

Evidence Informed Debriefing Framework

Michelle Garnett

MSpecEd, MEdLead, BPE, BEd, BNurs





Special Education Challenges

Teacher Wellbeing

- Special educators face unique daily demands
- These demands often lead to burnout

Dysregulation

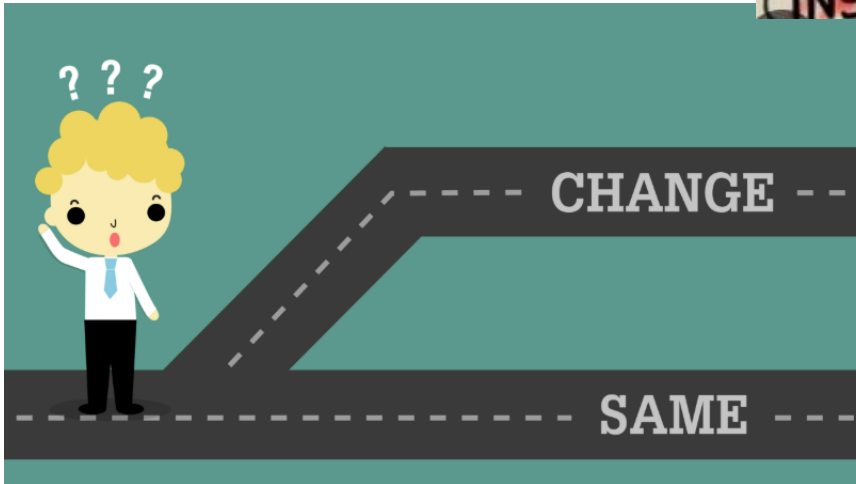
- Up to 50% of students with disabilities struggle with emotional regulation
- Dysregulation leads to lack of control over emotions
- Results in challenging behaviours like aggression and self-injury

Debriefing

Purpose and Benefits

- Supports individual's post a traumatic event
- Facilitates discussion of events
- Provides a safe space to explore and validate emotional responses
- Allows valuable time to reflect
- Generates an insight into what is working well
- Identifies areas for improvement
- Promotes refinement of practice and processes





School Context



School for Specific Purpose (SSP)



Class Ratio and Structure



Incident Data Review

Questionnaire



Questionnaire Findings

Guided the direction of the action research project



Debriefing Process

100% of participants stated it was not structured/formalised.
60% still deemed it helpful



