

Unlikely Companions

Introducing One Way Mirrors and a Reflecting Team into School Systems for work with Vulnerable Students and Families.

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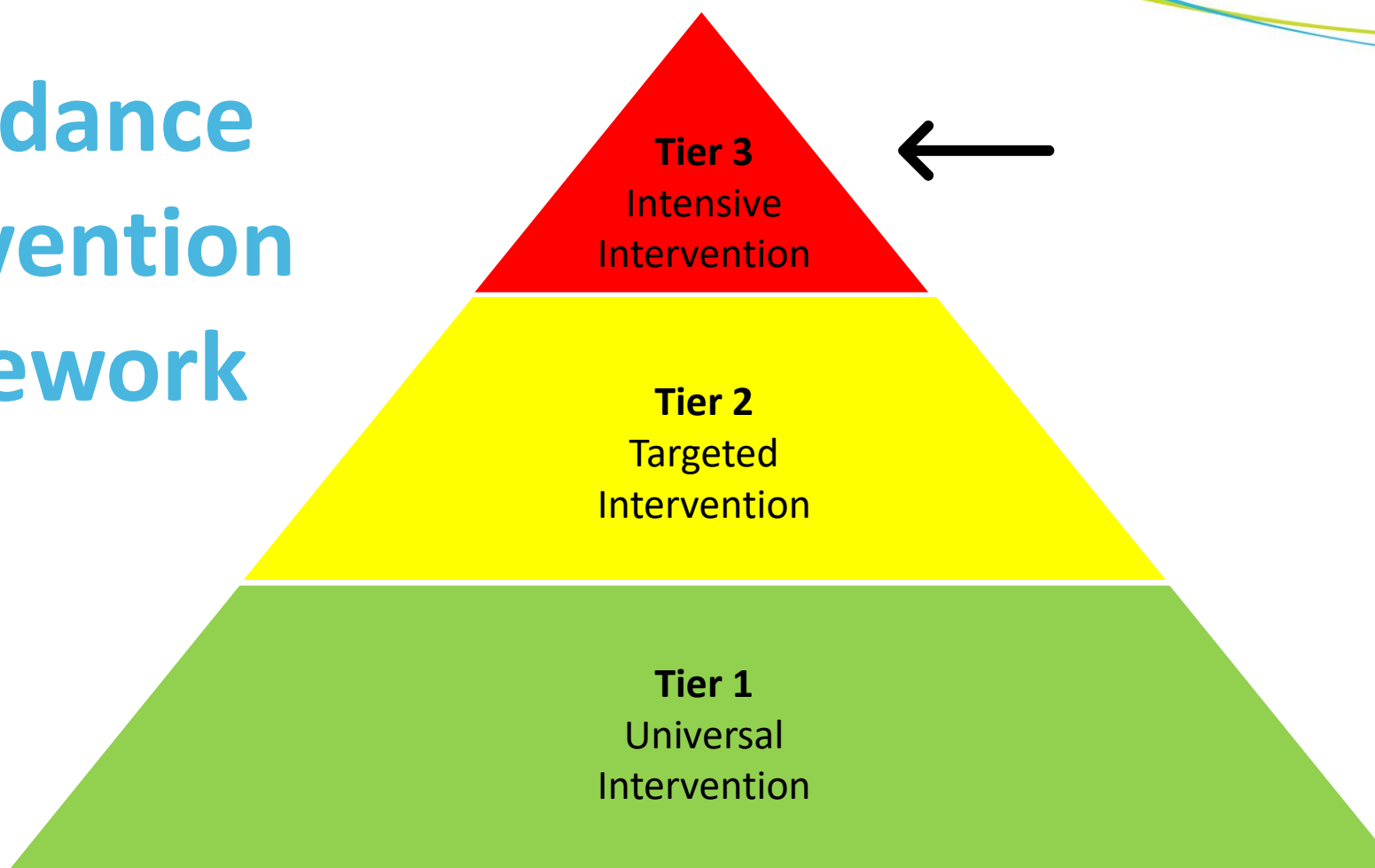
Catholic Education
Diocese of Parramatta

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Attendance Intervention Framework







The Smith family



Grandparents

increased parenting
when Linda unwell



Linda

Previous Domestic
violence
Ovarian cancer
current chemotherapy



Joel

15 years old
Attendance
rate 37%
PTSD



Frank

No current contact
with Joel



Linda's worries

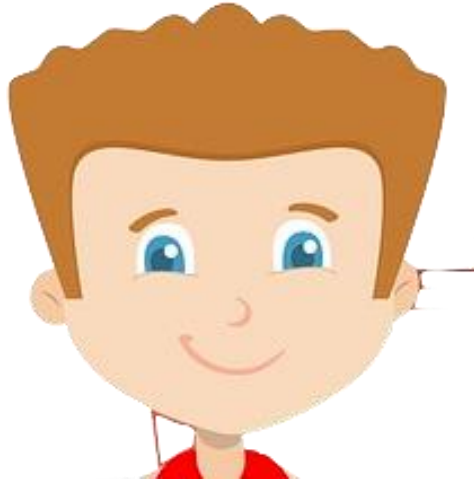
All related to Joel:



