

Building Underdeveloped Sensory Systems (BUSS)

3 Day course completed May – June – 2024

Provider – BUSS (Sarah Lloyd, Vicky Holland)

I am an Art Psychotherapist working within a Looked After Children's therapy team for the local authority, most of my work is with adoptive and special guardianship families. My core training is as an Art Psychotherapist however, within this work I have found the need to adapt my practice and utilise different techniques and modalities to support the children and families I work with.

Within this role I noticed a gap in my own training and knowledge around sensory systems and noticed the children and young people I was working with struggled with bodily movements and recognising and responding to sensations within their body, which led me to apply for this training to build my knowledge and understanding. This 3 – day course was delivered by Sarah Lloyd an experienced Occupational Therapist, who developed BUSS due to noticing children being referred into services repeatedly and a feeling of disconnection with their bodies. Most of the children I am referred have experienced significant trauma in their early lives, which compromised the development of their sensory systems. The aims of BUSS are to build a sense of agency within their own body and go back and fill in the gaps that were missed due to adverse early life experiences.

Sarah and her team were brilliant trainers, bringing difficult content to life with videos and exercises. We were given workbooks to help us begin to recognise and understand what we are starting to look at when thinking about the BUSS model, which was incredibly helpful to be able to read back through information we discussed in groups and make my own notes. There was also a 3-week break before day 3 to give us time to observe children and start to think about the BUSS assessment, having this break allowed us to come back and discuss what we noticed in groups and share our thoughts. It has helped inform my initial assessments with children and families and in giving information to parents and carers around the sensory systems.

This training will be incredibly useful in my work, I intend to carry out Level 2 in the future and work towards completing the practicum part of the training, I believe it will aid in my knowledge of developmental trauma and support children and young people coming to art therapy sessions, it would be beneficial for them to complete a BUSS intervention before starting art therapy to build safety and agency in their own bodies, therefore enabling psychotherapy to be more effective.