Strengths

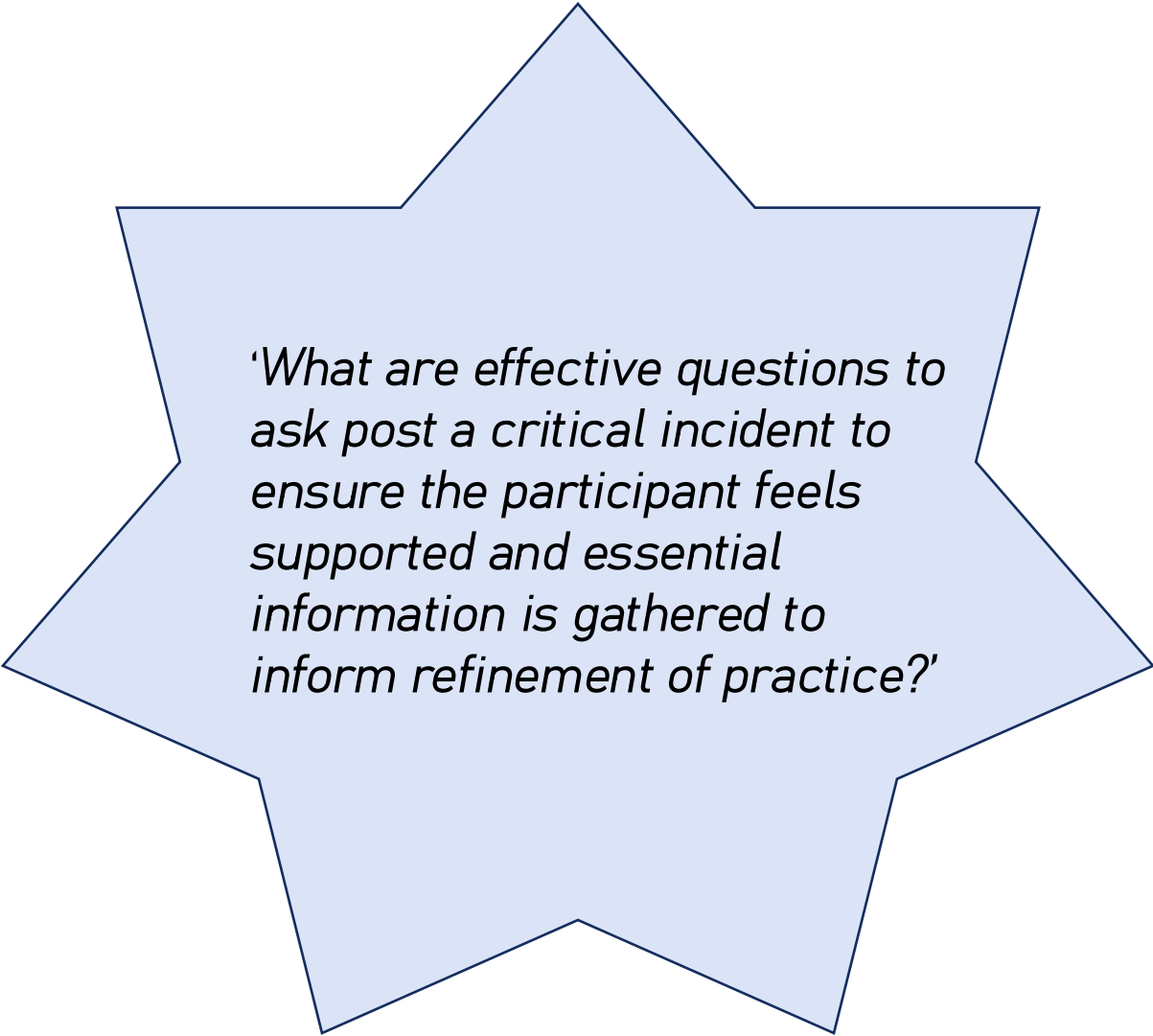
Provides support for staff
Clarifies events
Time to reflect to inform future practice



Areas for improvement

Structured/formalised process
Empathy and understanding

Research Question



'What are effective questions to ask post a critical incident to ensure the participant feels supported and essential information is gathered to inform refinement of practice?'

Debriefing Evidence



Debate on Debriefing Effectiveness

Some research suggests debriefing can do more harm than good
Lilienfeld, 2007; Wei, 2010; Rose et al, 1998



Contextual Limitations

Studies not conducted in education settings
Findings not directly applicable to special education environments



Need for School-Based Research

Lack of research on interventions for educators
Further research required in school settings



Literature Review Sources

Most literature stems from healthcare system

Traumatic Stress on Educators



High Exposure to Trauma

40.1% of educators rated their exposure to trauma at work as 8 or above out of 10

Need for Safe Debriefing Framework

Contextual, evidence based, trauma-Informed framework



Traumatic Stress in Healthcare Workers



High Risk of Exposure to Traumatic Events

Emergency departments are extremely stressful environments

Healthcare workers are at high risk of traumatic stress



Prevalence of Traumatic Stress

Systematic review of 345 articles demonstrated 65% prevalence of traumatic stress among nurses



Debriefing Focus in Research

Debriefing is a key focus of research

No standardised framework

'Hot' debrief universally utilised



Debriefing Frameworks

IRSATT, AIR and STOP

Health Sector Debriefing Frameworks

Evidence-informed Debriefing Frameworks

- Emergency department templates (ANZAC, 2021; Pallas, 2020; Walker et al, 2020)
- Established templates can guide framework development

Relevance to School Context

- High prevalence of traumatic stress
- Specific evidence-based questioning



STOP Framework

- Quick and comprehensive hot debriefing process
- Does not acknowledge emotional needs
- Formal cold debriefing session advised for emotional support

