

Ian May [00:00:03] Welcome everyone to our disability forum for parents. My name is Ian May and I'm the Director of Disability Policy and Programs in the Department for Education. This is a forum that we've been whole hosting most of the year, these types of discussions, we've had a series of different discussions but today our focus is on behaviour, behaviour supports and behaviour policy and of course I've asked someone in the Department so one of my colleagues who's leading this to join us so Trinh, Trinh Mai, what's your role what's your position and what are you leading at the moment?

Trinh Mai [00:00:39] Okay so I'm the Assistant Director for Policy and Project Implementation in the Engagement and Wellbeing Directorate. So I have responsibility for the Department's behaviour support policies and the different procedures and guidance that sit underneath that. So my responsibility is to very much provide the tools and the approaches that really help some teachers in schools and our specialist staff to provide a great response for children and young people around supporting their behaviour.

Ian May [00:01:09] Looking forward to unpacking the policy and the practices and principles in the Department but why are we talking about this today? Well this has come up through our parent reference group that helps us to organise these forums and we've had a series of forums that's been building towards this. We've looked this year at Interoception which is a program about teaching children about self-regulation. We've looked at Support Services structure, what is available to supporting our preschools and schools and parents and we've also looked at transitional practices this year. So those topics have all come about because parents have said "look we'd like to have a talk around that and here's some more information". So today we're building on that by looking at the behaviour and the behaviour policy and support. As this is a live webinar, if there's any technical issues we will hopefully go through them and prompt. We also welcome any questions, we've got a couple of people looking at the anything that comes in and we aim to respond immediately or at a later date. Towards the end we've got a survey questions about how useful did you find today and other things that you'd like us to focus on in 2021 so wherever you are we really appreciate you joining us and hope you're well safe.

To start, acknowledge country, acknowledge the importance of it, the South Australian education community strongly acknowledges the land of the traditional lands of the First Peoples of Australia. We're on Kurna land in Adelaide, but wherever you are across South Australia we really respect and acknowledge country. We respect spiritual relationships with the country and acknowledge that culturally heritage beliefs are still very important today. We also pay respect to the cultural authority of all First Nations Peoples, including Elders past present and emerging.

So, talked about our recapping, so we've had these forums which have been online this year, now in previous years as the people who know that have joined, we've actually had them face to face mostly in Adelaide, a few in the country and we've held a conference once a year which we've had about 150 parents come to do, come to those. So we absolutely want to continue on that in 2021; the model, well I suppose it's going to be a hybrid model like this. This is working for lots of people because it's going to be live but it's also recorded and it's on the Special Education Resource Unit website. So we'll be discussing about the next steps for 2021 towards the end. So let's talk about behaviour, behaviour supports and why is this a really good topic, because I think one of the things that we are learning about is, by having some very close examination of practices for people with disability in all sorts of ways, we've got a Royal Commission that's handed down an interim report. Now the interim report, which is now online and in previous forums I've been suggesting to parents you can contribute to the Royal Commission, have a say and monitor, you know the process, now we know it's broader than education, the Royal Commission, but for education it's made some interim comments and some of the comments have been about exclusionary practices about overuse of restraint and seclusion. It's been about poor expectations and poor outcomes for children with disability and it's making recommendations that these issues need to be examined in forums just like this, we need to put them on the table have a good deep dive and a collaborative open-ended discussion around how do we address those sorts of things that the royal commissioners are coming up with. At the same time, in a legislative framework, we have the Disability Discrimination Act and under it we have the Disability Standards for Education. Now they have also been reviewed this year and the early findings about the DSE review is that we need to promote the rights of children with disability, we need to promote the Standards and so people understand them and can really see their obligations within it, whether it's an Education Department, an educator or a parent. So there are pretty strong drivers that behaviour policy, behaviour supports, the behaviour principles, all actually need to be really closely looked at openly and effectively and that's why I've got Trinh doing that today. When I get asked about behaviour from parents it's often sort of two types of questions, sometimes it's a specific case, this specific child like "what is this behaviour showing?", "why is this behaviour happening?", "how do I support it?", "what resources are there within the Department and outside of the Department?", so I kind of get a range of those sorts of questions and the school and the Department, we try to very much respond to those but then I get another range of questions and that's at the side that we're looking at more today. What are the principles? What are the policy? What are the guidelines for schools and preschools to

adhere to, follow and support children? So that's the bit we're kind of looking at today, what's the policy and the principles? So have all that, so lead us through Trinh that starting question, the principle, the policy and the practices.

