

SOLIHULL APPROACH

Trainers

Practice Session Toolkit



Updated August 2015

INTRODUCTION

The Solihull Approach is a highly practical way of working with families by the application of a robust theoretical structure to practice. The underpinning theories provide a thoughtful psychodynamic approach with practical child development and behavioural approaches.

The Solihull Approach has a major contribution to make to the ways in which practitioners in health, education, voluntary and social care can work with families to ensure that children have a good emotional start in life. Collaborative working between different professionals using the principles of the Solihull Approach can help support parents in a consistent way. Further Information;

www.solihullapproachparenting.com

The HSC Clinical Education Centre (CEC) was commissioned by the DHSSPS and the Public Health Agency to deliver the Solihull Approach Foundation Programme as an infant mental health awareness programme.

This has been delivered widely across Northern Ireland to practitioners from Health & Social Care and the Voluntary and Community sector. The model is one of education and practice with the CEC providing education governance around fidelity to the programme and the delivery of education to adult learners.

This toolkit has been developed by Nurse Education Consultants under the leadership of Averil Bassett, Senior Education Manager to further support Solihull Approach Trainers in the delivery of the four Practice Sessions. These follow the 2-Day Solihull Approach Foundation Programme and are designed to enable practitioners to embed the approach in their practice.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit has been developed by Maire O'Halloran, Nurse Education Consultant and Orlagh Mc Carthy, Business Services Organisation Intern under the leadership of Averil Bassett, Senior Education Manager and Regional Solihull Coordinator 2013-2015. The need arose following an evaluation on the training experience of Solihull Trainers in N. Ireland. They identified the need for a supportive structure to use within practice sessions.

PURPOSE OF PRACTICE SESSIONS

Solihull Approach Practice Sessions are integral to the successful implementation of the theoretical model described on the 2-Day Foundation Programme. The sessions are planned approximately one month apart and last for two hours focusing on the development of the model within practice.

Evaluation demonstrates that practitioners value and benefit from Practice Sessions. They provide an opportunity to discuss case studies and to embed the theoretical approach to practice. The evidence based Resource Manual covers a range of issues common to childhood. The focus on the use of this in practice sessions helps busy practitioners to become familiar with resources that can be used for early intervention and support of parents in understanding their child. The multidisciplinary learning environment facilitates guidance and support from other disciplines and agencies on a variety of relevant issues across Children's Services.

This toolkit is based on practitioner experience of facilitating Practice Sessions. It is not intended to be prescriptive but supportive, recognising the value of practical support needed for busy practitioners in their role as Solihull Trainers.

N.B. Practice Sessions do not replace Supervision within the practitioner's own discipline/agency.

RECOMMENDED PATHWAY TO BECOME A SOLIHULL TRAINER

Attend the 2-Day Solihull Approach Foundation Programme



Attend 4 Practice Sessions, demonstrate the use of the model in practice, be familiar with the Resource Pack



Attend 1-Day Train the Trainers Course



Maintain Links with Solihull Trainers in N.I.
Continue professional development to embed the approach to practice
Update on developments via Solihull website
Attend Solihull *plus* Workshops

SAMPLE PLAN FOR PRACTICE SESSION

Time	Activity	Resource
09.30	Welcome/ apologies Introductions / Sign in. De-clutter ice breaker; Bin it, Bag it, Bring it	Attendance sheet
09.45	Group Agreement outlining confidentiality and safeguarding	Group Agreement
09.50	Individual reflection on practice and case examples integrating key messages of Solihull model	Key Messages
10.25	COMFORT BREAK	
10.30	Practitioner presentation on agreed topic using case study and resource pack information	SA Resource pack
10.45	Group discussion on topic and resources	
11.20	Summarise, thanking participants and reminder of date / venue / topic to be discussed at next session	Dates for group sessions
11.30	FINISH	
11.40	Solihull trainer reflection / checklist and complete trainers record of session	Solihull trainers record Self-Reflection Checklist page 10
<i>At the end of session 4 please complete questionnaire (Appendix 9)</i>		

PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE SESSIONS

1. During Day two of the programme, give the practitioners the four dates and venues booked in advance for Practice Sessions. (Appendix 1). It is good practice to have the sessions at four to six week intervals starting one month after completion of the 2-Day programme.
2. Explain that the sessions are integral to the programme and encourage the benefits of attendance.
3. On Day two, give the practitioners time to choose the topics (from the Resource Packs) they would like to discuss during the four practice sessions. Explain that they should complete this in pairs (if possible) and be prepared to provide a brief overview of the topic to the group and to include a case study from practice (give the Practitioners Record of Practice to the group. Appendix 8). This should demonstrate how they have used the Solihull Approach. Groups vary in their level of presentation of topics. The role of the Solihull Trainer is to value all participant input and to demonstrate containment to reduce anxiety.
4. Create a Group Distribution list in Outlook Contacts after Day Two Solihull Foundation Programme.
5. Record the topics on the 'Practice Session Topic documentation' (Appendix 2) and send this out to the group via the Group Distribution list from your contacts.
6. Send a reminder email one week prior to the Practice Session requesting '*confirmation of attendance*'.
7. Arrive early to the Practice Session venue to set up the room, allowing 15 minutes.
8. Think comfort – temperature, lighting, seating (all relevant for physical containment).
9. Arrange seating to promote inclusiveness and a relaxed learning environment (semicircle) or full circle without barriers such as tables if possible.

RESOURCES NEEDED

- ❖ Attendance and Group Agreement Record (discussion on where the record is to be stored should take place in each Trust/Agency)
- ❖ Solihull Trainer's Record of Practice
- ❖ List of dates for sessions for each group (if not given out on Day 2)
- ❖ Solihull Approach Resource Packs
- ❖ Trainers Practice Session Toolkit
- ❖ Clipboard
- ❖ Optional refreshments



WHAT DO I NEED TO THINK ABOUT?

- ❖ Greet practitioners as they arrive
- ❖ Consider using an exercise to help people settle and feel contained e.g. 'bin it, bag it, bring it'.
- ❖ Remind practitioners of the group agreement on the attendance sheet emphasising confidentiality, its limitations and expectations with the session.
- ❖ Give apologies for those that have responded to the email.
- ❖ Provide an opportunity for all practitioners to contribute.
- ❖ Make reference to Containment and Reciprocity using the Key Messages (Appendices 3, 4, 5) helping practitioners relate their case study practice to the underpinning theory of the model.
- ❖ Encourage/ facilitate participation from quieter practitioners.
- ❖ Provide containment for practitioners who need it.
- ❖ Ask open ended questions to encourage thinking and integration of the Solihull Approach to practice.
- ❖ Refer to the Solihull Resource Packs to help practitioners become familiar with the pack.
- ❖ Allow adequate time for practitioners to present the agreed Practice Session Topic and case study. This usually leads to further discussion.
- ❖ 10 minutes before close of the session, summarise the session and remind practitioners of the date, venue and who will present agreed topic at the next session.

Note: At the start of each Practice Session, the Solihull Trainer should ensure that attendees confirm the 'group agreement' which includes confidentiality with specific reference to adhering to Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures, Professional Codes of Conduct and /or Agency policies.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR PRACTICE SESSIONS

- ❖ Ask open ended questions to help practitioners explore their practice, e.g.;
 - Can you tell us more about.....? (seeking consent)
 - Can I hear how you contained the mother /father?
 - Tell us how you observed reciprocity?
 - How do you feel the visit went?
 - How did the mother/father respond?
 - How do you plan to move forward?
 - Has the group any thoughts, tips or questions? (involve the experience within the group, you are facilitating multidisciplinary adult learning).
- ❖ Listen without interruption (even if you have helpful things to say) let the practitioner tell the story.
- ❖ Offer containment statements.....
 - That sounds very tiring/challenging/ difficult....
 - I can hear you are feeling frustrated
 - I can see that was very difficult for you
- ❖ Clarify points from the reflection to encourage learning.
- ❖ Encourage group members to respond.
- ❖ Be empathetic and sincere. It will help the practitioner to feel listened to. It will promote empathy in the group – I imagine it's very difficult for you.
- ❖ Constructively challenge where appropriate, “would a referral to a dietician help?” Have you considered doing anything differently
- ❖ How did you feel? Did you seek supervision?
- ❖ Do not be afraid of silences they give you and the practitioner time to think and reflect.
- ❖ Conclude the input with a summary... “to summarise, you plan to visit next week and discuss



CONTAINMENT



WHAT I NEED TO DO AT THE END OF A PRACTICE SESSION

- ❖ Be aware of the 'dance of reciprocity' and the withdrawal phase when people need to 'look away/ turn away'. Take time to down and be aware of the emotions in the room in case anyone needs to be contained before they leave.
- ❖ Close the session on time as included in the group agreement.
- ❖ Maintain and file records of attendance and trainer's record for practice session promptly following the session.
- ❖ Complete self-reflection checklist to promote own learning from session – what worked well/ what would you do differently next time?
- ❖ Relax – you have completed a good session.
- ❖ Take time to think about YOUR feelings.
- ❖ Request supervision, if needed, or discuss with another Solihull Trainer.

