

I attended this three day training with a group of other professionals including teachers, social workers, educational and clinical psychologists and foster parents. It focused on applying Theraplay principles particularly to children who have been traumatised either through domestic violence and mental health issues in their birth family or through moving into fostering and adoption. It focused on the use of video, observing therapists using theraplay techniques with traumatised and challenging children and adolescents. It focused on active techniques and ideas to plan for and use with children who struggle to manage purely verbal ways of processing their experiences. It was very insightful about the power of repeated interactions that focus on safe, structured enjoyment of being in relation to another person, be that therapist, parent or foster carer. The use of songs and repeated rhythmic movements to address sensory difficulties was particularly helpful, specifically with some of the very dysregulated children we work with. Specific techniques to engage and support adolescents was helpful in addressing issues of touch safely and appropriately.

I found the course to be enlightening and uplifting in generating hopeful and enjoyable activities and therapeutic interactions that can really help when working with the weightiness and stuckness of issues for children who have been traumatised in their pasts. I hope to be able to use some of these ideas in my work and am keen to gain accreditation as a Theraplay therapist.