Trinh Mai [00:07:17] Okay. Well we've really had a fundamental rethink about the way that we look at behaviour support in the department and we wanted to create a policy, first of all that really identified what we believe and understand about policy, so that's the first part. The second part is we wanted to have a policy that not only guided our staff in terms of what they needed to do, you know the rules etc, but we also wanted to have a policy that really shaped and guided the conversations that would occur between staff and parents and children. So it was very much a policy that was that was designed to be used on a day-to-day basis not to be sitting on somebody's shelf. So what we did, it was the first thing we did, was we had a fundamental rethink so we used to think about the school discipline policy and that was the old policy and that kind of tells you something about the way that the Department looked at behaviour at the time but it was a disciplinary kind of approach. It was very much targeted to the kind of negative behaviours, the kind of the things that children get in trouble for, and it also took a an approach which is always a bit of a rationalist approach and that when what I mean by that is it kind of took the approach that children weigh up before they do anything, they weigh up in their minds the pros and cons; if I do this, this is what will happen etc. And you're a parent and I'm a parent and the parents out there will know that no child sits there and does a critical analysis of the pros and cons before they do a behaviour, so we actually recognise that the policy that we had really wasn't hitting the mark in terms of what we wanted to achieve. So what we did was we spoke to not only teachers, teachers, educators, specialist staff, additional professionals across the board but we also spoke to parents and we spoke to children about what they needed in this policy and where we landed was this, first of all the goal of the policy is safe inclusion for all children, so it's not about inclusion at all costs and it's not about safety at all costs but about the safe inclusion of or for all children.

The second part was that people were really clear that they wanted a behaviour policy that was about the entirety of children's behaviour including the beautiful respectful and inclusive behaviour's and the kind of little ratty things that all children will do at all times to test the boundaries and see what they can get away with and the kinds of normal rule breaking that we expect to see in every home and every classroom but we also wanted to be able to address the more complex and challenging behaviours and the really the really unsafe and dangerous behaviour so the policy is to address that entire continuum. One of the things that we did was we set some real strong principles. We actually said the principle is we know that behaviour is about a purpose it's about a function in the communication. What are we trying, what is this child trying to tell us with their behaviour and how do we help them meet that purpose; so that's a really strong principle that sits behind it. We actually added in a new principle, which was about the timeliness of behaviour. How many parents out there have said "oh you know the teacher said they told my child how to do uh blah and then he went and did the wrong thing", without thinking about the fact that children need time to practice behaviour until it becomes really really natural and flawed for them. We actually recognize that behaviour occurs in a context, so children don't exist in their own world they exactly exist in the context of their families, their communities, their school and their classroom, so it's really about understanding that context and shaping that context to put your child in the best position to do really really well. And the last thing was we really emphasised the partnership and decision making so really recognising parents as partners in this process, professionals as partners in this process, rather than necessarily about what this teacher did at this particular school. So those are the principles that really drove this approach.

The last part that we actually did is it was a little bit unusual, what we actually did is we created the One Policy, so there is one behaviour support policy. Not different policies for different types of behaviour. So the Behaviour Support Policy sets up the key things that all schools have to achieve for all children across the board and then we provide some procedures about how that translates into different types of behaviours, like sexual behaviours, like in suspensions and exclusions, like bullying behaviours. What we recognize is all of these things our behaviour, so we actually need to have some core things that we need to achieve and the core things that we need to achieve in this space is first of all, we have to provide what the good stuff is. We have to be able to say what beautiful, respectful behaviours look like and be able to name that, we have to be able to teach children what is the expectation and what does the behaviour look like. If a child can't read we don't ask them to go into the reflection room and reflect on their reading, we give them the techniques and the skills around chunking, decoding, phonological awareness, so we have to do the same thing when we're trying to teach behaviours. We have to intervene in the least intrusive manner possible and we'll talk a little bit more about that. So the we absolutely have to intervene if there's an instant there's absolutely got to be an intervention but how do we do that in the least intrusive and least exclusionary way possible; we absolutely have to collaborate in terms of really getting the right people at the table to help us understand what that is and what the behaviour is about. We really wanted to emphasize repairing relationships, we want to actually say we know that problematic behaviours can harm children's relationships with their peers and with school staff so

how do we repair those relationships and we have to be able to do this in a really visible way so that if other children are looking at how schools behave they kind of understand what's going on, they have trust and confidence and they know it's been done with care and the last thing is, we absolutely have to support safety; how do we create safety for everybody who's involved in the behaviour incident.

