

NICE guidance and Solihull Approach Parenting Research

(National Institute for Clinical Excellence)

Solihull Approach Parenting Group

The Solihull Approach is an integrated model of working for professionals who work with families with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It has been successfully used by a wide range of professionals around the UK in their individual and group work with families. The model brings together three well-developed concepts, which are containment from psychoanalytic theory, reciprocity from child development and behaviour management from learning theory. It is also used as an effective approach to preventative work and early intervention. The Solihull Approach Model is designed to work with families in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Levels 1-3. Within Solihull Mellow Parenting is used to work with families CAF levels 3-4.

The following recommendations have been made by NICE in relation to parent-training/education programmes. The information below describes how the Solihull Approach Parenting Group meets those recommendations.

- Be structured and have a curriculum informed by principles of social learning theory

The Solihull Approach Parenting Group uses the principles of learning theory in the design, incorporating modelling. Social learning theory was developed in the 1940's and 1950's and itself brought together behaviourism and psychoanalytic theory. The Solihull Approach Model integrates psychoanalytic theory, child development theory and behaviourism and interestingly the concepts of containment and reciprocity can be used as explanatory mechanisms for how social learning theory works.

- Include relationship-enhancing strategies

The Solihull Approach Parenting Group includes a range of strategies to enhance parent/child relationships. Activities are designed to encourage a reflective style of parenting that leads to more sensitive and effective parenting. The activities within the programme also help parents to develop a framework for thinking about their child's behaviour at any age encouraging parents to develop a reciprocal understanding of the cues their child is giving

them. Parents are also helped to understand how they can influence their relationship with their child through play. The Solihull Approach Parenting Group also uses the concept of reciprocity to help parents look at how to recover when things go wrong, repairing relationships.

- Offer a sufficient number of sessions, with an optimum of 8-12, to maximise the possible benefits for participants

The Solihull Approach Parenting Group is delivered over a 10 week 2 hours per week group for 10-12 parents. The length and size of the group has been planned taking into consideration relevant research in the field. Research shows that effective programmes run for 10-12 parents for 2 hours a week for about 10 weeks – Sarah Stewart-Brown, 2005.

- Enable parents to identify their own objectives

The Solihull Approach Parenting Group is designed to help parents identify their own objectives as an ongoing process during the course. In the first session an activity is planned to help begin the process of setting some clear goals. In later session parents revisit their goals as part of the reflective nature of the thinking that is encouraged in the Solihull Approach Parenting Group.

- Incorporate role-play during sessions, as well as homework to be undertaken between sessions, to achieve generalisation of newly rehearsed behaviours to the home situation

There are several opportunities for parents to participate in role-play during the Solihull Approach Parenting Group. Role-plays are used at specific points in the programme to help parents experience different ways of communicating. Role-plays are used to represent particular behaviours of adults and children with replaying of role-plays with newly reworded scripts that include improved ways of communicating between parent and child.

An important aspect of the Solihull Approach Parenting Programme includes specially designed homework that helps parents to observe, reflect and make appropriate changes to their responses to their child's behaviour. At the beginning of each session during feedback from homework session facilitators help parents to reflect and develop their thinking about what they learnt carrying out the homework.

- Be delivered by appropriately trained and skilled facilitators who are supervised, have access to necessary ongoing professional development, and are able to engage in a productive therapeutic alliance with parents

The Solihull Approach Parenting Group is delivered by professionals who have attended the Solihull Approach foundation training and a one-day Solihull Approach Parenting Group Facilitators' training. Supervision and ongoing professional development is advised as an important part of delivering the Solihull Approach Parenting Group.

- Adhere to the programme developer's manual and employ all of the necessary materials to ensure consistent implementation of the programme

The Solihull Approach Parenting Group has developed a Solihull Approach Parenting Group manual for professionals delivering the group. The manual details how the groups should be run with specific facilitators' notes and links to the Solihull Approach Model. The Solihull Approach Parenting Group manual has included in it all the necessary handouts needed to deliver the parenting course. Professionals are expected to attend a one-day Solihull Approach Parenting Group Facilitators' training. For professionals planning to cascade the training there is a Facilitators' Manual for training to ensure consistency of delivery.

- Programme should demonstrate proven effectiveness

The Solihull Approach Parenting Groups are being formally evaluated using a before and after measures design. The evaluation has been approved by both the local Ethics Committee and the Research and Development Consortium. Levels of parental anxiety will be measured using the Beck's Anxiety Inventory, Child Behavioural Problems with the Child Behaviour Checklist, and the Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire.

Data from the 72 participants have been subject to analysis by Statistician from Birmingham University

Bateson, K., Delaney, J. and Pybus, R. (2008) Meeting expectations: the pilot evaluation of the Solihull Approach Parenting Group. *Community Practitioner*, 81, 28-31.

Child Behaviour Checklist

For children under 3 years – There was a significant difference between pre- and post-externalising behaviour p value = 0.026 (i.e. reduction in conduct and behaviour problems at the end of the course)

For children over 4 years – There was a significant difference in both externalizing behaviour and total scores. Externalising p value = <0.001 , Total p value = 0.01

There were no significant changes on the internalizing scores at any age.

Beck's Anxiety Inventory Score

Highly significant difference between pre- and post-measures p value = <0.001 .

Parents of 45 children showed post-BAI scores lower than the pre-BAI score. For parents of 20 children, the post-BAI score was higher and for parents of seven there were no changes.

There was a relationship between the change in parental anxiety and the change in child internalising behaviours.

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

(Children over 4 only)

Highly significant difference in total score and conduct domain of the SDQ questionnaire between pre- and post-interventions. Total score p value = <0.001 .

There were no significant differences on the emotional, hyperactivity, peer problems or pro-social domains.

Relationship between BAI and CBCL

In both age groups, there was a significant correlation between change in BAI and change in internalising CBCL score (under 3's $p=0.022$, 4 plus $p=0.032$). In other words, the change in parental anxiety was significantly related to the change in child behaviours such as anxiety, tearfulness and being withdrawn.

There was also a similarly significant relationship between the BAI scores and the externalizing and total CBCL scores in children aged 4 years and over ($p=0.044$ and $p=0.009$).

- Programme providers should also ensure that support is available to enable the participation of parents who might otherwise find it difficult to access

Groups are offered at a range of locations, with crèche facilities available. The Solihull Approach Parenting Group has been designed so that parents can access it regardless of their level of education, so there is no requirement to read or write. The overall level of parents' satisfaction with the group is very high and so is their attendance.

Target Audience

The Solihull Approach Parenting Group targets CAF levels 1-3, that is from universal to moderate difficulty. We use Mellow Parenting for CAF levels 3+ to 4, those heading for, or on, the Child Protection Register, Mellow Parenting is a much more intensive group running for a day a week for 14 weeks, so it is clearly aimed at those requiring intensive support.

Summary

Key points

- The Solihull Approach uses the principles of learning theory within the Solihull Approach Model that integrates psychoanalytic theory, child development theory and behaviourism
- Activities focus on the parent/child relationship
- The group is delivered over 10 weeks, 2 hours per week
- Parents identify their own objectives during the course of the group
- Parents can participate in role-play and have homework between sessions
- The group is delivered by Solihull Approach trained professionals
- The Solihull Approach Parenting Group Facilitators' Manual gives detailed direction on how to run a group
- The Parenting Group is being evaluated using a statistical trends analysis
- Parenting groups are run in a variety of locations to facilitate accessibility for parents