



17 March 2021

Dear Premier and Children's Commissioner,

We write in response to your discussion paper and to outline the work TANA have undertaken to address the 'wicked problem' of complex trauma, as the known root cause of mental and physical ill-health.

To prevent the intergenerational transmission of violence, cruel treatment of the vulnerable and insecure we need a widespread education program, aimed at the general public.

This is a no shame, no blame program of events, promotions, information pieces on television and through all media outlining the impact of violence and boundary violations on the human condition.

We teach, outlining how violation impacts our gene expression, our physiology and how our brain works, our perceptions of the world and our very sense of felt safety. We explain how violation of boundaries impacts on our lived experience of the world and colours our every moment.

This must be widely understood, to the point of it being every day, common knowledge.

We need a default strategy to use instinctively - to discipline, to teach, to civilise and to bring our young people into flourishing, mature adults. TANA can share this widely and across all socio-economic, cultural and age groups.

We have an agreed upon, common framework of Attachment, emotional awareness and Regulation and Competency building (ARC). We focus and build on these three areas.

We advocate for bringing professionals into schools, where are young people spend the majority of their time, when not at home. This is critical support for teachers, having mental health and allied professionals on the ground, at the point of emotional breakdown and crisis, to work with our more vulnerable young people.

Right now, instead of this, the hurt and chaos is spreading into more and more classrooms and impacting more and more students and teachers. When the effects of complex trauma go unresolved day after day, we observe a compounding effect and a dismal trajectory unfold. We can *prevent* further transmission through our work.

When we provide a safe, healthy environment in schools, with a sense of calm, order and safety, we create real support. With health and disability support professionals based on school campuses, we augment the educational services offered by the Department of Education.

If the government are about serving the needs of the whole person and the community, over the needs of sustaining the status quo of government departments, health and justice professionals will

not have a problem going to where the need is greatest - where children are - instead of offering them appointments that they may or may not turn up to, out of their own environment.

Schools become a natural place for help and support, they are opened up to the community.

Right now, we are seeing a shift in knowledge of the impact of trauma, but not an understanding of the importance of modelling accountability.

Parents need to be supported in how to set and keep firm boundaries with their children, at each stage of their developmental level, from babies right up to late teens.

Successive generations of parents, who may never have seen modelled healthy boundary setting and support, need that education. They need to be shown how to say no to their children and that it is in everyone's benefit to do so.

Children of this generation want parents to parent, not to be their friend and companion. Children want parents to take responsibility for them and to actively parent them with authority and interest.

Never, in times past, have we had to parent in the age of mass technology, social media, children with access to unlimited, unfiltered information and influences, children banned from leaving the home to play unsupervised and parents under increasing time pressure and stress.

This parenting generation needs greater guidance and support. They would welcome direction and information. It would validate how they feel about their own upbringing and give them the freedom to attempt to change their practices and default behaviours.

We can no longer ignore parents, out of fear of their responses. They are increasingly desperate and in need to firm foundations. A combination of knowledge of the science of human thriving and common sense will help them redirect the ship of their family, for the benefit of all.

With high regard,

*Brigid Daly*

TANA President



TANA is a single-issue grassroots organisation, advocating for community and government decision making that understands and carefully considers the impact and effects of complex trauma and toxic stress.

We stand for creating community environments in which people feel safe enough to be true to themselves; to develop their capacity to express themselves more fully and openly and thereby be more open and receptive to growth and aspiration, kindness and compassion. These attributes are the natural outflow of supportive environments.

So first, we must *be* providers of safe spaces - for ourselves, our families and our communities.

We promote raising self-awareness as a fundamental starting point and, for many people, this will necessitate the acceptance and integration of any past experiences that were not able to be processed at the time of their occurrence, for the purpose of healing and recovery.

TANA members understand that this is the work of health care professionals and that we are not service providers, although many of our members provide community service as a life and/or career choice. Our co-founders have all worked in education, two as teachers across all levels of schooling.

We are solely here as a collective community voice, with this clear message to our government:

“We must consider the *root cause* of our mental and physical ill-health when setting policy and implementing service programs and practices for their mitigation. We must carefully consider the psychosocial impact of our practices in our major service departments, including health, education and justice and in our social service organisations when setting policies and programs.

We hold to the belief that all people have infinite potential for growth and development, contribution and happiness and we expect our top down decisions to reflect a desire to draw this out of the people of Tasmania.”