

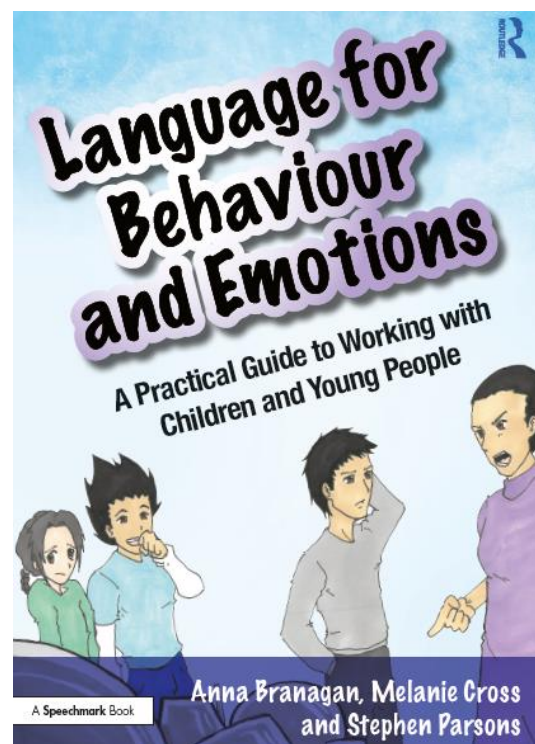
Language for Behaviour and Emotions (LFBE)

Why did we write Language for Behaviour and Emotions?

Children and young people's language development is important for their emotional development, behaviour and mental health.

We often see problems starting between children and young people because of verbal misunderstandings and problems with managing their emotions. These can then escalate because they can't negotiate or repair the miscommunication.

Sometimes things get even worse because adults try to resolve things using language that the children and young people can't understand. Other children and young people who struggle to understand language become withdrawn and struggle to explain how they feel or what support they need. Also, talking therapies, accessing mentoring and managing behaviour all require language and communication skills.



Although there are many children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) who have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) there are very few specific tools for practitioners which will help them to develop children and young people's **language, emotional and thinking skills**.

We want children and young people with SEMH and SLCN to have better access to support. LFBE can be implemented quickly and easily, by a variety of professionals to support these high-risk children and young people. It will also provide specialist staff with resources they can tailor more specifically to children and young people with more complex needs.

How does LFBE work?

Every child and young person is different and they will have different strengths and needs as regards their language and emotional skills, so assessment is required to know where to start LFBE. There are some short assessments which are necessary for all using the programme. There are also more in-depth assessments which can be used as required. Many children and young people will need a detailed assessment by a speech and language therapist and the LFBE assessments can form part of that. The assessments can also provide a baseline and be part of a dynamic assessment.

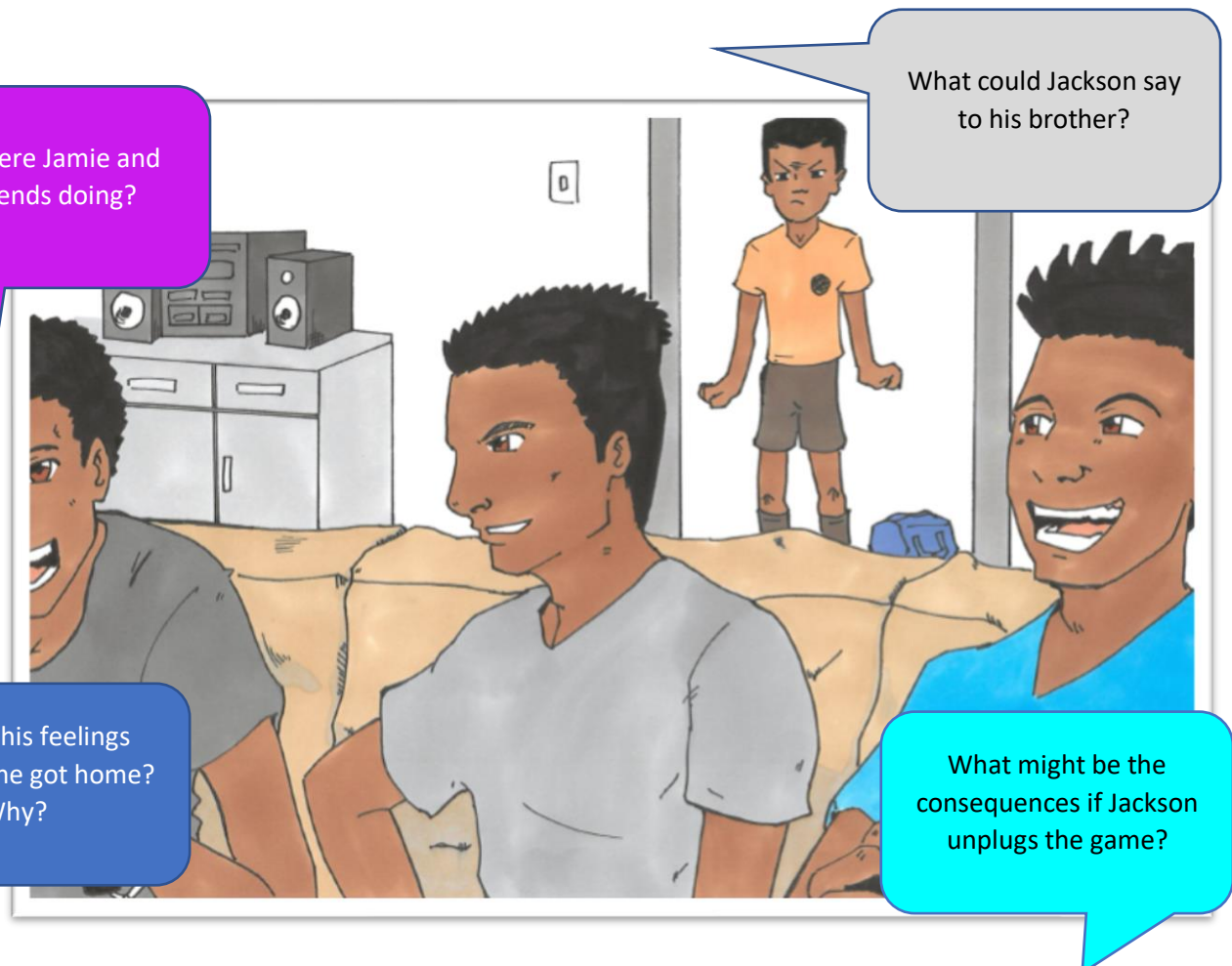
The assessment will provide a profile of each child and young person's strengths and needs. LFBE comes with a whole set of resources in the toolbox which can be used flexibly to develop the target skills.

