Writing Through and Anti-Racist Lens



Millie Kerr

Racial Equity and Anti-Racist Consultant

CS Southern Region

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What Constitutes Language/Communication



- Spoken communication - verbal
- Nonverbal, body language
- Eye contact/no eye contact
- Observations, visual
- ESOL/additional language,
- British Sign language
- Brail
- jargon
- Dialect, accent,
- Cultural/nationality differences (cockney, slang, Gaelic, patois, differing meanings etc)
- Gesticulation, (hand movements)
- Interpreters/translation
- Texting language (tbh, sick, l8r,)
- Abusive and differing interpretations of all of the above, when viewed through British Eurocentric lens

Anti-Racist Considerations

- Fear, lack for confidence, beliefs, stereotypes
- Parenting, socialisation, education (nature v nurture)
- Differing cultural Parenting styles
- Identity, linguistic needs, religion
- Traditions, norms and customs
- Explore and elaborate
- Cultural humility/sensitivities,
- Develop understanding of difference
- Adultification – seeing/treating black children as more culpable than their white peers – consider stereotypes
- What are we measuring good against?

Identity and Culture

- Assessments of Black and global majority children must consider identity, culture, religion, racial trauma, adultification and intersectional identity.
- *‘ The anti-racist social worker in practice’ – (2025) N. Jude, T. Moore, G. Simango*



Language, Labels, Bias, Stereotypes

- Presents as Confident, happy - could this be masking? (what is masking?) or hiding Trauma
- Blaming, judgemental language (difficult to engage, uncooperative,)
- Big for her age/presents as older (Eurocentric centiles/measurements)
- They were aggressive – if this is a behaviour what is the cause?
- His height is intimidating, he is a big black man (consider, bias, fears, beliefs)
- She was a 15-year-old gang member, with a 26-year-old boyfriend
- Sexualized behaviour
- Naughty black/mixed heritage child v difficulties with emotional regulation due to……..
- He will end up just like his dad in prison
- Excluded from school, labelled as having 'behaviour problems' 'Aggressive', 'Violent'
- In foster care, care leaver, contact v family time
- Muslim, Jewish, asylum seeker, immigrant, Black person, Gypsy, Roma Traveller – often viewed in the negative – Why? (labels only tell you one thing about the person)
- Can we write one positive thing about each group?

Trauma/Racial Trauma informed

- How does this all impact your decision making – reflect
- If Behaviour is a form of communication, what is it telling us?



What Does Culture Mean to You?



The Premise of Racism

- Social workers should start from the premise that Black and global majority children and families will have lived experience of racism and may be impacted by racial trauma. ‘Consider this in assessments and interactions, to understand the cause of issues and to not respond and judge behaviours in isolation.
- ‘ *The anti-racist social worker in practice’ – (2025) N. Jude, T. Moore, G. Simango*

Anti-Racist recording/Writing

- Do not just look through a deficit lens
- What are the strengths,
- Do we praise good deeds enough, big or small (this matters)
- Do we recognise small wins or achievements
- Don’t make assumptions
- Write with curiosity and empathy
- Preventative, capacity to change and hope
- Tools to aid your interventions and direct work
- What would you like to see, if assessments were written about yourself?
- Consider how the media may impact our thinking and remain open and curious in our social work practice.

