

EMOTIONAL LITERACY SUPPORT ASSISTANTS (ELSA) CONFERENCE

11th June 2026

Workshop Options – Please Choose 2

Places will be booked on a first come, first served basis



1. My LEGO® House

Alyson Thomsen

In this hands-on workshop, practitioners will explore the therapeutic potential of LEGO® construction through 'My LEGO® House', a playful, purposeful resource grounded in the Thera-Build® approach. Participants will actively build, furnish and personalise their own LEGO® room, before connecting each individual unit into one collective model, reflecting the themes of connection, community and shared storytelling. Through clear guidance and practical demonstration, the session will showcase how structured yet imaginative brick-building activities can offer children a safe space to explore their thoughts, feelings and lived experience(s) at their own pace; empowering them to make design choices, tell their stories and strengthen their sense of well-being.

2. An Introduction to Solution Focused Coaching: Empowering Children and Young People to Find Their Own Way Forward

Dr Holly Eeles

Solution Focused approaches support young people to find their own solutions to their problems by supporting them to identify their strengths and resources that can move them towards their preferred future. It can be used to support any child or young person around many areas of wellbeing, including around improving relationships with peers and adults, self-confidence, motivation and stress management. This approach is most appropriate for older young people, with good language skills.

This session will explore key practices within solution focused approaches, including scaling and exception finding.

3. Ensuring Your Social Narratives Support Each Unique Child

Ellie Anderson & Lucy Rawlings

Social narratives are great for ELSAs because they deliver simple, personalised, visual explanations of social situations, helping children understand expectations, manage emotions and build social skills in a structured, low pressure way that fits ELSA's emotional literacy role. Recent research found this style of approach significantly improved communication skills and reduced anxiety in children with social, communication differences, the effects were maintained at follow up (Rodrigues da Silva & Mwangi, 2025).

This workshop looks at how to write social narratives to ensure they support each unique child. In this workshop we will master practical checks for effectiveness and personalisation to ensure every narrative does its job!

4. The 'Art' in Art Therapy – Using Art to Work Towards Regulation

David Fisher

Engaging with materials in order to 'feel regulation'; a 'bottom up' approach that can create space for talking about feelings. We will use some simple creative activities in their work in order to ensure that they can facilitate a kind of sensory bridge with their clients, so that they can become 'ready to talk' in sessions.