

Module Outline Guidance for trainers - Module 2

Module 2

Relationships: “The Golden Thread”

Introduction

The core of this module is building relationships. It recognises the central paradox that it is in significant relationships that many children/young adults have been harmed, and yet it will be through the relationships they can make with others that they will develop their capacity to recover. Recognising that important relationships are children/young adult’s “golden thread” that sustains them into adulthood, this module is trauma informed and incorporates the latest research. This module rests on the premise that the presence of an adult with a sustained interest in them is an important factor in building resilience for children/young adults. For most children/young adults, that person exists in their family; for others it will be the relationship they make with a new carer, and for some it will be from a member of the community developing a passion (e.g. for football/ art etc.).

Participants will be encouraged to explore the application of ethical social work principles in practice with children/young adults and their families throughout this module. Issues of culture and identity are woven into the whole of this module.

The expectation is that participants already have a good understanding of relationship-based practice, attachment theory and about the impact of trauma, alongside a working knowledge of therapeutic and resilience building interventions.

Module Aims

This module explores:

- how children/young adults develop uniquely
- working with and supporting children/young adults to achieve permanence
- understanding trauma and methods for recovery
- how trauma, in this context, affects parents and carers as well as children/young adults
- the impact of vicarious trauma
- parenting capacity and capabilities
- the potential range of permanence options
- building the networks around children/young adults
- building resilience

Questions for Participants

Participants will be asked to consider a series of questions:

- how can you distinguish between relational and developmental trauma?
- how do you use relationships to bring about change?
- what resources are available within your local authority to support parents and parenting whether the parents are birth/adoptive parents, foster parents, or kinship carers?

- how does trauma impact on the needs and development of children/young adults' development?
- what constitutes good enough parenting across the developmental age range?
- why might disabled children/ young adults need different/additional parenting skills?
- how do you conceptualise your own role in creating, supporting, and promoting helpful relationships for children/young adults?
- how can you help ensure that healthy sibling relationships are sustained through childhood/young adulthood and into adulthood?
- why might it be important to think about your own responses to stress?
- what have you learned about the golden thread relationships (family, friends and community based) that sustain children and young adults?

Learning Outcomes

Participants will be offered opportunities to:

- exemplify in-depth working knowledge of development in childhood/young adulthood, how it might be compromised, how it can be supported and recognition of their changing developmental needs
- explain the importance of relationships for children/ young adults in the home, school, and community, and develop the knowledge and skills to encourage relationship-building, and integrate these elements for children/young adults
- create, build and sustain effective relationships with children/young adults, their families, carers, community, and professional networks
- consider diverse family structures and parenting styles
- examine knowledge around parenting capacity and capabilities, including strategies for how capacity can be developed and identifying who is available within their community network to support these relationships
- apply insight into the experience of trauma (including loss, abuse, and neglect) in childhood/young adulthood and its impact across the life course
- develop skills in recognising and offering appropriate interventions based on sensory experience, arts, and play
- elaborate skills in relation to assessing parenting capacity (including in matching processes), opportunities for sustained change and exploring permanent options for children/young adults
- identify strengths in the family to sustain children/young adults within their existing communities (e.g. use of Family Group Conferences)

- develop advanced skills in communicating effectively with traumatised children/young adults, their carers, and support networks by listening, attuning, and responding verbally and in writing in ways that represent their views accurately and compassionately
- evaluate which relationships are each child/young adult's "golden thread" and what it will take to maintain them with a view to developing caring, safe, and secure networks around children/young adults to support them into maturity
- recognise how vicarious or unresolved trauma in carers continues to affect children/young adults' experience with a view to enabling carers to manage this process (within available resources)

Week One

Optimising children/young adults' development – a trauma informed approach

Ensures that participants have a good working knowledge about development through childhood into young adulthood and how early experiences have lifelong consequences. The expectation is that participants already have a working knowledge of child/young adult development, attachment theory and the impact of abuse and neglect on development.

Learning Outcomes

Participants will be offered opportunities to:

- apply insight into the experience of trauma (including loss, abuse, and neglect) in childhood/young adulthood and its impact across the life course
- build a working knowledge of children/young adults' development, how it might be compromised, how it can be supported and recognise their changing developmental needs
- explain the importance of relationships for children/young adults in the home, school, and community

Week One Essential Tasks/Activities

Participants will be asked to:

- watch *The paradox of trauma-informed care* Vicky Kelly TEDx Wilmington
- prepare a short reflective study (maximum 500 words) in response to these three questions:

1. what thoughts and feelings arose in response to Vicky Kelly's video?

2. how can you distinguish between relational and developmental trauma?
3. how do you use relationships to bring about change?

- draw an eco-map of one child/young adult known personally and one known professionally
- compare them and work on how to make them look more alike
- consider which relationships are likely to be sustained until the child/young adult reaches adult maturity in their mid to late 20s
- review their own “tool box to consider what works in dealing with relational or developmental trauma? What methods do they use? When and how do they use them?

Week Two

Capacities and Capabilities

Focuses on parents/caregivers and explores how multiple adversities can destabilise parenting. Considers how these can be addressed both individually and collectively by various approaches.

Learning Outcomes

Participants will be offered opportunities to:

- examine knowledge around parenting capacity and capability, including strategies for how capacity can be developed and identifying who is available within their community network to support these relationships
- develop skills in recognising and offering appropriate interventions based on sensory experience, arts, and play
- elaborate skills in relation to assessing parenting capacity (including matching processes), opportunities for sustained change and exploring permanent options for children/young adults.

