

THURSDAY 30TH APRIL 2020 SESSION 18 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 3

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 Sessions 14 and 16, here's a quick summary before you watch the video. It would be helpful if you could briefly look at Sessions 14 and 16, as they 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. In Session 16 we looked at developmental delay and regression caused by trauma and the importance of viewing the child through a developmental rather than a chronological (age) perspective.

Today, please watch the video from 22.57 to the end

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

Questions for reflection

1. "With all of this in mind, how can we use the child/[educator] relationship as a vehicle for problem-solving and building a positive self-concept." How can you ensure that you bring about personal and whole school positive change in the way children's lives and behaviours are described?
2. Can you apply any the following common descriptors to children you know? How can you reframe the words so that you have an increase in insight, understanding and empathy and see more clearly what the child is trying to communicate and what he needs from you in this moment and in the future.?

confrontational

unmotivated

attention seeking

lazy

angry

attention seeking

rude

violent

manipulative

fidgety and refusing to sit still

annoying to others

disruptive

nosey and interfering

argumentative

rough with other children

always crying

'light fingered'

always telling tales

3. I speak in the film about not seeing the problem as intrinsic to the child, but externalising it instead. Seeing the problem as a separate entity, not as the child: *'Waiting for your turn in the game is difficult for you. How can I make it less difficult?'* The problem then is the waiting, not the child's behaviour. Once we externalise the problem, the onus is upon us, not the child to find a solution. Listen to what the child says when you ask the question and add your own suggestions, for example, use a fiddle toy, try to stand on one leg, count backwards from 20 in your head, count in your head all the things you can see. Remind the child before any waiting: *'We're going to be playing ... in a few minutes. It's going to be a bit boring waiting for your turn. I'll be close by to help and remind you of those things you can do so the wait doesn't seem too long.'* How can you ensure that all staff move away from seeing maladaptive behaviours as intrinsic to the child, and externalise it instead?
4. **Covid-19 relevance** Many children will return to school with high levels of anxiety and dysregulation, and those who are currently in school may be presenting with reduced self-regulation capacities. How are you able to meet the need for co-regulation given that it requires close physical proximity and there are limited numbers of adults to children?
5. Thinking ahead, how can you develop a Relational Curriculum for the return to school?

A lot of thinking today and this may be enough. Please DO NOT over-extend. Now, more than ever before it is so important that we listen to our own bodies and emotions, so if you haven't yet done 'self-care' today, this might be the right time. If you'd like more, the following article may be of interest:

It Takes Two: The Role of Co-Regulation in Building Self-Regulation Skills



<https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/reports-and-policy-briefs/Co-RegulationFromBirthThroughYoungAdulthood.pdf>

Have a good day, keep safe and healthy and ring or email me to chat if that would help. Jenny x