So those are the seven key functions of the Behaviour Support Policy and I think we can talk a little bit more about how they play out on a day-to-day basis.

Ian May [00:13:42] If a parent or someone online wanted to have a read of our Policy, where is it available at the moment

Trinh Mai [00:13:49] Okay, we said it was really, really important that it was public, publicly available to every parent and every child so it's actually on our Intranet, you can google the Behaviour Support Policy and that will come up and anybody can access it but our awesome team in DPP, will make that Policy available as well as the slides from today, available to everybody who's joined the webinar

Ian May [00:14:11] And DPP is my section, Disability Policy and Programs, so my takeaway, is what you're saying Trinh, is we've really got a core philosophy about wrapping around for all children, it's about positive mindsets, it's about promoting and naming good behaviour, because it's very important to do that. It's then about skilling long-term views of children and I think under it, what I took away, is about relationships, relationships between families and schools and of course the child in the middle. Are they sort of the right messages?

Trinh Mai [00:14:50] Absolutely and I think I really love the fact that you focused on the relationships because that's actually what children and young people told us. So we actually went out and we spoke to children and young people about the Behaviour Support Policy and we actually said "hey guys this is going to affect 180 000 of you, what do you want in the policy?" and they actually said "you know what, whatever you make as the rules, it won't matter unless it's actually being done by somebody who cares about us and who respects us" and we absolutely want to bring it, bring that alive in the policy. The kids absolutely nailed that one

Ian May [00:15:26] I'd imagine through your consultation that there was a large range of very positive strategies and practices that came through, wasn't there? Was there lots of good, I suppose lighthouse practices, that came through?

Trinh Mai [00:15:42] Absolutely and I think that's the part that we really wanted to be able to recognise. Often what we have, what happens when we talk about behaviours, is we take a really deficit approach and we take an approach which is what do you do to respond to this incident and it tends to have been a punitive response, but when we speak to schools and when we speak to parents and children, they were telling us about the stuff that really helps them to do really well, the things that help them to be able to either behave really well or support children's behaviour really well and we said the policy absolutely needed to be able to capture that.

Ian May [00:16:14] Now that's good because that's my takeaway when I visit lots of preschools and schools, is just the wonderful connections and the positive approaches that everyone is taking. I do want to refer back to the Royal Commission because they did, while all of the things that we think are there's many good things happening, they have highlighted some things like gatekeeping, where children haven't been included. They have highlighted things like restriction and they've actually used a phrase called exclusionary practice. Now I thought maybe we should flip the coin because we've been talking about some of the good practices but what's exclusionary practice? What is that? What does that come under? What's the definition of that?

Trinh Mai [00:17:03] Well exclusionary practices really covers a very wide range of practices and some of those are formal and some of those are informal, so most of you will know the formal structures around suspensions, exclusions and expulsions and those are very, very formal tools that are available under legislation to respond to the most serious and complex and unsafe behaviour. So most people will be familiar with that, but the Disability Royal Commission and in fact the Behaviour Support Policy recognised that outside of these very, very formal responses, there were a range of practices that excludes children even informally. So they cover the kinds of things which are about children having part-time programs and not being provided with a full day, the full extent of education that could be provided. They talk about exemptions, they talk about not being permitted to be in certain classrooms, certain activities, certain events, so those are, probably the more informal and possibly the more subtle ways in which exclusionary responses can occur. So what we wanted to be able to do with the Policy is recognise both those formal exclusionary responses and those informal ones as well.

Ian May [00:18:23] Is it fair to say something along that, we've got to work on our system and our practices from exclusionary practices that lead to inclusionary practices, is it the mind shift that I suppose supports the Royal Commission and our policy

Trinh Mai [00:18:42] Absolutely and I think the way that I think about it is, a lot of my work and a lot of where this work has come from has been very much around what are the things that we can do to reduce the extents to which children are excluded but the flip side of that particular coin are what are the things that we can do to increase the likelihood of children being included and to increase inclusion. So I think that's something I think I'd love to hear your views about that Ian