S	Summarise the case
T	Things that went well
O	Opportunities to improve
P	Points to action and responsibilities

(Walker et al, 2020)

AIR Framework

- Guided response for post-stress events
- Includes emotional response acknowledgment
- Consists of 7 steps focusing on reflection and quality improvement
- Escalation to response coordinator if additional support is needed

Hot Acute Incident Response 'Hot AIR'

1. **Gather directly affected staff in an appropriate space**
 - Voluntary participation only – Staff may opt in at any time
2. **Acknowledge the event** (Consider having a participant summarize the event)
3. **Ask if anyone wants to share their feelings about the event?**
4. **As a team was there anything we did well?**
5. **As a team was there anything we could improve for next time?**
6. **Is there anything else you would like to talk about?**
7. **Summarize the discussion and reflect on normal responses** (Where required)

(Pallas, 2020).

IRASTT Framework

- Introduction and Intention
- Reaction
- Analysis
- Summary
- Take home
- Thank you



(ANZAC, 2021)



Trauma-Informed Approach

- Five principles associated with post-trauma intervention
- Reviewed and practically embedded in the framework

Five Principles of Trauma Intervention

(Hobfoll et al, 2007)



Promotion of safety



Promotion of Calmness



Promotion of self-efficacy
and collective efficacy



Promotion of connectedness



Restoring hope

Sense of Safety

- Modify the Environment
- Update Plans
- Clear Leadership Messaging
- Reflect and Learn





Calming Interventions

- Tailored Interventions.
- Timing of Debriefing
- Normalise Responses

Boost Efficacy

Promoting Self-Efficacy

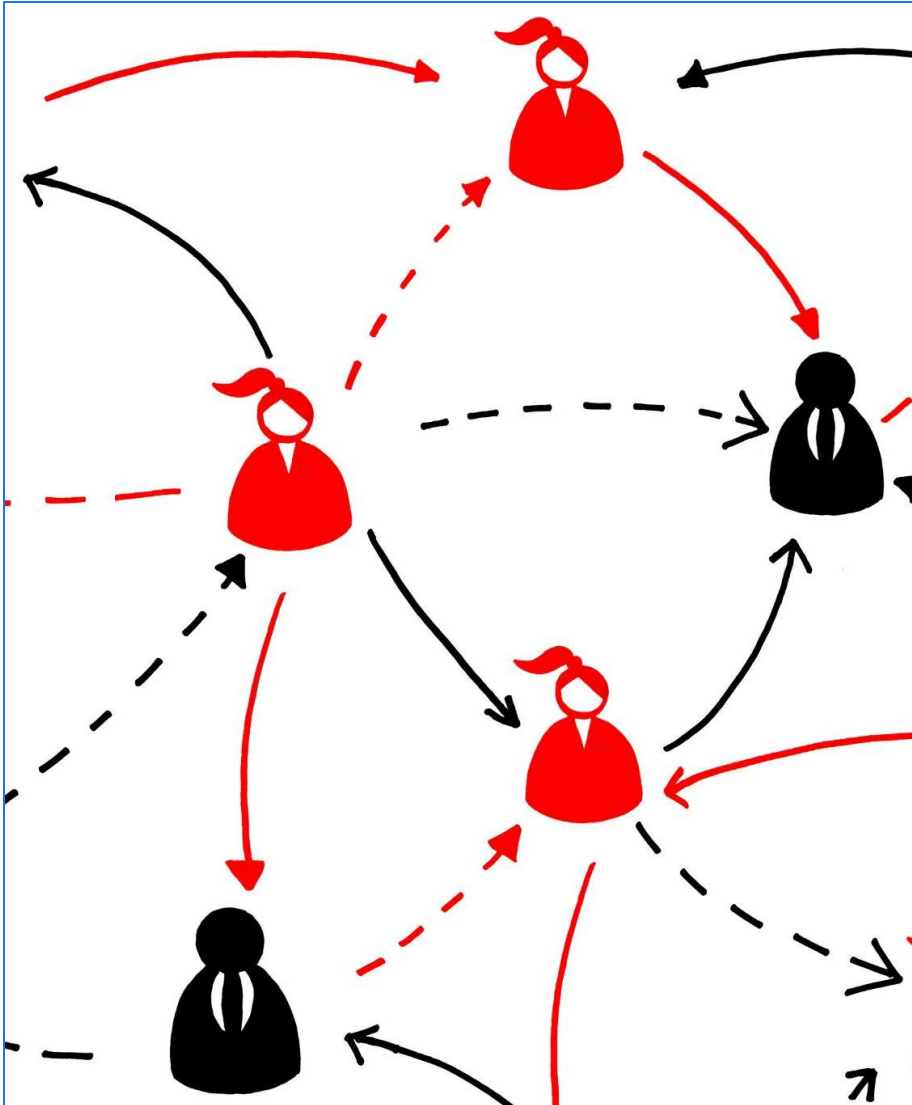
Enhancing self-efficacy assists recovery by instilling confidence and belief in one's abilities to overcome challenges.