- mental health
- sleep patterns and internet use
- undiagnosed health issues
- lack of attendance at school
- their relationship



Joel's worries



- Linda was 'too interfering'
- Internet and diet restrictions
- Stop the fighting at home



Grandparent's worries

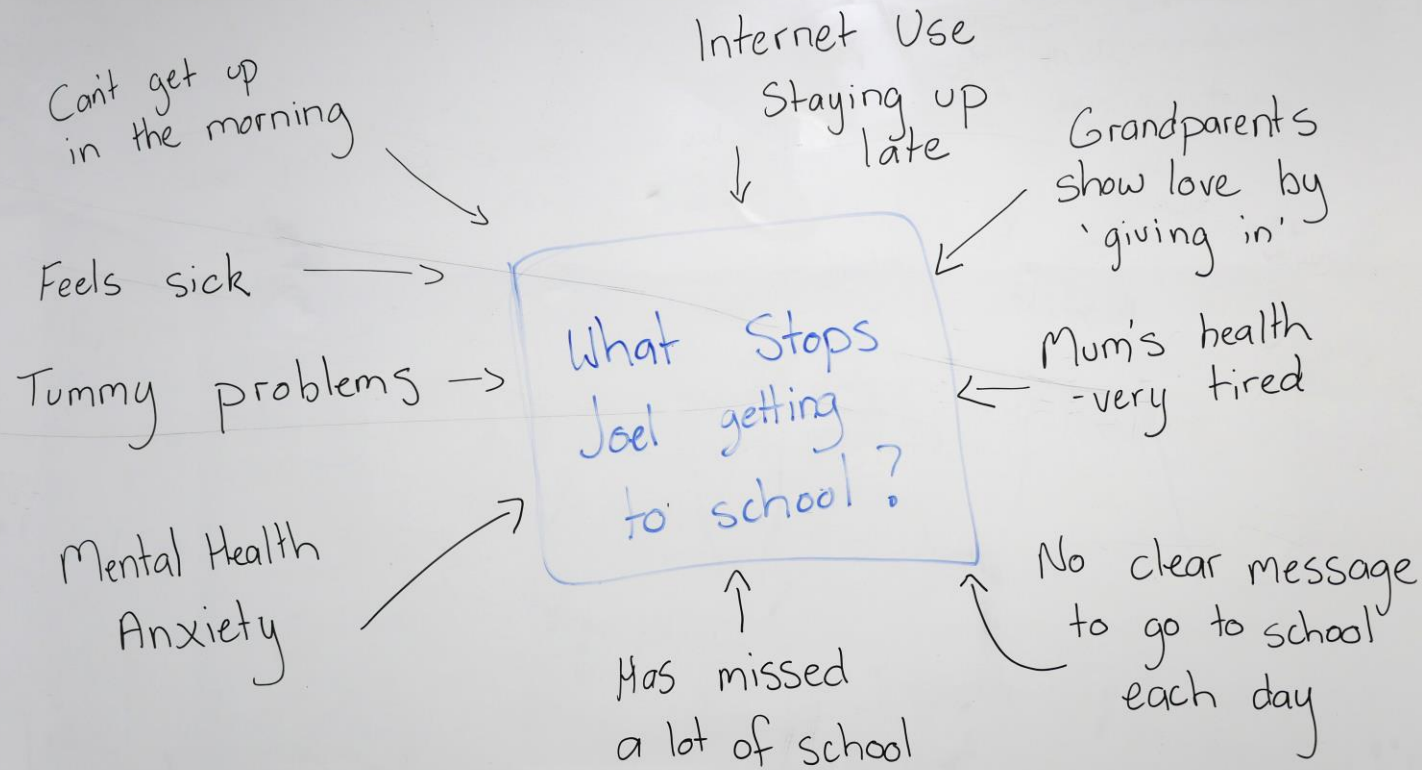


- non attendance
- conflict between Linda and Joel impacting Linda's health



- Non attendance
- Joel might suicide if pushed too hard





The team's thoughts...