Ian May [00:19:14] Well for me, I think it's recognising for a start, that we need to think about it is inclusionary. We do recognise that if we compare children children's rates of exclusionary practice, if we took out the cohort of children with disability there is over representation. When I see it from my point of view, when it works well, I think it goes back to the principles that you've said in the Policy, which is, it seems when people collaborate, have really good discussion, when there is a philosophy of teaming around the child, that works very successfully. When there is proactive, early planning, that works very successfully. As you said, it's not just waiting when things go awry, I think it's really good when we predict that these might be sticky points for the child. This might be the moment where we think the typical behaviour may not eventuate and maybe atypical behaviour does come to the fore. So I think it is about trying to do that prevention and prediction as an adult, whether you're a parent or an educator. I think it's also using evidence about the child, keeping strength based. When things are working well, we've got to acknowledge that with a child and say well done and congratulations and really about working their mindset into I am a successful human, I am able to control my emotions, I have a positive self image of myself. So I think using that evidence about saying we are seeing you going very well so I think they are kind of my two or three big things when you know, exclusion in practice if you think it in an inclusionary way. it works well does that?

Trinh Mai [00:21:20] Absolutely

Ian May [00:21:21] Highlight what you're thinking?

Trinh Mai [00:21:22] Yeah

Ian May [00:21:24] You're one of our experts in this area

Trinh Mai [00:21:25] And I think what we tried to do, we tried to capture in the policy, is what you've talked about there Ian, which is when you look at those seven policy functions that intervene in the least exclusionary way that is the only one that's necessarily attached to a particular incident, you know right, so often what we have is education systems in the past have very much tended to focus on this incident and we react to that incident and that's what that intervene function is about but what you've talked about is the proactive promotion of the good things the teaching the preventative work. That's where we're building into the other policy functions are promoting positive behaviours and explicitly teaching behaviours and behaviour expectations. All of the other components of the Behaviour Support Policy are actually doing all of that beautiful planning, preparation work and that long-term work and then you've got a response that you need to have to a specific incident, so that's how the policies really shifted

Ian May [00:22:27] A Parent question has come through Trinh and it's asked about restorative practice. They've heard about that their school does restorative practices, what is that and where does that sort of fit?

Trinh Mai [00:22:39] Oh it fits beautifully, it's actually one of the functions of the Behaviour Support Policy. So one of the things that we actually have in there is repair and restore relationships. So whenever there's been any sort of an incident, whenever schools are supporting children's behaviour, something that they need to do is actually look at have there been relationships that have been harmed in this situation, that need support to be able to restore and support them? And this happens at two levels, I think first of all, it's about talking to teachers and supporting school staff to recognise that behaviours can harm children's relationships, so if there's been a dispute if there's been some sort of an incident, that can affect the relationships and they it's actually saying to our teachers kids need help in terms of restoring that. To be able to acknowledge harm and to be able to say I am not that thing I did yesterday, I am this wonderful person who wants to have a connection with you and how do we move forward. So teachers need to be able to have the skills and ability to be able to do it and they need to know that's a core part of their business. The next layer up on that this is the part which teachers were really frank to us about, they actually said sometimes I feel really angry you know, sometimes I feel really hurt, I feel scared, I feel worried when I see these kinds of behaviours and it really told us that they also needed help to restore and repair relationships with children as well. So what it actually recognises is our teachers are human, our teachers bring the best of themselves into the classroom and sometimes they will need support from their Principal and from the Department to be able to say how do I restore the relationship with this child so that I can then help them restore their relationship with their peers. So that's very much in it and restorative practices is great because restorative practices are about prevention as well as about uh responding to an incident when there has been harm. So a lot of the things that you would talk to about would be about restorative

conversations, would be about groups where children have the opportunity to talk about the impact of their behaviour on others and that's both good prevention as well as a really great response when there's been an incident.

Ian May [00:25:02] That's really interesting what you said about the adult and the adults emotion in a situation where a child's emotions may be not regulated. We often don't think about the effect and has on us as individuals and how we need to manage those at the same time as supporting the child. So that leads, I suppose, to another question, a parent, how do parents work with their school to achieve a great approach? Because that's often, how do how does that collaboration relationship? how can that be working well? and how can it be strengthened?