Look beyond deficits and find the positives

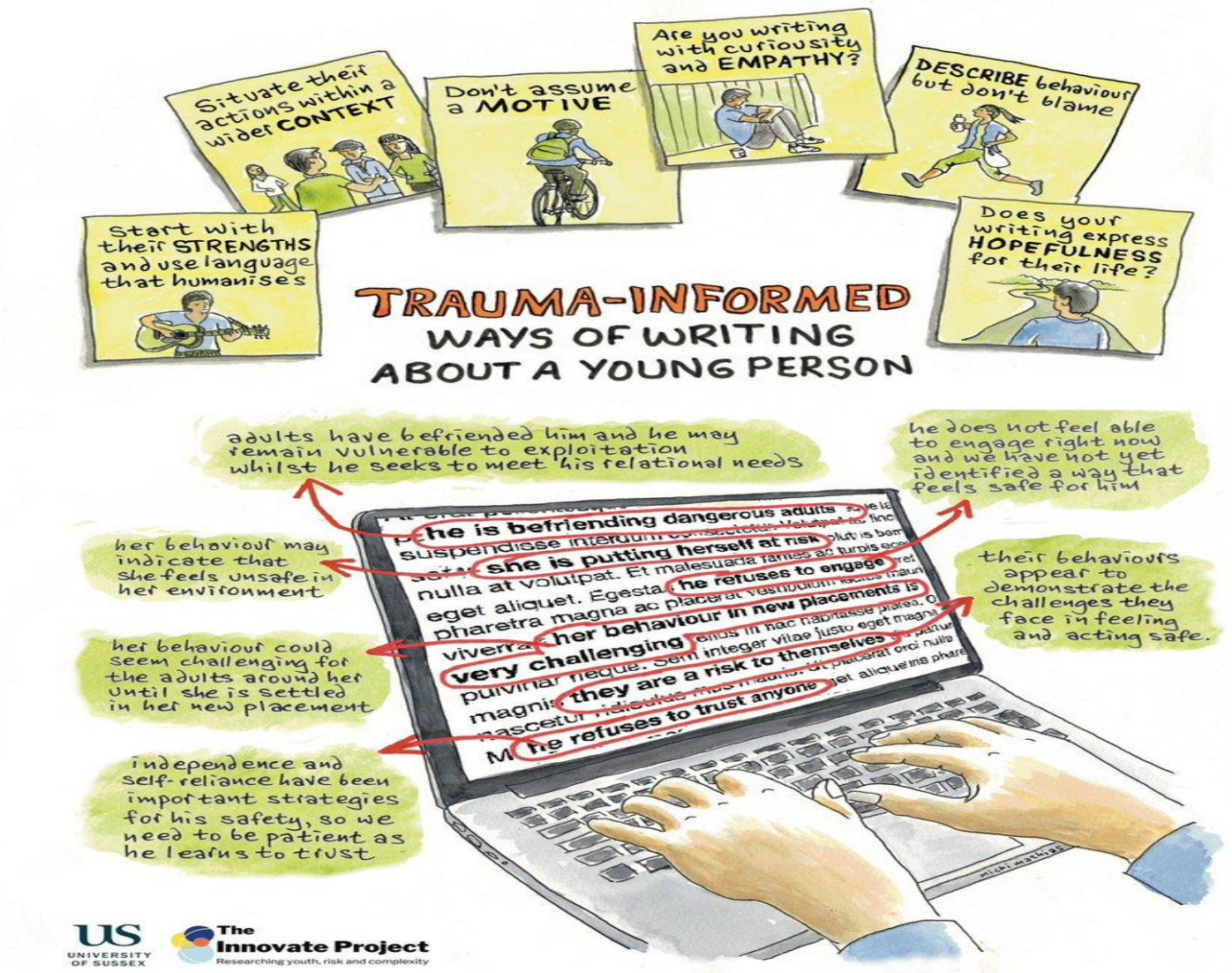


- We must reflect on racialised children and their family's needs in terms of their strengths, aspirations and achievements.
- ‘ *The anti-racist social worker in practice’ – (2025) N. Jude, T. Moore, G. Simango*

