Attendance		2016 95.6% 2018 96.8% 1.2% Improvement National CLA 95.7%	2016 89.9% 2018 93.5% 3.6% Improvement National CLA 95.7%	2016 95.4% 2018 95.3% Stable through transition National CLA 95.7%
% Persistently Absent pupils		2016 8.1% 2018 2.8% 5.3% improvement National CLA 10%	2016 26.9% 2018 9.3% 17.6% improvement National CLA 10%	2017 17.3% 2018 12.2% 5.1% improvement National CLA 10%
Exclusions (fixed term)		2015 9.8% 2018 8.1% 1.7% Improvement National CLA 11.4%	2015 7.2% 2018 5.4% 1.8% improvement National CLA 11.4%	2017 14.5% 2018 14% Stable through transition National CLA 11.4%
GCSE Outcomes		Average Attainment 8 for AfC Virtual School : 31.8 National Looked After Attainment 8 : 19.3		
Personal Education Plans	Early Years	2017 no pupils 2018 100%	2017 95% 2018 100% 5% improvement since 2017	2017 Autumn 86% 2018 100% 14% improvement this year
	Year 1-11	2017 100% 2018 97%	2017 100% 2018 100%	2017 Autumn 59% 2018 100% 41% Improvement this year
	Post 16	2017 95% 2018 98% 3% improvement since 2017	2017 95% 2018 100% 5% improvement since 2017	2017 Autumn 15% 2018 65% 50% improvement this year

We are able to present an improvement picture.

With excellent PEP completion in Richmond and Kingston and strong improvements in RBWM.

Above National Attainment 8 for our GCSE students and improved school attendance in particular for those with Persistent Absence.

Achieved through sharing understanding of the impact of trauma and neglect; putting effective interventions in place and aiming high.

With strong partnership working between education, social care and health we are able to overcome the barriers that many of our young people face so that they can lead successful lives.

Questions?



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