

TUESDAY 28TH APRIL 2020 SESSION 16 STAYING CONNECTED AND CURIOUS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Knowledge and understanding of attachment and trauma

Supporting and Scaffolding the Foundations of Child/Adult Relationships 2

Today, I'd like to return to my webinar for Adoption UK for our learning and reflection. For those of you who didn't access Session 14, here's a quick summary before you watch the video. It would be helpful if you could briefly look at Session 14, as it will provide a foundation for today's work.

In the video, I'm talking specifically to adopters, but the key messages about child/adult relationships are relevant to all parents and adults who work with children and young people, so as you watch and listen, substitute 'parent' with 'educator' and think about all the children you know who have not consistently experienced safety and nurture in their early years.

Key points covered in the video:

The importance of building relationships with children who have experienced relational trauma;

Scaffolding and supporting by:

- Moving away from the 'age-appropriate mantra' and using a developmental lens through which to view the child and their behaviour;

- Developing a new narrative around behaviour;

- Co-regulation as a vital step to self-regulation;

- Creative activities for scaffolding the child/adult relationship.

Earlier in the Staying Curious series, we looked at the development of attachment where the caring is 'good enough'. The video briefly covers that and also covers the impact of developmental, relational trauma; that is, when the care is not good enough and the baby's needs are not met adequately. For some of you, this might be new learning.

It then considers ways to strengthen and scaffold the child/adult relationship. In Session 14 we considered the importance of building relationships with children who have experienced relational trauma, and specifically focused on the first half of the video.

Today, please watch the video from 17.57 to 22.57.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYxluedsIOw&feature=emb_title

Questions for reflection

1. In Session 2, we identified multiple adverse childhood experiences:

- poverty
- abuse – physical and/or emotional
- neglect – physical and/or emotional
- parental stress
- inconsistent expectations and rules
- domestic violence
- lack of supervision
- erratic and punitive discipline
- low rate of positive interactions
- high rate of negative interactions,
- lack of interest and concern from significant adults
- poor adult role models
- parents who are violent and have arrest records
- parents who have mental health issues
- parents who are addicts or abuse substances

Pupils' histories can provide us with vital information about the child's behaviour and can be used as a framework within which to interpret behaviour. What methods do you currently use for gathering historical information? How, and with whom, is relevant information shared? How could you develop your information gathering so that instead of asking 'What is wrong with this child?', we ask 'What has happened to this child?'

2. Think of a child with whom you work who experienced any pre- or post-birth trauma, particularly in the first three years of life. Reflecting on the child's backstory, what experiences and developmental opportunities did she miss out on?
3. How do your expectations and goals map on to your child's social and emotional developmental stage, compared with their chronological age?
4. What about the parents/carers? Do they have appropriate expectations for their child?
5. What experiences does the child need in order to fill the gaps? For example, a child who spent a lot of time in front of a screen, or strapped into a buggy is likely to need lots of gross motor activity.
6. How can you tailor the curriculum in order to meet the child's needs, regardless of age?
7. How can you address the 'spiky' developmental profile and respond to the child, where she is in that moment?
1. **Covid-19 relevance** Children, like everyone else, are currently living in a traumatized world, and many children are regressing physically and emotionally during this time, as we discussed in Easter Supplement 5. This regression is likely to continue for some time. The child may have a very spiky profile, which varies from minute to minute, day to day, depending on triggers and perceived threat or safety in any given context or environment. How can you respond to those children today, whether they are in school or not? How can you support families in helping them to understand that regression to an earlier developmental stage is a normal

response to trauma? What do you need to be aware of when schools reopen fully? How can you develop your understanding of particular triggers and perception of threat and safety in order to minimise crisis situations? How can this be addressed in your 'Return to School' Policy?

How are you coping with isolation today? Has the change of weather/temperature affected you at all? I'd like to suggest this short meditation as part of your self-care routine today:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Atb0J2czYmc&feature=youtu.be>

Tomorrow, we're going to have a Calm Box session, so you may want to make a few changes to your contents in preparation. Have a good day, keep safe and healthy and ring or email me to chat if that would help.

Jenny x