Trinh Mai [00:25:40] Yeah, I think, well, I think that the core part is that parents need to have a seat at the table and they need to be then they need to be supported. So that creates both an obligation on the Department to make sure that parents have a seat at that table and that they have the opportunities to be able to contribute to decisions and really inform that process. The other part of it, is does it actually put a real pressure on parents to be there and we know parents are busy, we know that sometimes parents, especially parents who have had a lot of involvement with behaviour supports in schools, it's really tiring, sometimes you feel frustrated, sometimes you feel angry, sometimes you feel what is the point of me being there and it's really easy to say no. I just need to not be there. So it is actually about recognising the impact that has on you as a parent and finding the supports so that you can continue to be at the table to be able to have the conversation. So I think that's the first part, history is made by people who show up, so that's really the starting point. But the flip side of it and what we're trying to do with this Behaviour Support Policy is to change the conversations that occur when you're at the table. So the way that we've actually written the Behaviour Support Policy is that it's actually a guide for conversations. So again as I said, the conversations that we tend to have are around an incident and what happened on this date and how do people respond, and that's important. We need to have that conversation but all of those six other policy functions are your prompts for the other things that need to be in that conversation. So absolutely, you need to have that conversation around what little Johnny did at recess time on Tuesday and what the school did in response and how everybody can support. The flip side of that conversation is also around, broadly speaking, what does this tell us about what Johnny needs to understand about beautiful relationships and beautiful behaviours? What does this tell us about the skills that Johnny needs to learn and does he actually know what they are and how do we help him to learn them and how do we help them to practice them? So all of those policy functions are a prompt to the other parts of the conversation that need to occur and sometimes don't occur as much as we would like them to.

Ian May [00:28:04] What typically are, what's the Department putting out about in skilling teachers, providing supports for teachers around behaviour supports, what typically are school's doing?

Trinh Mai [00:28:16] Well at the moment, I think school, schools absolutely use some great strategies out there so really helping schools to be able to, you know, plan their environment and create environments where children feel safe, so that's things around the way that you structure the environment, access tools and resources, lighting sound all of those things, that's quite, that's great and they've also used really good strategies like the use of visuals, of guides, the use of fidget toys and things that children can hold; sensory input, all of those things are great. What we're seeking to do is, first of all, expand the range of tools that are available to teachers, is the first part. So what we've actually said is, we have scoured the country and the world to look at what are the evidence-based strategies that we know work really, really well and we've actually said don't worry about looking for this stuff for yourself, we've found it all for you and you know that if you use any of these strategies, they will work and they're drawn from the positive behaviour interventions and support systems, so they're very very clear practices and behaviours that teachers can use across supervision, across pre-correction, prompting corrections, use of praise, active supervision; so there's some very very clear practices and we're making sure that all teachers have access to these practices. The other thing that we're actually saying, is you need to be using all of these practices all of the time, so it's not about having the one tool that you go to all the time but having a real range of tools that you can use when you're actually saying I'm using this at this time but I think I'm going to have to draw in some additional tools and additional strategies. So again creating a bigger toolbox for teachers and we've just created a Behaviour Support Toolkit that really helps teachers to be able to go, okay I'm going to grab these tools and I'm going to use them and I know that they're going to work.

Ian May [00:30:21] As you know, for students with disability, we have the One Plan to be a proactive mechanism for educators and parents and the child to come together and say well look, where is my learning going? What are my next steps? Do you see? That's here I see it's a really proactive voice strategy. Is that what you see? Would that be within your philosophy for behaviour support?

Trinh Mai [00:30:40] Absolutely and I think that's the thing, you know, there isn't this fake you know dichotomy between children's academic and children's behaviour, they're really one and the same and they're really so connected. So I think that what I love about the One Plan is it really brings together all of those different dimensions

which we know exist in our children. The thing that I really think is useful is the One Plan provides the structure for the kinds of points of which I think is really nice, so one of the things that we do is we actually, again, say okay we've got this behaviour, is this behaviour the child seeking something or avoiding something? Is it something internal to them in terms of their physiology and their senses or is it something about relationships outside these externals? Like relationships or a thing that they want. Even being able to have the One Plan conversation in terms of is this child seeking or avoiding? What are they seeking and avoiding and how do we actually help them to meet that need?

That's a great conversation to have in the One Plan

Ian May [00:32:03] Earlier you mentioned problem sexualised behaviours. We had a parent forum organised through the Special Education Resource Unit, it was actually a face-to-face one, so a maximum of 17 parents could attend but that process was to unpack our potential policy and practices. So, if we just look at problem sexualised behaviours just for a second, do you know anything about that process and what parents were saying what that led to?