FINALLY REMEMBER...

*SUCCESS IS A JOURNEY NOT
A DESTINATION*

POST PRACTICE SESSION REFLECTION

(Self evaluation) (PS) Practice session

	PS1	PS2	PS3	PS4	Your feelings / comments
Email to group					
Environment					
Welcome					
Settling exercise					
Group Agreement					
Contribution of whole group					
Refer to key messages on containment					
Key messages Reciprocity					
Quieter group members					
Open ended questions used					
Used Resource Packs					
Prompt finish					
Summarise and remind of date/ presenter for next session					

RECOMMENDED READING

1. Egan, G (2007) *The Skilled Helper: A Problem –management and Opportunity development Approach to Helping*. ISBN 0495092037, 9780495092032
2. Karr-Morse and Wiley (1997) *Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence*, The Atlantic Monthly Press, New York.
3. Gerhardt, S (2004) *Why Love Matters: How affection shapes a baby's brain*. ISBN 13:978-158391-817-3
4. Goleman, D (2005) 3rd Ed. *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books, N.Y.
5. Murray, L.& Andrews, L. (2000) *The Social Baby: Understanding Babies' Communication from Birth*. CP Publishing, Surrey.
6. Siegel, D & Hartzell, M (2003) *Parenting from the inside out: How a deeper self-understanding can help you raise children who thrive*. Penguin group, New York
7. *Early Intervention: Good Parents, Great Kids, Better Citizens* (2008) Graham Allen MP and Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith
8. Barlow J, & Svanberg, P. (2009) *Keeping the Baby in Mind: Infant Mental Health in Practice*, Routledge, NY
9. Douglas, H. (2007) *Containment & Reciprocity: Integrating psychoanalytic theory and child development research for work with children*. Routledge, London
10. *Conception to Age 2: The Age of Opportunity*, Wave Trust, www.wavetrust.org
Music, Graham (2011) *Nurturing Natures: Attachment and Children's Emotional, Sociocultural and Brain Development*. Psychology Press. Sussex
11. Perry, B .& Szalavitz, M. (2006) *The Boy who was raised as a dog*. Basic Books, New York.

Appendix 1

Contact Details:

For more information on the Solihull
Approach Programme and Practice Sessions
please contact;



Solihull Approach Practice Sessions for

**Information for Practitioners and
Managers**

Introduction

The Solihull Approach is a 2 Day foundation programme followed with a minimum of 4 mandatory practice sessions in the first year.

Research on the Solihull Approach has demonstrated the importance of reflection to integrate the theory to practice.

The shared learning in a multidisciplinary setting offers practice development support with input from the Solihull Approach Trainer who will facilitate the sessions.

What happens during a Practice Session?

This is a 2-hour session with a focus on

- Reflective Practice
- Case discussion
- Use of Resources with parents

Solihull Approach Practice Sessions

Trust/Organisation _____

Date	Time	Venue

Please note that the Practice Sessions do not replace the need for staff to receive supervision within their own agencies.

Please confirm attendance before each session

APPENDIX 2

Trust/Organisation: _____

Date of Foundation Programme: _____

SOLIHULL APPROACH PRACTICE SESSIONS

Topics chosen by the group for the 4 Practice sessions

Discuss and agree with your group

- We will all aim to read the relevant section in the Resource Pack before attending
- Think about practice and reflect on use of Containment and Reciprocity and share with the group for learning
- The person delivering the Resource Pack Topic will do a brief overview (5- 10 mins) with key points for practitioners (as per resources), triggers for referral and useful Hand-out's for parents with case study reference to practice.

Date:	Resource Pack Case Study focus:	Who:

APPENDIX 3

KEY MESSAGES- BABY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

1. The quality of parent–child relationship is crucial to the way the brain wires itself up, and to the child’s ability to regulate their emotions and behaviour.
2. Relationships between parent and child which are characterised by trauma, neglect and stress are known to have a detrimental effect on infant brain development, child behaviour and emotional regulation.
3. Our brains continue to form new synapses and prune away unused connections throughout life, so there is always potential for change. However, critical pathways developed during the first year of life can continue to exert a strong influence and may be harder to change. These pathways can be helpful or unhelpful in terms of learning.
4. Most brain development occurs in the child’s first three years.
5. A child living in conditions of extreme neglect can have up to 25% fewer connections. This has implications for a child’s potential to learn.
6. Brain development will affect a child’s behaviour in the home and later in school, both in the playground and in the classroom.

