

## **TRANSCRIPT: ISC - Building positive relationships (3): Massage therapy**

Gavin Lyons

We are dealing with challenging behaviour in the department and if they've escalated to a state of high anxiety and they're in crisis, we need to help them calm down. So it's about us being able to teach them coping strategies as part of our behaviour management. Helping them to recognise what calm is like is an important part of that and massage therapy gives us the opportunity for them to experience what it's like to be calm and to be relaxed. It does, however, offer the opportunity for lots of interaction as well and all that non-verbal communication, it's about us building relationships and building trust.

We had a trained masseuse come in and give us some very basic hand and foot massage techniques, just so people had some sort of rough idea as to what to do.

We have two or three students who have an aversion to touch and we don't want to force the issue on them but we will have a go and if they don't like it, they can move away and if they're ready to come back, we will have another go and then they can move away. What we've found with a lot of our students is that they will, initially, say 'no' because it's something different but, in many cases, once they've experienced it, they realise that it's OK and, 'I actually quite like this', and it leads on to more positive experiences.

© Crown Copyright, 2012