Trinh Mai [00:32:34] Yeah absolutely. So first of all, I wanted to be able to say thank you so much to all the parents who contributed to that process and I think you know there's a question here which is around whether or not the new policies are inclusive of parent and carer and student voices and that's our intention, that's always our aim, so you can see that happens in a couple of different ways. One was that the policies and procedures were actually and resources were shaped by what parents told us they wanted to see in the policy, what children told us they wanted to see in the policy, so that was the important part. So Claire's conversation with this group was very much around getting parents voices around what they needed to see in policy and procedures around children's harmful sexual behaviours; so that was the first part. The second part, is we create the policies and procedures in a way that helps parents, students and teachers to be able to have the same conversation and that's why the language is so simple, that's why they're actually uh you can view them as a prompt for the day-to-day conversations that occur. Now harmful sexual behaviours is a really really complex and tricky area and what we actually find though is that the same kinds of things that you want to do in all sorts of behaviours applies to sexual behaviours. So when we talk about promoting, what do really respectful, safe behaviours actually look like and being able to help children to be able to talk about that and identify that, but explicitly teaching children what are the expectations in terms of your body, other people's bodies, things which are good and bad secrets, good and bad touches; all of those kinds of things are things in which we are explicitly teaching children the expected behaviours but also how they actually do that. So we take the exact same approach to harmful sexual behaviours as we do to the broader Behaviour Support Policy. The really interesting angle that we're taking in this and this is being informed by some the research that's coming out of the UK, which is the kinds of things that work really really well to address children's sexual behaviours, other things that actually work well in terms of their social emotional learning. So does the child know how to seek help, for example, and help seeking skills are a skill for all children but a child who's engaged in sexual behaviours may not know how to seek help so if you teach them help seeking it addresses the sexual behaviours. Does the child know how to self-regulate if they're being if they're feeling agitated and stressed? Some sexual behaviours are self-soothing behaviours, so if they've got other behaviours that they can use to self-soothe and self-regulate, that's going to address health of sexual behaviours. Do you have a child who, do you have parents around a child and teachers around a child ,who recognise the signs of distress and provide support and that doesn't have to be around to stress around sexual behaviours, that's around anything. So if a teacher says "I know when little johnny's feeling agitated and when I see this I do these particular things", that's the kind of a response that will address sexual behaviours but it's also a kind of response that will address a whole range of other behaviours.

Ian May [00:35:53] I'm looking at the live feed Trinh, there's a question about sexualised behaviours, is it our policy and the toolkits that you've been talking about, are they inclusive of children with disability? Do they recognise that children with disabilities see the world sometimes differently and at a different development statuses? So does it recognise that their perceptions may be different from other people?

Trinh Mai [00:36:18] Absolutely and I think that was really important for us to be able to recognise, that what we describe as sexual behaviours may actually not have a sexual intent or motivation or experience, it may be absolutely about a sensory issue and soothing. It may actually be around social connection and trying to engage with somebody not actually necessarily having the skills around that. So I think those are the challenges that children with disabilities but also children with trauma, often experience, which is for them their behaviour may actually not be sexual at all but it comes out in that particular way. So how do we understand that and how do we frame the responses that doesn't unreasonably put a sexual lens on something that might not be sexual for children.

Ian May [00:37:05] That's really insightful and I know that's a very sensitive topic you are talking about but I think actually, when parents look at it they may be reassured; they say yes, it's because it's well principled, it is recognising that children do have different purposes for their behaviour. Another question, it's come through is, can parents and

students and carers put together a toolkit from our perspective about the hints and tips we need to do from their life experiences and see where it sits alongside the policy and the toolkits that we just developed?

Trinh Mai [00:37:44] I actually think that's a fantastic idea and I can see that kind of approach playing out both at a school level and at a parent level, so I think what we've done in terms of our Behaviour Support Toolkit is to identify the kinds of behaviours, the different categories of behaviours, what we would expect to see in children of different ages and what are the strategies that you can use to respond. But I think even just as that question, it prompts me to think around how parents might be able to use the same kind of ideas, which is again being able to support children to name and understand the behaviours and create some predictability and consistency and responses; so almost like when you do these things, this is what I will do and that's actually great because then you can actually say when you do these beautiful, respectful behaviours I will be able to share praise, I will be able to recognising knowledge etc. When you're showing these tricky behaviours and we can describe what they are, I will do this and I think that's a really great toolkit for all parents to be able to have as well as all schools.

Ian May [00:38:58] And if parents are saying, that's what we'd like to do, we could organise next year for Trinh to come back, we can go through the toolkit and we could have a discussion around that idea about well let's have a complimentary approach from a parent and student point of view. Has there been discussions, this is another question come through, in about exclusion being used as a tool because educators may not have the skills around managing a situation; so is that come up through your consultation?

Trinh Mai [00:39:33] Absolutely, I think and it certainly has come up through the submissions and testimonies to the Disability Royal Commission. So what we're doing is we're recognising that we're building the toolkit, we're creating the increased range of supports and strategies that teachers can use so that they don't use exclusion unless it's absolutely necessary. So what we are very much focused about is what are all of the day-to-day things that teachers can use to include children and to support positive behaviour so we don't have to move to exclusion and exclusion is very much seen as a tool of last resort.

Ian May [00:41:12] And I can re-emphasize, has there been discussions around children with disability and exclusions and suspensions? Absolutely, because we are clearly aiming for a reduction in that type of exclusionary processes to that more inclusionary and I think the journey that you're taking us on "well let's get the policy right", "let's get it clear what our goals are" and then we can work out the bits of the support so we will now have toolkits, we'll make it clearer, we'll have training and we'll keep this discussion going forward because obviously we are aiming for that inclusionary outcome.

Trinh Mai [00:40:53] Absolutely

Ian May [00:40:54] Now will restorative practices be mandated? If so and if not why not? Well what's about our mandatory responses?

Trinh Mai [00:41:02] Okay I think I'd need a crystal ball to be able to look into the future and see whether we will go down the rack of mandating the training I think the first part is really to actually have a system that embeds the approach of restorative practices, give teachers the tools and skills to be able to understand what are the different ways they can do restorative practices at the front end as well as restorative justice and reparation at the back end when there's been an incident. So I think, we'd really want to get a strong foundation in that and provide training overall to teachers before we start having the conversation around does this have to be mandatory and is that the best way to be able to get behaviour changes

Ian May [00:41:45] Yes but it's clear that the policy you've developed, that is an expectation in all our preschools and schools isn't it? That is the cornerstone that we're all waiting for and abiding by now isn't it?

Trinh Mai [00:41:56] yeah absolutely

Ian May [00:41:57] so that's I suppose, that's the mandatory bit and then the choices come out of that, from the school and the preschool point of view.

Trinh Mai [00:42:05] Yes

Ian May [00:42:06] Well I really actually found today, I thought I've unearthed more Trinh, I always enjoy speaking with you and I really am so delighted that you were able to share the processes of how this policy and the toolkits are being developed, the principles behind it and the next steps and I've got a feeling we might be inviting you back in 2021 to do a few of those more next steps

Trinh Mai [00:42:30] Yeah I would love to come back, I'd love to hear what parents are saying and I think it would be fantastic for us to a: have people have the opportunity to look at the policy, look at the toolkits we're using that your

fantastic team will be sending out some some discussion props and ideas and I'd love to hear what parents say how they're using it and what else they need to be able to have some great conversations about behaviour support

Ian May [00:42:57] Well thank you Trinh, thank you for your leadership in this area and thank you for everyone also who have contributed to the consultation through Trinh. This is our last live webinar for 2020, thank you for the team that's always put this on, organised it, to the Reference Group and to the Department staff that have supported the Reference Group. One of the learnings from 2020 is that the webinars have allowed us to reach across the state and either live now or it's going to be online and recorded. There is a survey that will be distributed and to ask you quick questions just to shape 2021 and the foci of our work. Absolutely you can email and connect with us around any thoughts you do have. Do want to promote the Special Education Resource Unit, down at Henley Beach; many of you would have been there, many of you would/do connect with the Special Education Resource Unit. A fabulous amount of staff there and a range of resources that parents can borrow, can ring up, you can go in and you can seek supports through the Special Education Resource Unit. We are looking hopefully in 21 of having a conference, held again in September, so all being well in our world that's the goal. So I suppose as we're halfway through term four, it's premature to wish you Merry Christmas and a good holiday but I will, because this is maybe the last official time that I can do that. But I may see some of you at our discussions in schools and preschools, so wherever you are in South Australia, I do hope the rest of the year goes successfully for you and the holiday period is a wonderful time for families thank you always for your support and over and out for now and see you in 2021. Thank you.