

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD



S O L I H U L L A P P R O A C H



Understanding Your Child – online course for parents

Guide for Shropshire Council
Residential Care Workers

Guide to support parents/carers of children in residential care;

The online course consists of 11 sessions of about 20 minutes each, with interactive activities, quizzes, video clips, ideas to try out, downloadable information sheets and a notebook to record ideas.

The supporting professional will need to use their knowledge and expertise around the child's journey in order to individualise the course for each family.

Key messages:

- the course includes finding out about children's brain development and how it affects behaviour
- It helps parents understand more about why their child behaves a certain way
- parents will learn the importance of supporting their child's development

UYC Online Course

To **access the course**, follow these steps:

1. Anyone wishing to take the Parenting Online Course must first make a free account on Ourplace, by going to www.inourplace.co.uk and clicking on 'Start now', and you will be prompted to enter your name, email address, and create a password. This will be your account on Ourplace, and you can safely keep photos and information here.
2. Once you have made your account click on 'Learn' along the top of the screen, then in the box for 'Parenting online course' click on the 'Take course' button.
3. Click on the 'Already have a discount coupon?' button. Enter the coupon code in the box and click 'Apply coupon', and once it is accepted then click on 'Sign up'.

Then you can start your course! You can always access the course on www.inourplace.co.uk by going to 'Learn' along the top of the screen, and then clicking on 'Take course' in the 'Parenting online course' box. The course can be used on PCs, Macs, laptops, tablets and smartphones.




















For a coupon code contact Shropshire Council Parenting Team

Understanding Your Child

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Once you have set up your family's profile on www.inourplace.co.uk and accessed the parenting online course you will begin by being shown an outline of the course content.

The course is broken in to 11 Modules.

ourplace 		UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD SOLIHULL APPROACH 	Dashboard
Module 1	How your child develops		
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Each module is broken down into units, which will need to be completed in order.


Welcome!

Welcome!

Welcome to Understanding Your Child, the course designed by the Solihull Approach Team and based on our highly successful face-to-face course.



Before you start, make sure you're comfortable and that you have about 15 to 20 minutes to work through this first session of the 11 session programme. Try to find a quiet space where you won't be interrupted.

At the end of each session there will be an opportunity for you to see in real life some of the topics we have talked about in the session so do give yourself a few days between each of the sessions. 

Use the next [Next Unit >](#) and back [← Previous Unit](#) buttons to navigate your way through the pages. You will need to go through each session in order. You can go back to sessions you have previously worked through.

There are audio and video sections so you may want to make sure that you have headphones to listen to the sound or turn up the sound on your computer.

If you don't want the voiceovers to play automatically, you can

If you don't want the voiceovers to play automatically, you can change your Profile settings by clicking on your name at the top of the screen, going to "Profile" and selecting 'off' next to "Course Audio". You will then need to refresh this page once you have turned the Audio off.

You can start and stop the course as many times as you like, and return to where you left the course. Just make sure you mark each unit as complete when you see this Image.

Mark as Completed

Once you have marked as complete, you will be able to navigate onto the next unit.

Have you completed this unit? Then mark this unit as completed.

Mark as Completed

Next Unit >

In order to move on to the next unit, the 'mark as completed' box will need to be clicked.

What's it all about?

As you go through the course, you will build a clear understanding of why children behave in the ways they do and how you can maintain a happy, calm home.

You may be a mum, dad, step-parent, grandparent, auntie or other carer of a child: whatever your role, you will find this course will give you practical ways of thinking about the stages of your child's development and how your relationships with your children can get even better.



The course builds on the idea that children and young people's behaviour is connected to feelings. All feelings are relevant to understanding behaviour – including yours.


You may find you wish to skip bits of the course to find the sections that are relevant to you. However to get the most from the course we recommend working through all the modules. This way you will pick up key ideas – a framework for thinking about what is happening in your family that you can use as your child or teenager grows.

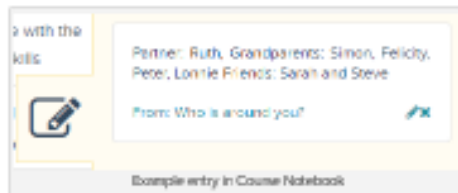
You will find examples for different age ranges throughout the course. Feel free to click on the ones that are relevant to you and ignore the ones that aren't.