Collective Efficacy

Highlighting positives during post-incident debrief sessions helps build collective efficacy and confidence in recovery.





Connectedness

Encouraging connections among individuals helps in emotional recovery by fostering a sense of community and support.

Facilitate opportunities to share experiences and create a psychological safe workplace that promotes emotional understanding

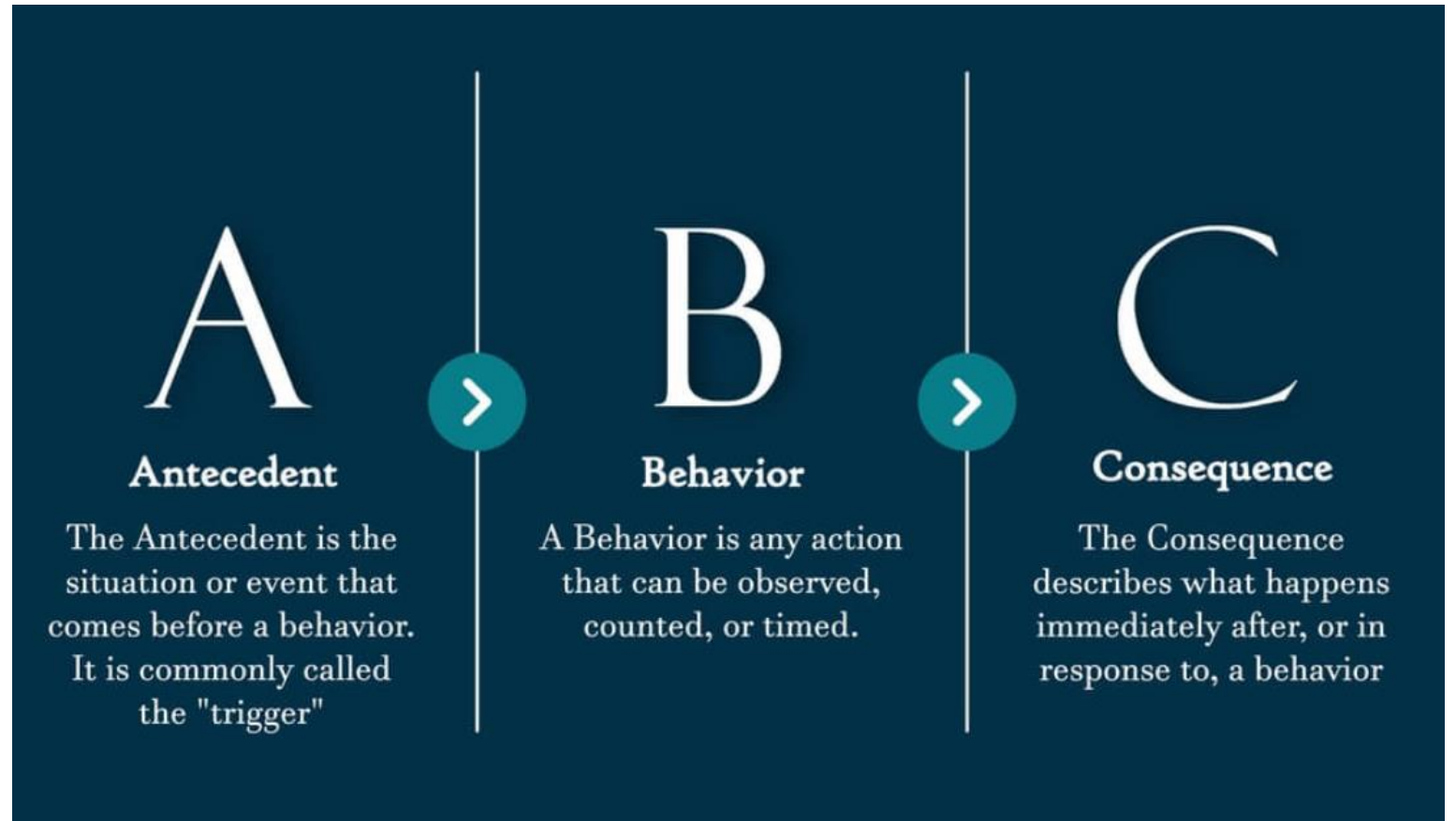
Restoring Hope

Leaders should focus on restoring hope to ensure long-term well-being and emotional resilience in affected individuals

- Normalise responses to the traumatic situation.
- Provide comfort and validate reactions
- Building Resilience



Function of Behaviour





Framework Questions

Gathering Essential Information

- Can you describe what happened during the incident?
- Can you identify the antecedence/s leading to the incident?
- What occurred after the incident?

Refinement of Practice

- What could be done differently next time?
- What was done well?
- List 'Recommended Actions'

Ensuring Participant Support

- How are you feeling after the incident?
- Do you want to express how you felt being involved in the incident?
- Do you have anyone outside the workplace you can talk to?

Debriefing Framework

Incident Debrief Form

Debrief date and time	
Debrief participants	

Incident date and time	
Location of incident	
Staff involved	
Student/s involved	
Describe what happened?	

Do you want to express how you felt being involved in the incident?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No List any staff member that you feel requires individual follow up post debrief:
Can you identify the antecedence/s leading to the incident? <i>(demands, sensory, social)</i>
What occurred after the incident? <i>(consequences to student, impact on other students)</i>
What was done well? <i>(communication, removal of others, timely support)</i>

What could be done different next time? <i>(positioning, environment, instruction)</i>
