

Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy – Level 1 January 2013

'Introducing a Framework for Therapy and Parenting Developmentally Traumatized Children'

About me

I work as a Specialist Social Worker within a Looked After Service with CAMHS. I have a keen interest in attachment and systemic working, and the DDP approach really builds upon this, in working to improve the emotional health of children in care. The underlying premise is that the relationships that children and young people experience with those people caring for them provide the reparative, healing that traumatized children need.

I work alongside some colleagues who were already trained in DDP, and was very keen to access the training myself. I would like to thank the FPSA for the funding which enabled me to complete my Level 1 training. The four day course was facilitated by Kim Golding, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, and organised by Adoption Plus in Newport Pagnell, Milton Keynes.

Objectives

- Understand the DDP framework and its relationship to Attachment-Focused Family Therapy
- Understand the theoretical foundations to DDP
- Apply this framework to a therapeutic approach for children and parents; and parents alone
- Explore and practice using the central components of DDP
- Apply this framework to a parenting approach which can complement the therapeutic approach.

Background Information

DDP is an attachment Focused Family Therapy, tailored to the needs of children in care and those that who have been adopted. DDP was originally developed by Dan Hughes as a therapeutic intervention for families who were fostering or had adopted children with significant developmental trauma and insecurity of attachment.

DDP is theoretically underpinned by models of attachment theory and Intersubjectivity, and is consistent with the needs of children and young people who have experienced developmental trauma. It is a family-centred treatment, with the child's attachment figures actively involved. The training involved the presentation of the core components of DDP which were then explored through discussion and experiential exercises.

Putting it into practice

Our service works on a consultation model to support the networks involved with children in care. We also offer some direct work with foster carers and their foster children. I have put the DDP into practice within all aspects of my work, and whilst it does not suit everyone, there are some themes from the approach that can be used helpfully in most cases. I have also drawn upon the approach in another area in which I work; completing assessments of people applying to be foster carers, and so I feel a wider range of people are benefitting from the training. I have joined the DDP interest group that runs on a monthly basis in Nottingham and attended a study day, to continue to build my knowledge and understanding. I have received some really positive feedback from some young people and their carers about the way they experience our work together, and I am sure that this is, to a large extent, a result of the DDP approach.

Final note

Whilst on the DDP course, I shared information about FPSA, to try to increase awareness about the work that they do, and hopefully others will be able to benefit from their support. I would like to take this opportunity to thank FPSA again, for giving me the opportunity to access this course.

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