The black bar at the top provides audio, should a family have difficulties with literacy skills and would benefit from having the text read.

Your Notebook

As you work your way through this online course there will be times when you might like to make notes for yourself, either while you're learning or between sessions when you're using what you've learnt in some activities with your child. You may find this interesting to look back on in the future.

We have provided a special Notebook for you. To access click on this image, or on the image on the right hand side of your screen () at any time and you will be able to save some your own notes.



As you work through the course, there will also be leaflets to view and download containing practical ideas, tips that you can use with your children and links to YouTube videos.

Click Next to meet the other parents who are taking part in this course.

Have you completed this unit? Then mark this unit as completed.

[Mark as Completed](#)

[← Previous Unit](#)

[Next Unit →](#)

The course provides a notebook facility, but it might be beneficial for the family to keep a real notebook to enhance their discussion with their support worker.

At the bottom of the page there is the facility to click the box to revisit the previous unit if this is useful.

Meeting the virtual parents

This group of virtual parents are featured throughout the course. You will be able to click on them to find out how they have responded to the questions that you will be asked to think about.

Click on each of the parents to read a bit about them and their families.

→ [Helen, Grace and Sophie](#)

↓ [Billy and Rio](#)



I'm Billy and this is my stepson Rio. He's 12 and recently started senior school so me and his mum would like to know that we're doing the right things to help him deal with this big change in his life. I think understanding his behaviour more can only be a good thing.

→ [Anwaar, Samir and Nadira](#)

→ [Carla, Graham and their son Harry](#)

→ [Lee](#)

Throughout the course you will see reference to virtual parents. These parents offer different discussion points about their families, which might or might not be relevant to the family you are supporting. It is worth spending some time becoming familiar with the virtual parents as they may offer an alternative viewpoint which might enhance any discussion.

Your own experiences as a support worker will also be useful in enhancing areas of reflection and discussion.



How do you currently feel about parenting?

Before you start the course, you might like to see how you feel about your relationship with your child.

Please take a couple of minutes to fill in this questionnaire. It's a simple questionnaire which will help us to see how helpful the course is.

We'll ask you the same questions at the end of the course so you'll be able to see how your feelings about your relationships have changed.

You do not have to fill in the questionnaire to continue with the course. Your answers are anonymous which means that we won't know who gave them. However 'before' and 'after' questionnaires help us know if this course is helpful to parents.



Some parents who have more than one child like to complete a questionnaire for each child. If you have added them to Ourplace, their names will automatically drop down in the box that says 'My child', so you can choose one or more children.

Module 1 – unit 5

During Module 1, parents will be asked about how they feel about their relationship with their child. They will be asked this again at the end of the course, during which time we hope that they will have had regular contact with their child and time to reflect upon and build on their relationship.

This questionnaire can be used as a measure of effectiveness of the intervention.

The questionnaire is as follows;

1. I share an affectionate, warm relationship with my child.
2. My child and I always seem to be struggling with each other.
3. If upset, my child will seek comfort from me.
4. My child is uncomfortable with physical affection or touch from me.
5. My child values his/her relationship with me.
6. When I praise my child, he/she beams with pride.
7. My child spontaneously shares information about himself/herself.
8. My child easily becomes angry at me.
9. It is easy to be in tune with what my child is feeling.

10. My child remains angry or is resistant after being disciplined.
11. Dealing with my child drains my energy.
12. When my child is in a bad mood, I know we are in for a long and difficult day.
13. My child's feelings toward me can be unpredictable or can change suddenly.
14. My child is sneaky or manipulative with me.
15. My child openly shares his/her feelings and experiences with me.

Post-course questionnaire

Please complete the questionnaire and see if there is a difference with the first questionnaire you filled in.

Thank you for submitting the post-course questionnaire at 16:02 15/05/2016. Now comparing the answers between the pre-course questionnaire that you completed about on 11:06 15/05/2016 we have found that :

	Pre	Post	Diff
Closeness	28	31	-3
Conflict	15	15	0

Closeness

Well done! Your score indicates that you **feel closer** to now than you did at the start of the course.

