

# Compassionate Approach



---

**SPLASH**

**Somerset Preschool Lifestyle Activity  
Skills for Self – Help**

20th June 2024  
SSCP Forum Week

**Dr Megan Rowley**

**Isobel Feakins**



**Somerset**  
NHS Foundation Trust



# What is SPLASH?

We are a service in Somerset for preschool aged children (0-4) who are living with obesity.

Our team is made up of a dietician, a clinical psychologist and an assistant clinical psychologist and consultant paediatricians.

We work with the family to help them learn new skills, build confidence and understand more about food and well-being.

Weight loss is **NOT** an outcome of our service.

We develop a personalised plan depending on the child and family's individual needs and goals.

# Ethos

Family focused

Supportive and non-blaming

Strengths based

Centered on relationships

Connecting

Compassionate Trauma-informed approach

## Our Kids Hear How We Talk About Food & Bodies

@bodypositive\_mom



Let's Eat



The Same



Foods Our



Kids Eat



Let's Talk About



How Normal



& OK Body



Differences Are



Let's Celebrate



Uniqueness & Make



Food Enjoyable,



Not Scary

# Trauma-informed Care (TIC) in Paediatric Weight Management

- Association between stress in early life, chronic stress and obesity in adulthood is well established (Eating, 2017).
- Growing evidence for the relationship between ACEs and the risk of childhood obesity, with an increase in number of ACEs associated with a higher risk (Schroeder et al., 2021; Kyler et al., 2021).
- TIC is especially pertinent to children and adolescents with obesity due to their high risk for weight-based bias, victimisation, and social isolation (Cuda et al., 2022).
- The TIC framework creates a safe, nurturing space to have open conversations with families to promote resilience and reduce stigma related to obesity without re-traumatisation (Scott and Rhee, 2023)

# Contributors to Obesity



Williams et al., (2022)



**Somerset**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# TIC in SPLASH – Home Visits

- Unthreatening, de-medicalising conversations around obesity and symptoms trauma (**realise, safety, voice, resist**) build trusting relationships (trustworthiness).
- Take time to actively listen to personal experiences (**safety**).
- Provide time for patients to tell their story and encourage them to share their experiences as experts in experience (**trustworthiness, collaboration**).
- Ask permission to talk about weight (**recognise**).
- Understand what has been helpful/unhelpful about previous encounters around their child's weight (**resist**).

# TIC in SPLASH

- Develop a mutual plan of goals important to the family ([collaboration](#)).
- Prioritise regular (monthly) appointments, continued opportunities for conversations, sense of being held and really getting to know families ([safety](#), [mutuality](#), [resist](#)).
- Provide as much choice as we can in appointment modality ([choice](#)).
- Understand the role of food in life and in histories ([recognise](#)).
- Offer an MDT for co-ordinated care ([resist](#)).
- Use resource mapping that is appropriate and accessible ([resist](#)).
- Share key learnings and compassionate approach, to support weight-based conversations ([resist](#)).