Any additional information
Do you have anyone outside the workplace you can talk? <i>(family, friends, professional)</i>

Recommended actions	
Action <i>(update Behaviour Support Plan)</i>	Who <i>(class teacher)</i>

Debriefing Guide

Prior to commencing

- Gain consent as debriefs are voluntary
- Ensure psychological safety
 - be kind and compassionate
 - remind participants to be mindful of their language and tone
 - non-judgemental
- Highlight that while this is a shared incident, people may not have shared perceptions
- Acknowledge that this experience may have been confronting and emotive
- Establish an intention such as:

'I think it's important to take 15 minutes to discuss the incident that occurred today. This allows valuable time to share and reflect on the event with hopes to improve the safety and care of our staff and students.'

Post debriefing

- Thank the staff for choosing to work in this specific school context and their dedication
- Thank the staff for participating in the debrief and displaying vulnerability
- Friendly reminder of confidentiality around the process
- Highlight the departments Employee Assistance Program (EAP)- 1800 951 198
- Follow the flowchart

Semi-Structured Interview Results



Participating in the Debriefing Process

Constructive and well-received experience
Supportive and not too time-consuming
Participants felt validated and positive



Appropriateness and Relevance of Questions

100% satisfaction with questioning
Questions were relevant to the school context
Facilitated honest feedback



Suggestions for Additional Questions

No additional questions needed
Current questions deemed appropriate



Benefits of Debriefing

Provided closure of event
Facilitated a learning opportunity to improve practice

Limitations



Time Pressures



Frequency of Incidents

Possibilities for Future Research

- Continue data collection in SSPs
- Examining Optimum Time Frame
- Transferability of Framework

Thank
you!!!
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