KEY MESSAGES – CONTAINMENT

The most important aspects of a containing relationship are:

1. The practitioner needs to create a suitable environment and consider how best to enable a parent or carer to talk about what is really bothering them.
2. The parent's mind being available to think about the infant, child or young person (trainers should discuss factors which undermine this for example, stress).
3. The parent observing cues from the infant, child, young person (thus requiring reciprocity).
4. The parent digesting the cues and feelings and trying to make some sense of them.
5. The parent conveying back to the infant, child, young person in words, or actions, that the child's experience is being thought about with care (held in mind).
6. The practitioner thinking about what feelings are being elicited in him / herself.

APPENDIX 5

KEY MESSAGES - RECIPROCITY

1. The Dance of Reciprocity is the basis for all healthy relationships (parent – baby/child/teenager, parent-practitioner, teacher-pupil) and can be observed from the first few hours of life.
2. A degree of mismatching is necessary to promote healthy emotional growth and to facilitate resilience. ‘Rupture and Repair’ is a stage of the ‘Dance of Reciprocity’ when the infant / child processes the interaction during the withdrawal / ‘look away’ stage. This leads to learning. Parents can misinterpret this stage and may need support.
3. ‘Chase and dodge’ reflects the parent/carer not recognising the infant’s signals and need to withdraw as they are becoming overwhelmed. Attempts by the parent /carer to continue engagement are intrusive and the infant becomes distressed as they increase their efforts to ‘dodge’ the interaction. Lack of withdrawal stage inhibits synapse formation and storage of information to memory.
4. Reciprocity is important for:
 - Self-regulation
 - Building block of attachment
 - All transitional stages – (e.g. weaning, moving to own room, starting school, reading cues from others)
 - Developing a clear sense of self
 - Language development and social skills
 - Provides a blueprint for all relationships (links to attachment)
 - Links to baby brain development

APPENDIX 6

SOLIHULL APPROACH PRACTICE SESSION: GROUP AGREEMENT

Date:	Solihull Approach Trainer:
Apologies:	

Group Agreement:

1. Attend a minimum of 4 sessions
2. Come prepared to participate in the session
3. Individual reflection on Solihull Approach in practice
4. Have an agreed focus on a topic from the Solihull Resource Pack
5. Case study presentation
6. Confidentiality
7. Focus of the next session will be agreed by the group
8. Prompt finish.

Print Name	Signature	Line manager	Base

APPENDIX 7

SOLIHULL APPROACH PRACTICE SESSION: SOLIHULL TRAINER'S RECORD

Date:

Time:

Trainer:

Venue:

Practice Issues Discussed:

Actions / Topics for next session:

Who?

Signature of Trainer:

Date:

Date of Next Meeting:

APPENDIX 8

SOLIHULL APPROACH PRACTICE SESSION: PRACTITIONER'S CASE STUDY	
Name:	Role:
How I used Solihull Approach in Practice demonstrating Containment and Reciprocity :	
Situation:	
What worked well?	
What I would do differently?	

APPENDIX 9

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE SOLIHULL TRAINING AND PRACTICE SESSIONS

Name: _____ Title / Role: _____

Dates of Solihull Foundation Programme Training: _____

The purpose of this questionnaire is to give you an opportunity to reflect on your experiences and help those planning training.

1. Has the Solihull Approach model provided you with research and evidence on the importance of early brain development?

Yes

No

Comment _____

2 Do you take time to discuss the importance of brain development and the parent infant / child interaction for the development of positive emotional/ mental health?

Yes

No

Comment _____

3. Has the Solihull Approach Foundation Programme made a difference to your understanding of children and families?

Yes

No

Comment _____

4. Has the Solihull Approach Foundation Programme made a difference to how you work with children and families?

Yes

No

Comment _____

5. How many Practice Sessions have you been able to attend? Please circle

1 2 3 4

Comment _____

6. How useful were they to supporting your practice?

Not Useful Useful Very Useful

Comment _____

7. If you haven't been able to attend Practice Sessions, please state main reasons?

Comment _____

8. If you had the opportunity, would you like to continue with Practice Sessions?

Yes No

Comment _____

9. Do you use the Solihull Approach Resource Pack?

Please identify how with yes / no and comment

Yes No

Reading more Information on the Solihull Model		
Reading examples of Case Studies		
Giving Hand-outs to Parents		

Comment _____

10. Are you interested in becoming a Solihull Trainer?

Yes No

Comment _____

Date of completion: _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire