



Understanding trauma to strengthen a family bond

Case study: LINKS Trauma Healing Service



The Family Profile

Due to child protection concerns, Luke* was removed from his biological parents and placed with foster carers. The three year old experienced abuse in care and consequently, after relocation, he and his two siblings were reunited under one roof, with their grandparents.



Luke's traumatic past manifested itself in his violent behaviour. Despite finding a safe and loving home with Margaret* and John*, Luke was physically and verbally aggressive and was displaying oppositional behaviour, at home and at preschool. When Luke was referred to the LINKS Trauma Healing Service, his grandparents were exhausted and ready to give up.

The family attended weekly sessions, which included Parent Child Interaction Therapy, with Amy*, LINKS Mental Health Clinician, for approximately five months. As time went on, the grandparents started



The Result

noticing small improvements in Luke's behaviour. He was listening more, was able to follow instructions and became less aggressive towards them and his siblings. Margaret and John reported feeling more confident in managing their grandson's behaviours.

Prior to the intervention provided by LINKS, their experience with Luke was overwhelmingly negative. The therapy has strengthened Luke's attachment with his grandparents.

'By the end of the LINKS intervention, Luke was like a different child', said Amy. 'His behaviour has changed significantly: he follows instructions most of the time and displays kind and helpful behaviour on a daily basis. Luke loves spending time with his grandparents and is eager to please them'.

All LINKS therapists are experts in trauma and the interventions are trauma-informed and evidence-based. Luke's experience of complex trauma was a major contributing factor to his behaviour and helping his grandparents to better understand his attitudes and actions through a trauma lens was essential. Luke's grandparents learnt 'play therapy' skills to help them build and strengthen their attachment with him, as well as specific skills to help them with limit setting, boundaries, and consequences for behaviour.

Luke is excited to start school next year and has been attending the Kindergarten orientation visits each week in preparation for his transition to school.