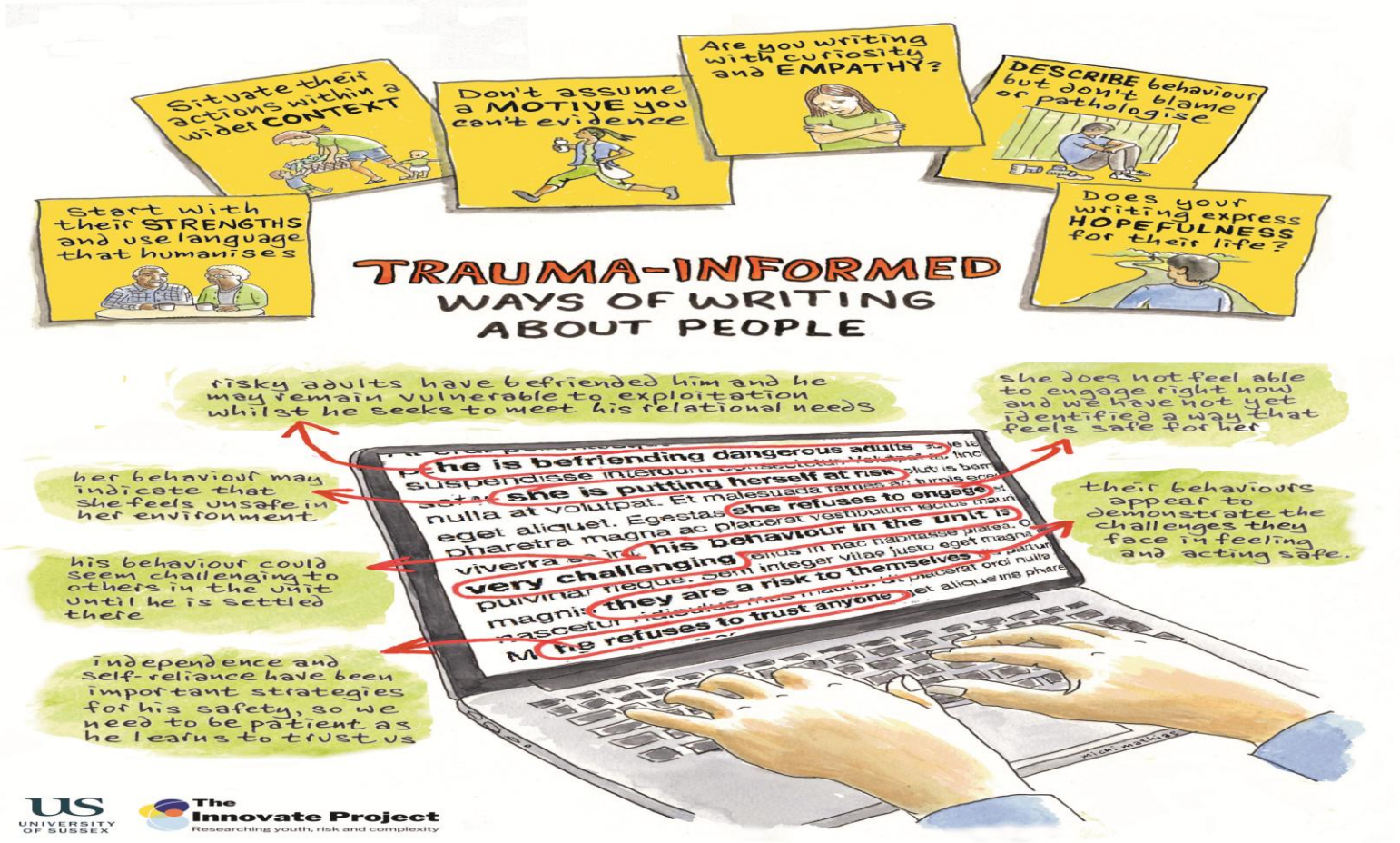
Case Study – Eric

- Eric is of Black African/Nigerian heritage, with English as an additional language. He separated from his white Scottish partner, when their mixed heritage daughter was aged 3, due to concerns around mums' mental health and domestic violence. With Eric stating he was not believed, when he was being beaten by his ex-partner and needed to defend himself. Eric had little contact with his daughter now aged 7, and now in foster care, due to mums' mental health and inability to care for her 7-year-old, who was also now on a full care order to the LA. Eric had returned from Nigeria after on a working visa and wanted, contact and custody of his daughter.
- The social worker was concerned that Eric would 'physically abuse' his daughter, as this was viewed as the culture in Nigeria, despite dad saying he would not. Dad was initially having supervised contact and had been described by staff members as 'loud' and his daughter was fearful of him. His daughter's primary carers/foster carers had predominantly been women, and she was getting used to contact with her dad, where her mother had also used racist language when talking about him in the past. Eric was also described a 'not very affectionate' when collecting his daughter from school. The social worker recommended counselling to enable dad eric and daughter to understand each other better and for him to be able to manage her challenging behaviour, due to past trauma.
- During court proceedings for custody of his daughter, Eric was not provided with an interpreter, as it was assumed his English was good enough, his immigration status was raised as a concern, although he was not an asylum seeker. The social workers assessment stated that Eric was difficult to engage at times but seemed to genuinely want to care for his daughter.
- (***Also consider the child and the mother***)

