

# Hope for Children and Families Intervention Resources

Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties



Series editors : **Arnon Bentovim and Jenny Gray**

child  
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training

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What are the **Hope for Children and Families** intervention resources?

The **Hope for Children and Families (HfCF) intervention resources** consist of a set of resources for practitioners who work with children and families to support and enhance the quality of their direct work. They are an innovative resource developed by Child & Family Training and partners, part of a programme designed to make planned whole-system changes to the delivery of children's services. They do this by providing an accessible set of evidence-based approaches, and resources and tools for assessment, planning, analysis, intervention and measuring outcomes when working with children and families. The resources are intended to empower practitioners, children, young people and their families when working together – building on strengths and overcoming difficulties. Successful change is evidenced through the improved safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people.

## Guiding principles

Each intervention guide is informed by a broad review of the literature on the distinct specialist treatment protocols (systemic, cognitive behavioural and dynamic). From this review, the 'common practice' elements that characterise the approach were distilled, and the main steps of that practice approach set out with guidance on how to carry them out. The various steps are integrated into the modules, and in turn the modules are integrated into the set of intervention guides for practitioners. Each guide presents a consistent, step-by-step approach to intervention, bringing together effective practice that can be used by a wide range of practitioners working in different contexts.

The Assessment Framework (AF) triangle provides a map for gathering and organising information collected when working with children and families. It has been utilised to formulate the interventions set out in the intervention guides.

**For details of how to order the Intervention Guides please turn to the back cover.**

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## Introduction and overview – Arnon Bentovim and Jenny Gray

This guide introduces the Hope for Children and Families (HfCF) Intervention Resources as part of an overall approach to evidence-based assessments of children, parenting capacity and family life, analysis of impairments to health and development/harm to the child, risks of further harm and prospects of intervention.

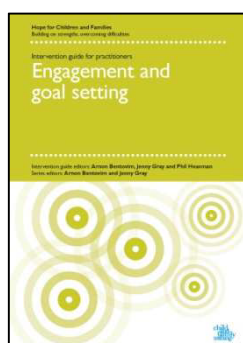
The **Introduction and overview** outlines the core principles underpinning the HfCF approach as well as:



- its aims
- its place in the context of assessment, analysis and planning with children and families
- the role of proactive case management
- the research and evidence base
- its structure and content
- models of change and associated skills
- guidance on using the resources.

## Engagement and goal setting – Arnon Bentovim, Jenny Gray and Phil Heasman

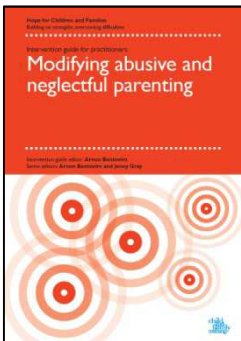
This guide introduces a seven-stage model of assessment, analysis, planning and reviewing interventions in child wellbeing and safeguarding contexts that underpins the HfCF Intervention Resources, as applied to the practitioner's own case. It also provides guidance on discussing actions affecting children's health and development to support the practitioner:



- **to gather relevant information** about children's needs, parenting capacities, family and environmental contexts; to describe and analyse the family's strengths and difficulties; and to consider processes and impact on the child's health and development without intervention
- **to engage children, parents and families**, promoting hopefulness by acknowledging strengths and overcome difficulties; ensuring a child's safety, establishing a team around the child; and by clarifying the concerns of the statutory protection agency, what could go wrong and how working with the practitioner could help
- **to establish collaborative goals** by exploring the goals of the children and parents, and integrating them with those of the statutory protection agency and the practitioner who is responsible for working with the child and family to bring about the desired change.

## Modifying abusive and neglectful parenting – Arnon Bentovim

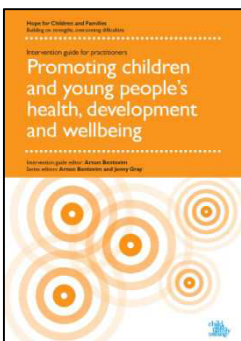
This guide addresses abusive and neglectful parenting associated with negative perceptions of children used to justify harsh parenting and the humiliation associated with sexual and emotional abuse. It supports the practitioner to:



- understand how abusive and neglectful parenting affects children's emotional and physical development
- deliver a psychoeducation programme, exploring how parents explain harmful impacts; providing an account of toxic stress and the effects on the child's developing brain; and the value of parents taking responsibility for abusive actions
- explore parental stress and the link with abusive and neglectful parenting, how stress affects parents' thinking, behaviour and capacity to provide good quality care, and factors which affect parental stress such as personal health, family of origin contexts and environmental stressors
- help parents understand and cope with negative perceptions of their children
- clarify, share and reconcile the impact of abusive and neglectful parenting.

## Promoting children and young people's health, development and wellbeing – Arnon Bentovim

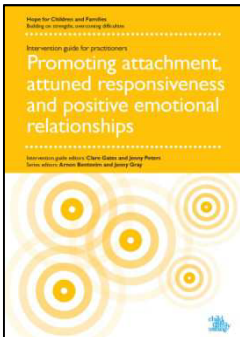
This guide helps parents understand their children's needs and stages of development, meet their safety and physical care needs, and promote their health, development and well-being. The modules support the practitioner to help parents:



- identify and understand children's physical and emotional needs by understanding that the brain develops in response to experiences throughout childhood, adolescence and young adult life and that the quality of care is therefore of paramount importance in helping children achieve their potential
- promote early and late development, such as language, motor skills, vision and fine movements, social behaviour and play
- ensure safety and prevent harm by establishing safety precautions in the home and community after reviewing harmful events in the past, reviewing current risks of harm and how to address them
- provide good quality care by identifying obstacles to adequate care, and establishing collaborative goals and how to achieve them
- provide adequate nutritional care and manage weight faltering and failure to thrive.