Week Two Essential Tasks/Activities

Participants will be asked to:

- watch The Untold (Radio 4) Care or Custody (podcast). What thoughts/feelings arise from any of this material?

- identify the anti-oppressive practice from the podcast. How could it have been improved?
- read Jim Kennedy's special report on Assessing Parenting Capacity, written for CareKnowledge, September 2017
- undertake research into the theme identified for their policy and practice briefing
- identify the resources available within their local authority to support parents and parenting (birth parents/carers with parental responsibility/ kinship carers/foster carers/adoptive parents).
- describe the eligibility criteria for these resources and identify the theories which underpin them. (N.B. participants will need to complete this task and bring it to the workshop)
- identify any ideas or questions they want to bring to the workshop

Week Three

Essential reading (available on-line in programme learning resources)

- *Applying the science of child development in child welfare systems.* Harvard Center for the Developing Child
- Ward, H., Brown, R. and Hyde-Dryden, G. (2014) *Assessing Parental Capacity to Change when Children are on the Edge of Care: An overview of current research evidence.* London: Department for Education.
- Case Study: Part One, Chronology.

Additional Study Options

- Growing an emotional brain – nurturingminds.co.uk video with Graham Music and Sue Gerhardt
- Harvard Center for the Developing Child online articles/ videos
- The adolescent brain: TED by Sarah-Jane Blakemore
- Siegel, Daniel (2011) *Brainstorm –The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain.* Tarcher
- Siegel, Daniel and Payne Bryson, Tina (2012) *The Whole- Brain Child; 12 Proven strategies to nurture your child's developing mind.* Robinson, London.

Week Four

Workshop Two

Relationships: The Golden Thread

Learning Outcomes

Participants will be offered opportunities to:

- explain the importance of relationships for children/young adults in the home, school, and community, and develop the knowledge and skills to support relationship-building, and integrate these elements for children/young adults
- create, build and sustain effective relationships with children/young adults, their families, carers, community, and professional networks
- develop advanced skills in communicating effectively with traumatised children/young adults, their carers and support networks by listening, attuning, and responding verbally and in writing in ways that represent their views accurately and compassionately
- recognise how vicarious or unresolved trauma in carers continues to impact on children/young adults' experience with a view to enabling carers to manage this process (within available resources).

Workshop Timetable

09.30 – 11.00	Review learning Relationships which harm and relationships which heal
11.00 – 11.10	Break
11.10 – 13.00	Recovery in relationship
13.00 – 13.45	Break
13.45 – 15.00	Sibling relationships
15.00 – 15.10	Break
15.10 – 16.30	Strengthening networks.

See session plan with notes for trainers for further detail of workshop content and process

Week Five

Important people

Focuses on identifying and sustaining links to the important people in children/young adults' networks. How will the "golden thread" be maintained throughout children/young adult's lives even if they do not live with those people?

Learning Outcomes

Participants will be offered opportunities to:

- Evaluate which relationships are each child/young adult's "golden thread" and what it will take to maintain them, with a view to developing caring, safe, and secure networks around children/young adults to support them into maturity.

Essential Tasks/Activities

Participants will be asked to:

- read Mike Lauerman's special report on permanence and attachment, written for CareKnowledge, November 2010
- refer to the eco-map created on week 1 of this workshop and reviewed briefly in session 4 of the workshop
- draw genograms of birth family and current "family" if relevant
- review all the information known
- identify any community based people (such as teaching assistants, neighbours? etc).

Week Six

Family structures

Examines the range of what could be construed as 'family' and how to find opportunities that build the networks supporting children/young adults in whatever family arrangements they form a part of.

Learning Outcomes

Participants will be offered opportunities to:

- consider diverse family structures and parenting styles
- identify strengths in the family to sustain children/young adults within their existing communities (e.g. use of the Family Group Conferences).

Essential Tasks/Activities

Participants will be asked to:

- watch TEDx talk: Tom Weisner
- reflect on the TEDx talk: What is the most important influence on development?
- prepare a reflective study (maximum 500 words) in response to the question: "What have you learned about the golden thread relationships (family, friends and community based) that sustain children and young adults?"
- write up their research/knowledge findings in relation to their policy and practice briefing
- reflect on how the content of this module relates to their policy and practice briefing.

Week Seven

Essential reading (available on-line in programme learning resources)

- *Supportive relationships and active skill-building strengthen the foundations of resilience.* Harvard Center for the Developing Child
- Brown, R. and Ward, H. (2013) *Decision-making within a child's timeframe: an overview of current research for family justice professionals concerning child development and the impact of maltreatment.* London: Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre.

Choice of further reading to be guided by specific learning goals identified by the participant with their manager/supervisor.

- Center for Developing Child online articles/ videos

- Growing an emotional brain – nurturingminds.co.uk video with Graham Music and Sue Gerhardt
- The adolescent brain: TED by Sarah-Jane Blakemore
- Featherstone, B., Gupta, A., Morris, K. and Warner, J (2016) *Let's stop feeding the risk monster: towards a social model of 'child protection'* Families, Relationships, and Societies
- Lord, J. & Borthwick, S. (2014) *Together or apart? Assessing sibling relationships for permanent placement*. London: BAAF
- Siegel, Daniel (2011) *Brainstorm – The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain*. Tarcher
- Siegel, Daniel and Payne Bryson, Tina (2012) *The Whole- Brain Child; 12 Proven strategies to nurture your child's developing mind*. Robinson, London