

The Parenting Toolkit

Part A training covers the following topics:

Looking after yourself

This looks at the importance of getting your needs met as a parent and not to feel guilty about this. It also looks at how patterns from previous generations can influence how we parent and that these need to be understood so that we do not pass on unhelpful patterns of parenting. This is especially important for adoptive parents as they have to process their sense of loss as well

Ages and stages

This area describes how the meaning of children's behaviour is dependent on the developmental phase the child is in and how during each phase a child needs to master particular tasks. – it also discusses how for some children (maybe who are adopted) who have experienced trauma they could be stuck at the age of the trauma and so their behavior will show this and so parenting has to be adapted to take this into account.

Play

This explains the reasons why play is important and how to implement child-led play so the child experiences high quality special time with their parent.

Parenting styles

This describes the four main types of parenting style, aggressive, passive, manipulative and assertive and their impact on children.

Stress management

This looks at how to manage stress for both parents and children.

Communication skills

This looks at how to listen and the common pitfalls that parents can fall into.

Descriptive praise

This chapter describes how to give specific praise which makes the child feel valued.

Helping your child solve problems

This describes how a parent can help their child solve problems in a creative way.

Labels

This looks at the importance of not ascribing to children labels but describing the behaviour instead. It also looks at roles in family and the importance of letting children not be defined by a role e.g. the sporty one or the shy one.

Emotional literacy

This describes the importance of acknowledging feelings so children feel that their feelings are being taken seriously. It also teaches parents how to express feelings in a way that can be heard and does not spoil relationships.

Discipline strategies

This topic discusses and explains how to implement numerous discipline strategies. It discusses in a sensitive way how some discipline strategies that may work with a child with a secure base such as timeout could be inappropriate for an adoptive child with huge abandonment issues so Time in could be more useful.

Understanding your child's behaviour

This topic explains that no behaviour occurs in a vacuum. There is always a need underlying the behaviour and that this behaviour always communicates a meaning. This is especially true for adoptive or foster parents as the child may be trying to elicit the same destructive responses that they received in their family of origin and the parents have to be extremely vigilante to guard against this.