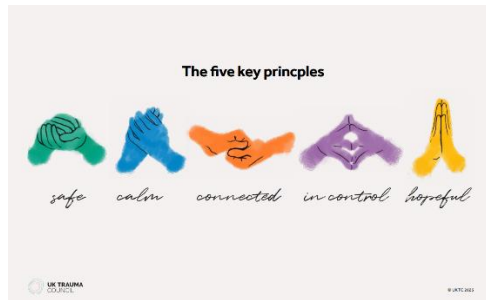


*The **Critical Incident Support Service** provides support in a Critical Incident, consultation and advice about bereavement as well as training.*

Welcome to the Spring newsletter for the Critical Incident Support Service, we thought it would be good to update you on recent developments and also let you know about training and support that we offer.

The **Critical incident team** provide emotional support, practical advice and containment to promote the well-being of the school community in times of crises, and to empower everyone in building resilience. We use evidence-based approaches to offer a quick response in a compassionate and empathic manner, helping schools to recover using the five key principles of safe, calm, connected, in control and hopeful (Hobfall et al, 2017).



([UK Trauma Council](#), Critical incidents in educational communities, 2023)

The team is led by Dr Bianca Finger Berry and Cherie Pointon, who share the role of Critical incident Specialist Leads.



Bianca trained in social pedagogy in Bielefeld, Germany and after working as a social worker in West Sussex she joined EPSS in 2001. She completed her Doctorate in Education in 2015, and her MA in Advanced Social Work in 2018. Bianca is an accredited EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation & Reprocessing) practitioner. She is part of the EPSS extended leadership team and leads on work relating to critical incidents, bereavement, trauma and is involved in some suicide prevention activities.



Cherie joined EPSS in September 2021 as a Specialist Learning Support Teacher and joined the Critical Incident Team later that year. She holds the NASENCO award and CCET. Cherie started working as one of the Critical Incident Specialist Support Leads, alongside Bianca in June 2023. Cherie recently trained as a TRiM (Trauma Risk Management) practitioner.

Depending on the circumstances, we can offer support and guidance over the phone/MS Teams or come into school to provide support, share resources, and template letters as well as signpost to other agencies and professionals.

The Critical Incident Specialist Leads also offer consultations in relation bereavement and recent trauma, providing research-based support and advice, as well as working closely with Norfolk independent and statutory services.

Support we have offered 2022-2023: We offered support/ advice on 114 occasions and visited 30 settings supporting pupils and staff, for example, when a child or member of staff died. Support included further interventions such as TRiM (staff only) or EMDR (staff and pupils) where traumatic stress symptoms have been experienced.

Quotes from schools and settings that we have supported recently:

People are human and need support and care in times of trauma and stress. Supporting our staff in turn supports our children and communities and is invaluable. Thank you for your help and support.

Reassurance that we had taken the 'right' steps and approached it in the right way - a boost at a time when we needed it.

Thankfully critical incidents are occasional incidents, therefore, to have someone who can provide support and guidance to ensure the best outcomes for all is essential.

Training available

Training on 'Managing critical incidents and bereavement for senior leaders' and 'Supporting bereaved children in educational settings' is provided to support staff develop their competence and confidence. You will find the latest courses [here](#). We encourage settings to attend training and prepare for Critical incidents (Red Book procedures).

Upcoming training includes [Update Training -Managing critical incidents, trauma and bereavement](#) (online) date TBC
[Supporting bereaved children in school communities](#) 19/3/24 (in person) 9:30-12:30

Learning from Training / Conferences and Research

In September 2023 Bianca attended the International Crises Conference in Innsbruck and it was extremely interesting hearing different perspectives. Simon Finkeldei talked about how crises intervention with children does not always mean to undertake direct work with children. We know that the ability of the caregiver to provide stability is closely connected to whether affected children are able to process events. It is therefore important to provide information to caregivers in order for them to recognise whether their children need additional help as well as provide the secure attachment that children need. In all crisis situations, it's important that people recognise the needs of children. German colleagues used the image of being a lighthouse for the children and watch out for warning signs.



New Developments 2023/24



Peer group supervision sessions relating to bereavement will be starting during the spring term 2024. The dates for these are: 13.2.24 & 26.3.24 (2-3pm – primary), (3:30-4:30pm secondary).

Please email cs.criticalincidentservice@norfolk.gov.uk if you are interested in joining these.

We are committed to developing our resources and support for you all and have developed a **Padlet** with books and podcasts / videos that may be of use and interest to you. These are resources that we have used or found to be helpful but cannot endorse each resource for individual circumstances, as we are aware that whether a book is helpful or not is subjective and as such is a decision that can only be made by the individual.



The Padlet is being developed and so will be added to regularly. [Critical Incident Service: Useful Books and Podcasts \(padlet.com\)](#)

Please do get in touch with us if you would like to know more about any of the topics mentioned in this newsletter, or if you would like to have further information about the Critical Incident Service. **Email:** cs.criticalincidentservice@norfolk.gov.uk

You can also find out more and access resources on our website: [EPSS Critical Incident](#)