The key skills addressed by LFBE in both the assessment and intervention are

- Understanding language
- Emotional literacy skills
- Inference and verbal reasoning
- Understanding and telling stories
- Solving 'people' problems

It is designed as a small group intervention but can easily be used for individual work. The principle is that the intervention should be holistic, so useful strategies should also be used by all who know the child or young person across the day.

The resource is built around 60 social scenarios which are accompanied by clear colour illustrations. The scenario story is read to the young people and then all in the group (adults included) take turns to answer the graded questions which accompany each scenario. The questions start out with reporting key facts from the story but move eventually to high level reasoning.



Involving children and young people

Children and young people need to be involved in the assessment process and the choice of targets if they are to engage. ⁱ In LFBE we provide opportunities for the child/young person to give adults' feedback on their communication and provide tools to include them in target setting. The intervention is structured with all involved taking turns to ask questions and answer them and sharing their ideas. Through 'real' conversations, based on interactive resources, where children and young people's ideas are respected, they can learn important language and emotional skills.

Impact

LFBE has been developed by combining theoretical knowledge with extensive clinical practice. Draft versions of many of the tools have been used for some time, but we are seeking to gather impact data and develop case studies, we would welcome your contribution to that.

Language for Behaviour and Emotions: A practical guide to Working with Children and Young People is out now, published by Speechmark/Routledge.

<https://www.routledge.com/Language-for-Behaviour-and-Emotions-A-Practical-Guide-to-Working-with-Children/Branagan-Cross-Parsons/p/book/9780367331832>

Who are the authors?



Anna is a Speech and Language Therapist within a Youth Support Team in Gloucestershire, working to enable vulnerable young people with speech, language and communication difficulties to access support more effectively. She also works within mainstream schools supporting inclusive practice in Worcestershire. Anna trained at Leeds Metropolitan University 25 years ago. She is the co-author of best-selling Speechmark resources 'Language for Thinking' (2nd edit 2017), 'Word Aware' (2013) and 'Word Aware 2' (2017).
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Melanie is a Speech and Language Therapist who has spent a 25 or so years working with looked after children and those who have social emotional and mental health needs (SEMH). Right from the beginning she's wondered why these children and young people (CYP) have the strengths and skills gaps that they experience. She has pondered about what the implications of these issues might be for them and has worked hard to find ways to engage CYP and help them learn the skills they need. She is the author of 'Children with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and Communication Problems' (JKP 2011), 2nd edition. She is also an Advisor on child mental health and she was lead author of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Clinical Guidelines on Social Emotional and Mental Health and their mental health learning journey. Melanie is also a trainer, supervisor and Video Interaction Guider and Supervisor

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Stephen is a Speech and Language Therapist, trainer and author of practical language development resources for teachers and SaLT. From 1996–2017 Stephen worked as a Speech and Language Therapy Service Manager in Hackney and the City of London. With 30 years' experience in the field, he is co-author of best-selling resources 'Language for Thinking' and 'Word Aware'. Stephen graduated in Speech Pathology from Flinders University, before attaining an MSc in Speech and Language Therapy from City University, London in 2000. He currently serves as Chair of NAPLIC, the UK organisation for professionals working with developmental language disorder, and UK representative of RADLD, the international campaign to raise awareness of developmental language disorder.

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ⁱ Yeager, D. S., Dahl, R. E., & Dweck, C. S. (2018). Why Interventions to Influence Adolescent Behavior Often Fail but Could Succeed. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 13(1), 101–122.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691617722620>