

# sp(i)eel

creative arts therapies collective

Child Trauma Conference Abstract Submission

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**Title of presentation:** Families and Futures: An arts-based psychosocial approach to community mental healthcare in a South African context.

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## **Abstract:**

This presentation is based on the recent publication of a logic model for arts-based psychosocial practice that was a collaborative research project between sp(i)eel arts therapies collective and Brunel University. It was developed to address the lack of evidence for effective community arts-based psychosocial interventions for collective trauma and unknown consensus about best practices specific to a South African context. The study included an interdisciplinary focus group of arts therapists and arts practitioners, as well as a literature overview of intergenerational trauma in South Africa and organizational policies.

The logic model speaks to an African Cosmology of collectivism and offers a practical approach to addressing child mental health and wellbeing within family and social systems. Its impact goal is the development of collective resilience and a series of short and intermediate outcomes to achieve this goal is discussed.

The presentation includes examples of the various work packages of the logic model as it was implemented in rural communities, with specific reference to family programmes that took place during the COVID-19 pandemic. It advocates for a trauma-informed, community model of mental healthcare that is situated in arts-based and indigenous knowledge practices and it offers a practical examples and tools to incorporate creativity and the arts when working in family systems.

The presentation concludes with a reflection on challenges, an overview of current research in Arts for Health practice in South Africa, as well as identifying opportunities for scale and developing the evidence-base in this field.

**Key-words:** Arts-based Psychosocial Practice, Community Mental Health, Intergenerational Trauma