



A Sunfield Fact Sheet

Crisis Aggression Limitation & Management (CALM)

What is CALM?

CALM is an evidence-based approach to understanding and effectively managing behaviour. The focus is on gaining insight and understanding into the underlying contributory factors, by identifying behaviour patterns, and looking at proactive strategies for supporting children to maintain positive states of arousal and reducing negative behaviour where possible.

How does Sunfield help children with behaviour difficulties?

There are many reasons why children with complex needs may present with challenging or aggressive behaviour; these may relate to communication breakdown, sensory overload, peer conflict, frustration, anxiety around task demands or perhaps they are simply missing home.

Sunfield is dedicated to gaining a deeper understanding into what these contributory factors may be for each individual child and how we can best support the children to express their wants and needs while maintaining a positive state of arousal. Effective communication is key to this approach, and it is imperative that positive and trusting relationships between children and staff are preserved.

How does CALM support staff?

Sunfield acknowledges that supporting people who present with challenging behaviour can be extremely stressful. The CALM approach equips staff with the skills and confidence to effectively manage challenging situations, helping to diminish the fears attached to challenging behaviour.

CALM Trainers focus on providing staff with the skills to monitor arousal levels and support children through challenging situations, avoiding significant triggers where possible. CALM focuses on the effective identification of appropriate and timely de-escalation techniques, so that, wherever possible, children will not reach the point of heightened anxiety where aggressive or challenging behaviour can often follow.

In the event that these strategies are not successful, and the safety of the child, staff or others is at risk, non-aversive CALM physical interventions are implemented. CALM adopts a whole organisation approach, involving policy development and staff support as key determinants of workplace safety for all.

Further reading

CALM Training Services Ltd – <http://www.calmtraining.co.uk/>.

Brodie Paterson, Lindsay Bennet, Patrick Bradley (2014) Positive and Proactive Care: could new guidance lead to more problems? British Journal of Nursing, 23(17), pp. 939–941.

Restrictive Physical interventions in Secure Children's Homes. Dr Di Hart National Children's Bureau (NCB) June 2008.