You are likely to have a better understanding of your child and may well be enjoying your time together more than before.

Conflict

Your score indicates that there is **the same amount of conflict** with from the beginning to the end of the course.

This may be at a low level that you are happy with and that is right for your family, as some conflict is always normal. If it is at a level that you are not happy with, you may find it helpful to talk to a family member or friend or someone else to work out what might help such as your health visitor, children centre, GP or school nurse.

Module 11 – unit 11

Print off a copy of questionnaire as evidence of effectiveness before you click as completed.

Once you have 'completed' the family will be provided with a summary of their progress.



Video: Experiences build brain architecture

You just found out about how a baby's brain develops in the early years. Now click the link to the YouTube clip to find out how a baby's experiences affect their development. It's a short video produced by Harvard Medical School entitled 'Experiences build brain architecture'.

Then when you're ready click Next to find out more about baby brain development.



Sourced with permission from the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University.

At different points in the course you will be provided with video clips, to access these you will need to get past the Council firewall.

can react without thinking.



This leaflet which summarises brain development through childhood captures this information.

Click to view and download the PDF of the Brain development leaflet.



Have you completed this unit? Then mark this unit as completed.

[Mark as Completed](#)

[« Previous Unit](#)





[Next Unit »](#)

Throughout the course there will be the opportunity to print off supporting leaflets on a variety of topics.



What you've learnt

In this session you've learnt that:

-  Babies' brains develop more quickly before the age of 3 years than at any other time.
-  By the age of 2 a child will have as many brain connections as an adult.
-  Babies often look away because they need time to process what has just happened.
-  The teenage years are the second most rapid episode of brain growth and reorganisation.

Have you completed this unit? Then mark this unit as completed.

[Mark as Completed](#)

[← Previous Unit](#)

[Next Unit →](#)

At the end of each module will be provided with a summary.

Time to have a go!

This last part of the session is about real life. As you learn more about theory and research this 'Time to have a go!' section is about joining it up with your life and your family. We'd like you to observe your child, or one of your children, and to reflect on the behaviour that you see.

You might find it useful to make notes in your Notebook (📝):

- 👤 Think about what you and your child are thinking and feeling.
- 👤 Think about what you notice now that you hadn't noticed before.
- 👤 You might also find the [Feelings map](#) is useful in trying to identify the emotions that you and your child are experiencing.

We can learn a great deal about our children's behaviour by learning to observe them well. Many of us are so busy that we sometimes overlook this but do take the time to spend a few minutes observing what your child is experiencing and trying to put a name to what you see.

If you do not see your child or grandchild before the next session, spend a few minutes thinking about the last time you saw your child. Looking back, what do you think your child was thinking and feeling?




At the end of each module there will be a reflective activity suggestion, these may need to be tailored to fit the families circumstances. This is the reflective aspect of the course and essential to moving a family forward in their relationship with their child.

ourplace UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR [Dashboard](#) [Learn](#) [FAQ](#)


▶ 00:00 00:02


Feeding back on Time to have a go!

At the end of the last session we asked you to observe and reflect on your child's behaviour and to begin to think about your child's and your own feelings.






How did you get on? What did you observe? What did you think you or your child had been feeling? What did you notice that perhaps you hadn't noticed before?

Take a couple of minutes to think about what you saw. You might want to look back at your Notebook () to see what you noticed.



▶ 00:00 00:02

Click on the characters to see some of the things that other parents have told us after doing this observation.

-  Penwar
-  Leo
-  Helen

Each module will begin with reflection on the 'time to have a go' activity from the previous session.

This is where families make most of their progress in understanding their children's behaviour.

The three key questions

While you do this, think about three key questions. These will help you to think about your child's behaviour and what this tells you about what he is feeling. We will be referring to these three key questions as we go through the course. Some parents have found it helpful to have these questions easily available to look at. For example they have printed the questions and put them on the fridge.

1. What is the exact age and developmental stage of your child?

Think about what they're trying to do at the moment: are they learning to crawl, to feed themselves, to overcome difficulties getting to sleep, or if they're teenagers are they going out with their first girlfriend or boyfriend?



