

## WHAT IF... IT WAS A SURVIVAL STRATEGY BEHIND THE LABEL?

Young people whose needs were not met naturally find ways of adapting to the adults around them. They develop 'survival behaviours' which usually fall into fight/flight (hyper-arousal) or freeze/collapse (hypo-arousal) responses and always function to protect them from perceived harm.

Mental health services are often organised around psychiatric diagnostic labels. For traumatised children, their survival behaviours are vulnerable to being misunderstood; mis-diagnosed and therefore, treated with interventions targeting the outward symptoms, rather than the hidden unresolved trauma.

