



Trauma Informed
Change Consultancy
(TICCS)

Why the Right Culture Matters More Than the Restraint Model: Reflections on Supporting a Children's Home

I recently had the opportunity to support a children's home as they explored how to strengthen their approach to behaviour support, de-escalation and physical intervention.

Like many services across Scotland, they were navigating a familiar challenge:

How do we choose the right training for physical intervention, and how do we make sure it's used safely, ethically, and only as a last resort?

As we worked together, something became very clear:

The specific model a home chooses matters far less than the culture that surrounds it.

And that became the heart of our work.

It's Not About the Technique It's About the Conditions That Make Crisis Less Likely

One of the most important conversations we had centred on something I've seen repeatedly across my career in child protection, policing and trauma-informed practice:

The safety of a physical intervention has far more to do with what happens before and after a crisis than the technique itself.

A training model can teach staff how to de-escalate and, if absolutely necessary, how to hold safely.

But only the organisation can shape:

- how staff interpret behaviour
- how relationships are built and repaired
- whether the environment feels predictable, nurturing and safe
- whether staff feel psychologically supported
- whether reflective conversations happen regularly
- whether supervision genuinely challenges and develops practice
- whether data is used to learn, not to blame
- whether children's rights and voices are central to decision-making
- whether leadership models calm, consistent, emotionally attuned behaviour

This is the space where TICCS naturally works.



We do not deliver restraint training.

But what we do offer is the foundation that makes any physical-intervention model safer:

- trauma-informed organisational frameworks
- staff wellbeing and vicarious trauma training
- Katharine Manning's LASER technique
- rights-based, relationship-centred approaches
- reflective supervision structures
- inspection readiness and governance
- clear escalation pathways and thresholds
- psychologically safe team cultures
- everyday de-escalation practice
- embedding UNCRC, GIRFEC and Care Inspectorate expectations in daily routines

When these elements are strong, something powerful happens:

Crisis reduces.

Intervention becomes rarer.

Staff feel more confident and connected.

And children feel safer.

Supporting the Home to Make an Informed Decision

Rather than recommending a specific provider, we explored together what good looks like.

They needed a model that:

- is aligned with trauma-informed, rights-based practice
- is recognised by the Care Inspectorate
- offers strong foundations in de-escalation
- sets clear standards for practice and refresher learning
- fits their staffing structure
- encourages reflection before, during and after any incident

My role was to help them understand that choosing a training model is not a tick-box exercise.

It is a strategic decision that must be rooted in their ethos, their values and their approach to care.

And ultimately, they came to the conclusion that matters most:

Training alone does not keep children safe — culture does.



Culture Is the Standard That Can't Be Faked

Care Inspectorate expectations are clear:

- Physical intervention must always be a last resort
- Staff must be confident in de-escalation
- Governance and recording must support learning
- Children's voices must shape how practice evolves
- Trauma-informed, rights-based approaches must underpin decision-making

A training provider can teach the physical skills. But only a strong culture, which is supported, reflective, relational and well-led, ensures those skills are used ethically and sparingly.

That's where TICCS adds real value.

By supporting both staff and children, by embedding reflective practice, and by strengthening trauma-informed governance, we help homes build environments where:

**Interventions are rare,
relationships are strong,
and safety is shared by
everyone in the building.**



A Final Reflection

When the team reflected on the work, one comment stood out:

“You’ve helped us realise the culture comes before the training.”

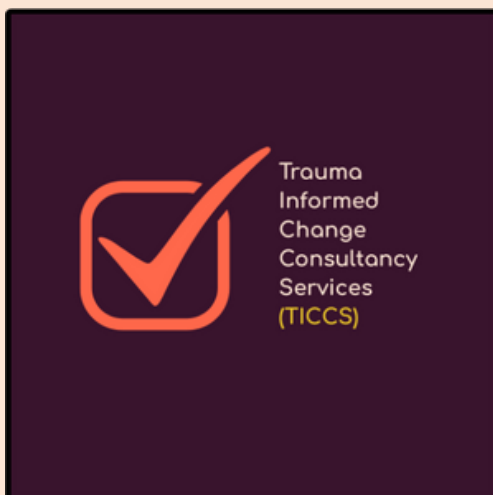
For me, that captures everything.

Because this work is not fundamentally about holds or techniques.
It’s about relationships, safety, humanity and creating the conditions
where both staff and children can thrive.

Training is important.

But culture?

That changes everything.



 ticcsltd.co.uk

 office@ticcsltd.co.uk

 [TICCS LinkedIn](#)