

Arousal

Blue Knot Foundation fact sheet about how trauma can affect our arousal

- Arousal is the way our body and brain responds to a situation or experience.
- There are two types of arousal. We can be jumpy (hyper-aroused) or shut down (hypo-aroused).
- We can change between being jumpy and being shut down.
- When we are jumpy or shutdown this can come with strong feelings.
- We can be sad, scared or angry.
- We use different ways to manage these strong feelings. These are called coping strategies.
- We do best when we can manage our feelings. This means we are not jumpy or shut down.
- The arousal level when we can manage our feelings is called the 'window of tolerance'.
- When we are hypo-aroused or hyper-aroused we are outside of our 'window of tolerance'.
- It is easy to tell when a person is hyper-aroused.
- A freeze (shut down) response is harder to recognise.

If you or someone you support lives with disability and experiences of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation OR is affected by the Disability Royal Commission, you can call the **National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 458** between 9am and 6pm AEST Monday to Friday and between 9am and 5pm AEST Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

If you or someone you support has experiences of childhood trauma or is considering the National Redress Scheme, you can call the **Blue Knot Helpline and Redress Support Service on 1300 657 380** between 9am and 5pm Monday to Sunday AEST.