2. What changes have taken place in your lives recently?

Think about all recent changes no matter how big or small. For example, your child might have lost a favourite cuddly toy or your teenage daughter may be breaking up with her boyfriend.



3. How well can your child communicate his or her needs to you?

Is it obvious when your child is feeling sad, angry, frustrated etc. or do you need to be more of a detective to spot the signs?



Module 2 – unit 20

Here you will find the introduction of the three key questions. You might find this useful to print off and have as a hard copy to refer to throughout the course, which will be a useful tool to unpick children's feelings and understand behaviours.

Recap of Resources

Leaflets

Click on the pdf of any of the leaflets you may have missed or want to look at again.

[Let's play 0-4 years PDF](#)

[Let's play 5-11 years PDF](#)

[Let's play 11-18 years PDF](#)

[Developing a good sleep routine](#)

[Play: a child's and a parent's perspective](#)

[Sleeping difficulties: a child's and parent's perspective](#)

[Behaviour: a child's and a parent's perspective](#)

[Developmental milestones](#)

[Feelings map](#)

[Brain development](#)

[Coping with anger](#)

[How parenting has changed](#)

Please note that the certificate of completion will be available on the page you accessed these sessions from, once you complete this final session.

You can print off a certificate to confirm that you have successfully completed this Solihull Approach Parenting Course.

At the end of the course there will be a final opportunity to access any of the leaflets which might be relevant.

Further resources

If you would like to continue to learn more about your child the following websites have lots of useful material.

[Understanding Childhood](#) has very interesting leaflets on different subjects, such as sibling rivalry, which can be downloaded free or read online.

[Socialbaby](#) has some free access to videos plus resources to buy, including the book 'Social baby' which shows in pictures the skills that babies have to try to get us to relate to them.

[Parentchannel.tv](#) has lots of short videos with free access, covering children aged 5 years to 19 years and a wide range of topics from play to bullying.

Other sources of information and help

- [Relate for parents](#)
- [One Plus One – Strengthening Relationships](#)
- [Netmums.com](#)
- [Mumsnet.com](#)
- [Health visitor](#)
- [Children's centre](#)
- [School nurse](#)

Module 11 – unit 10

Further resources; You may want to add to this by providing local information.

Once the course has been completed you are able to print off a certificate for the parent.

The parent will be able to return to their course at any time in the future.

Understanding Your Child online course – things to consider...

Module 1	How your child develops	Parents will learn about early brain development and the impact of early experience. They may need to be supported to move away from self blame and encouraged to focus on future positive experiences.
Module 2	Understanding how your child is feeling	Some families struggle with feelings and need to acknowledge their own feelings before beginning to understand their child's.
Module 3	Tuning into what your child needs	Families regularly struggle to be realistic about their individual child's developmental stage, particularly if the child has an additional need or has experienced trauma. The worker may need to support this understanding.
Module 4	Responding to how your child is feeling	Parents are being asked to consider their own feelings and how this impacts on their behaviour, how they experience containment. This needs to be understood and valued in order to consider their child's feelings.
Module 5	Different styles of parenting	This module can evoke powerful emotions for the parent, and the support worker may need to set some time aside following the session for their own containment.

Module 6	Having fun together	This can be a difficult session as parents may not have played or had fun with their child/young person in some time and may not know how to. Suggestions for this may need to come from the support worker.
Module 7	Rhythm of interaction	The rhythm of interaction begins by considering a child's early experience, which may be uncomfortable for some parents. However it is essential in understanding how their child's journey has impacted on their behaviour.
Module 8	Why sleep is important?	Sleep is used to illustrate reciprocity. The worker may need to explain routines that work within Chelmaren, that can be translated in to the home situation to support the transition home.
Module 9	Self regulation and anger	Some children will experience a great deal of anger that might be directed toward their family. This may need to be explored in some depth, if emotions are understood they become easier to manage.
Module 10	Communication and tuning in	Time spent with the young person during the course will be essential to reflection during this session. The parent will need to take responsibility for when things go wrong, and may need support to acknowledge this.
Module 11	Looking back and looking forward	Time to reflect, celebrate positives and plan for the future.

For further information and support contact;

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