

'THEY PUT SO MUCH FAITH IN ME THAT I KNEW THEY WOULDN'T LET ME GIVE UP'



The grassroots ACEs Movement, which has sprung up over the last year in Scotland, has engaged many adults. Now the voices of more young people are being heard. In today's editorial, we hear from Fern Guckel, who talks about how ACEs information has helped in her life and why she thinks all employers should become trauma-informed.

I first learned the term Adverse Childhood Experiences this year, when I watched the documentary film Resilience, at a staff training night within the nursery where I work.

My first reaction was to cry, because I could personally relate to most of what the film focused on. After the documentary was finished, I felt so empowered, like someone had flipped a switch on inside me. Personally, I am a very shy person

who never voices my opinion, but after I watched Dr Nadine Burke Harris in the documentary, I felt like I had to speak out and be heard. The documentary gave me a voice that could not be ignored.

Growing up in my family was extremely difficult. I have experienced multiple ACEs. We were exposed to frequent trauma and adversity. There was very little opportunity to feel safe and calm. It was not my sanctuary.

I grew up feeling like I was alone in the world and could trust no one. School tried to put me through years of counselling, but I just couldn't trust anyone. I didn't feel safe. I have never really been a high achiever in school or in anything I ever done. My teachers told me I would never make anything of my life because I never showed any emotion towards anything I ever did.

After school I tried college because I had a feeling I wanted to work with children, but I never really had any

passion for college. After three years I left and decided to do an apprenticeship in childcare. That turned out to be the right place for me. My managerial team knew about trauma. After many heartfelt conversations with them, I had finally found people who put their faith and trust in me and where I could feel comfortable.

Three years later, after many tears and cuddles, I am now proud to be a fully qualified Early Years Practitioner. I have wanted to give up so many times over the past three years and just give in to my own negativity.

But I have the most amazing manager and director I could have ever imagined. They put so much faith in me that I knew they wouldn't let me give up. That was all because they understood about trauma and ACEs. I am now looking forward to the future with the most amazing support team I could wish for.

Thank you so much.



**Fern Guckel,
Lullaby Lane
Nursery**