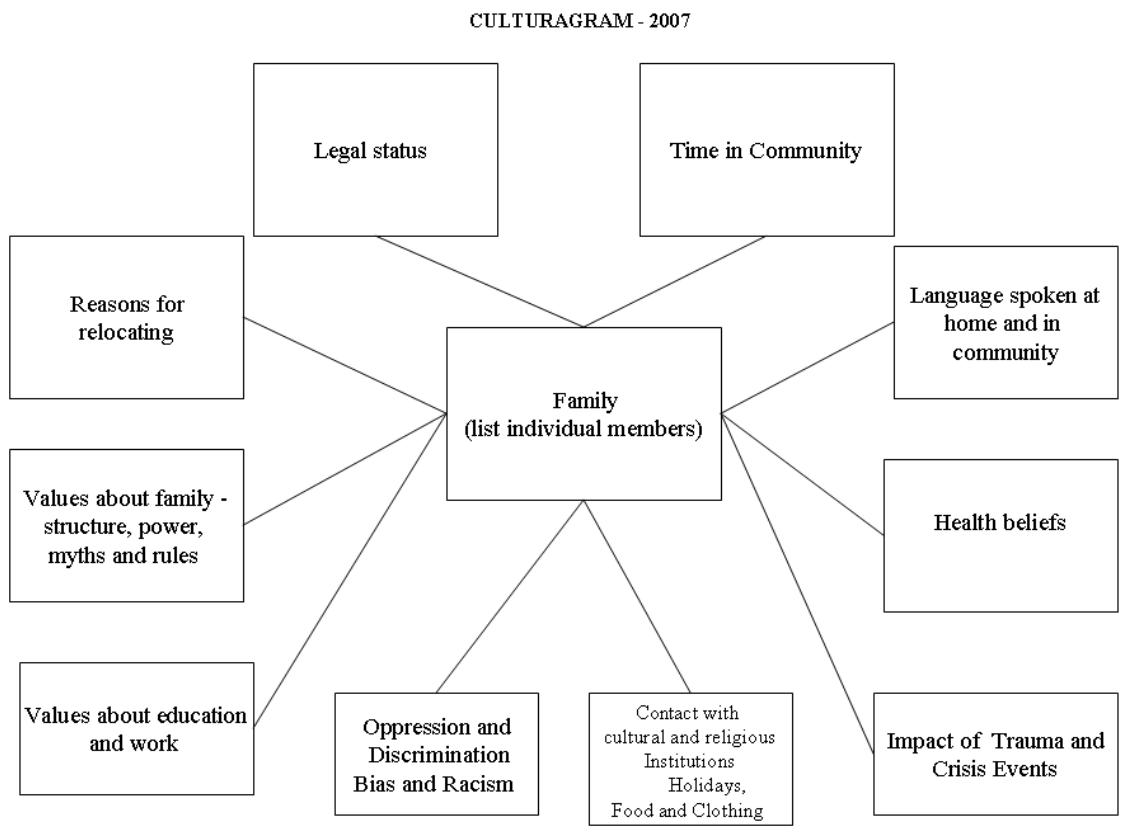
Trauma informed Practice



Trauma infirmed writing on case files



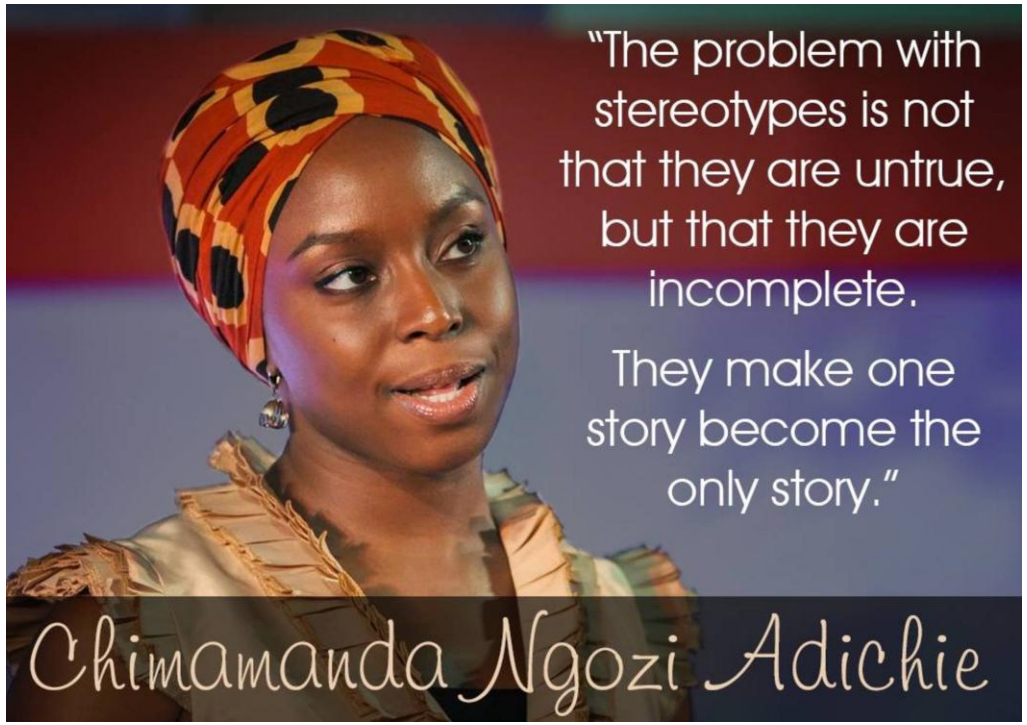
Culturagram



How will you use Language going forward?

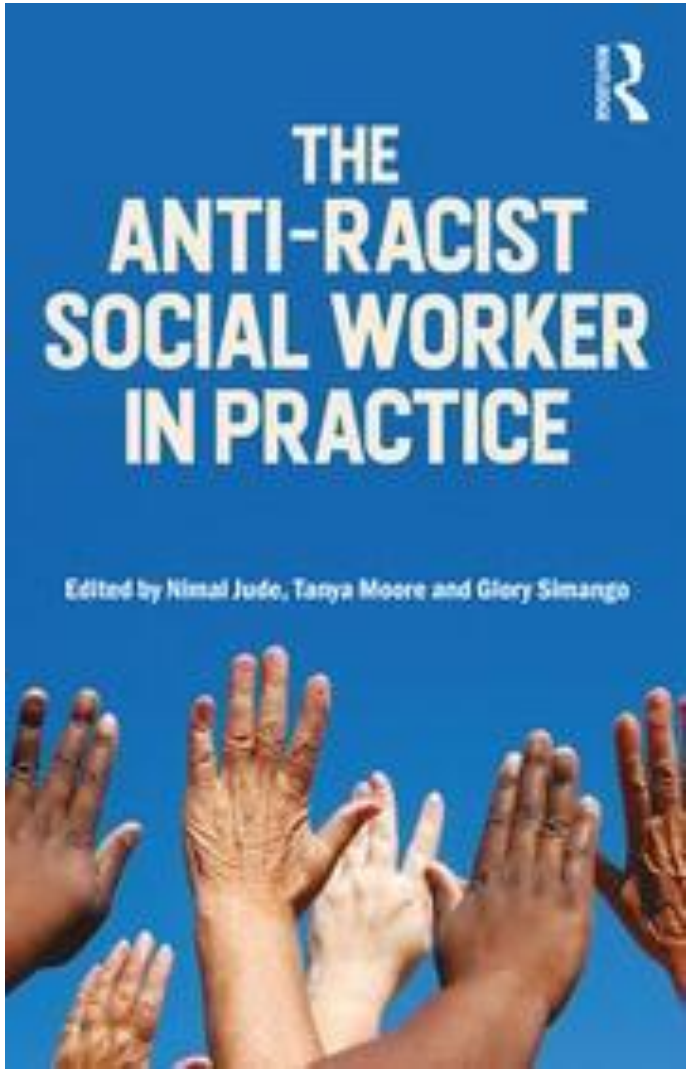
- What will you do differently

The Danger Of a Single Story



Thank You

- Millie Kerr
- Racial Equity and Anti-Racist Consultant
- LinkedIn: Millie Kerr



Resources

- Use of language and adultification in child safeguarding reviews | Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
- The Importance of Trauma-informed Language – Meadows
- The pervasive problem of 'linguistic racism' - BBC Worklife
- understanding-exploring-and-supporting-children-s-identity-development_pt_web.pdf
- Language that cares guide
- behaviour as communication- beha
- READ REPORT | Black Child SEND
- "It's Silent": Race, racism and safeguarding children – Panel Briefing 4