- Linda needed to feel heard and understood
- Parental hierarchy needed to be restored
- Joel needed to feel heard



Team reflection:



- Acknowledgement re cancer diagnosis
- Acknowledgement of strengths. Lots of love
- Desire to “hang on tightly” to a child at the time it’s developmentally appropriate to let go
- Joel’s anger as a normal desire to separate
- Let Joel manage his own diet
- Time for Linda to step ‘back’ into the role of parent



Session 2 – Linda only

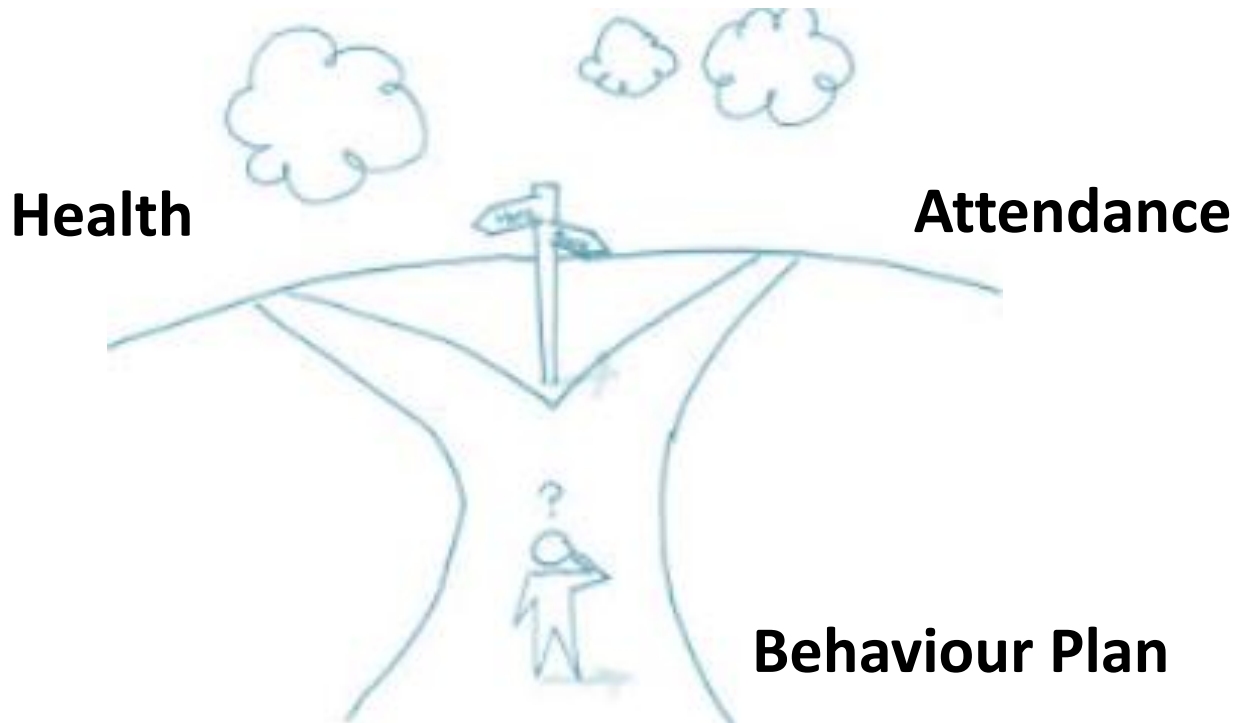


Linda talked about

- Ongoing health worries for Joel
- Tension at home when she tried to set any limits
- Couldn't address school until Joel's health improved



Team reflection



In summary

- Two sessions
- Started with a focus on physical health
- New understanding – impact of anxiety on physical health, well being and school attendance
 - Informed the direction of casework
- Therapist helped develop behavior plan



How is Joel going now?

- The relationship between Linda and Joel has improved
- Health improved
- Attendance rate now 87%



How is this different

- Expertise
- Can deliver cold, hard “facts” without blame
- “Breakthrough moment.” Health versus attendance.



Feedback from Linda

- “Good family that had been through a tough time”.
- Message to Joel “this is serious”
- Improved relationship
- “From that first meeting his attitude toward me changed. He was much softer and more understanding”



- More hopeful – “It wasn’t just me.”
- Brainstorming session
- Interactions between emotional health and physical health.
- Importance of school attendance to mental health.
- “Expert” behaviour plan



Feedback From the Caseworker

- Enhanced my recognition of Joel and Linda's strengths
- Exposed barriers
- Witness a family sharing their experiences
- Developed a more systemic understanding



The Team and the Screen

- Is a powerful intervention
- Introduces systems thinking
- Helps develop a shared understanding of the problem
- Can be a catalyst for change
- Is energising and supportive for families and workers





Thank you for welcoming us to share with you today

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