

**Report for FPSA Funding 2019-2020 in  
Non-Violent Resistance training at the Partnership Project.**

I would first like to take this opportunity to extend a huge heartfelt thank you to the board at FPSA for funding the Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) training, without you it would have been extremely difficult to have studied on this course.

**Why Non-Violent Resistance?**

I am currently employed as a Systemic Psychotherapist in Social Services in both the safeguarding and the 0-25 All Age Disabilities Team. I work with young people and families who have experienced acute and multiple traumas. I work with families and foster carers who care for children with autism amongst other high-level disabilities. A growing issue within social care in both the safeguarding and children with disabilities teams has been children becoming violent towards their parents/caregivers. In the worst-case scenario this meant that caregivers had injuries and children went into foster care. No training or service was available to support families to support families in this area. In two separate children's social care review meetings which I attended I asked the mothers what had helped reduce the violence and they said NVR. This prompted me to explore the training and apply for it. NVR fits into the families' timescales as it is a short-term intervention as most of our families have said that they dislike long term therapy. According to research NVR has high rates of efficacy and very low drop-out rates making this a very efficient and cost-saving approach for clinicians. Overall using NVR can help prevent family breakdown or foster placement breakdown.

**The NVR training:**

The 10-day training involves a number of lectures to learn about theories, ideas and skills. NVR is an approach which involves working with nuclear/foster and extended family members, schools, neighbours, friends and the NVR facilitator. There are seven sections of the process and each can be used separately. The training taught me about the importance of language in evoking violence and arguments and how violence is not only verbal but can be physical too. NVR can also be used to address anorexia. A very useful part of the training was the role playing and looking at scenarios as this highlighted the challenges of working with children who are violent towards their caregivers. This built my empathy levels for the lived experiences of caregivers and the fear they experience. The increase in empathy helps to connect with the family helping them to feel contained and use NVR.

**How the parents/families have experienced NVR**

An aspect which caregivers like about NVR is that it focusses on the 'here and now' rather than seeking out issues which occurred in the past. NVR takes a non-blaming approach which helps parents to be open minded about using new approaches. The caregivers found it helpful that NVR is a transparent process which has a structure. Families like that usually NVR is a short-term intervention (3-4 months) and longer if necessary, to provide longer interventions for multi-stressed families. The caregivers have liked that an extended network supported them in the process; they felt less isolated and overall had more courage to tackle the violence that they were living with. Overall the children seem to feel a sense of containment, especially as the model helps the caregivers to stay consistent with their reactions and give the child the message that parents and the wider network want to keep them safe.

### Introducing NVR ideas to my team:

I have carried out a number of workshops within my organisation introducing NVR ideas to the children with disabilities social workers and foster carers. The idea is for the social workers to pass on NVR ideas to parents. The children with disabilities social workers have stated that these ideas have been really helpful to the parents who have children with autism and children with communication issues. The social workers continue to want to learn more about NVR and I hope to run an NVR group for parents. I have attached feedback forms from some of the NVR workshops and I request that they are not published on this site due to confidentiality reasons. The overall feedback has been positive.

Once again, I am very grateful for the significant support that Foundation PSA has provided me and remain impressed by their robust commitment to improving adolescents' mental health, emotional wellbeing and overall quality of life via their training grants to professionals.