## Promoting attachment, attuned responsiveness and positive emotional relationships – Clare Gates and Jenny Peters

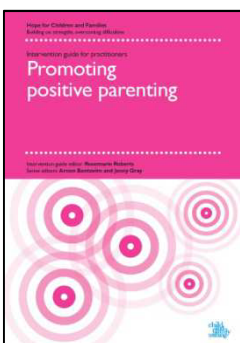
The guide addresses attachment difficulties, including parents' own attachment dynamics, and supports the practitioner in promoting parents' attachment, responsiveness and positive emotional relationships with:



- **younger children**, so that parents understand what attachment is, can balance the child's need for both security and exploration, and address disorganised attachment responses
- **older children** using one-on-one time
- **adolescents**, so that parents understand the way attachments develop during adolescence, how apparently challenging behaviour can represent attachment needs, and how to provide a positive emotional charge for young people.

## Promoting positive parenting – Rosemarie Roberts

The guide enables practitioners to support parents reinforce their children's desired behaviour and shape challenging behaviour using a range of strategies, by helping parents to:

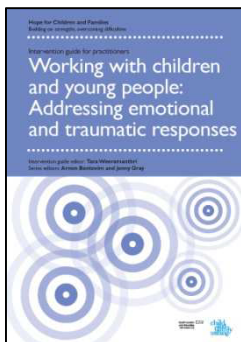


- **understand the causes of difficult behaviour** by exploring with them factors which contribute to challenging behaviour
- **use praise and positive attention** to increase behaviours which are most desired
- **use attention and ignoring** to withdraw attention from mild, inappropriate behaviour, e.g. complaining, whining, reassurance seeking and to respond to desired behaviours
- **give effective instructions** to avoid reinforcing a cycle of conflict
- **provide appropriate rewards** using different systems to achieve a successful outcome
- **shape challenging behaviour** using strategies such as consequences and sanctions, time out, externalising (e.g. 'Defeating Temper') and solution-focused approaches.



## Working with children and young people: Addressing emotional and traumatic responses – Tara Weeramanthri

This guide recognises that many children and young people exposed to abusive and neglectful parenting show high levels of anxiety and fear, or display aggressive or sexualised responses. The focus is on working collaboratively with the child, the parent or carer. A toolkit of generic and specific skills helps the practitioner to help the child or young person manage their feelings, thoughts and problems of anxiety, mood and trauma. The guide supports the practitioner to develop a child-centred approach, to provide psychoeducation to the child on the effects of maltreatment and to help the child:



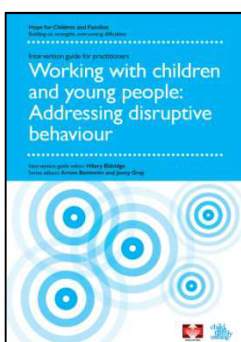
- **devise a safety plan**, increasing the child's ability to maintain personal safety when there are known risks in the environment
- **develop coping skills**, recognising and managing difficult emotions in a way that is helpful and adaptive
- **relax and self-calm**
- **describe and monitor their feelings**, giving the child or young person a better appreciation of how they can be affected by events
- **select activities which have a positive effect on mood**, making the connection between the things we do and how we feel
- **develop problem-solving skills**, applying them to real problems
- **working with children who experience traumatic responses** psychoeducation about the nature of traumatic responses for children and parents, supporting engagement, constructing a trauma narrative, cognitive coping, processing, mastery, enhancing safety, recovery and resilience.
- **address anxiety problems**, learning to understand what anxiety is and how to differentiate between normal anxiety in situations of danger and excessive anxiety
- **address mood problems**, learning how mood can be controlled and feelings be changed by how they act and think
- **maintain improvement and build resilience.**

In addition, the practitioner provides psychoeducation to parents to help them develop skills to support their children to engage in interventions to address traumatic and emotional responses.

## Working with children and young people: Addressing disruptive behaviour – Hilary Eldridge

This guide recognises the increasing risk of externalising (i.e. disruptive/anti-social behaviour in children and young people who have been exposed to maltreatment as they approach adolescence).

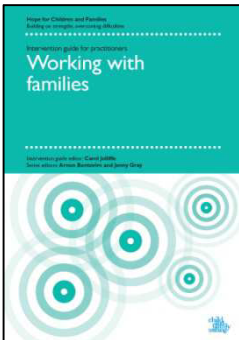
This guide supports the practitioner to help children and young people:



- **enhance their competence by developing a 'Good Life'**, to achieve their primary goals in socially acceptable ways
- **address disruptive behaviour**, to manage anger, reduce disruptive, verbally aggressive and impulsive behaviour and understand the benefits of doing so
- **assert themselves in more appropriate ways**, practicing everyday situations
- **develop positive relationships with family and friends**, learning new social skills.

## Working with families – Carol Jolliffe

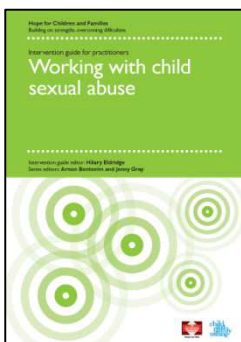
This guide aims to promote resilience within the family despite potentially stressful and destabilising events. It supports practitioners to:



- **promote healthy family functioning** by developing their skills in setting up family meetings and facilitating positive parent–child communications
- **develop effective approaches to manage conflict and dysfunction in family life** by learning to understand the origins of conflict arising within the family and between the family and agencies working with the family, and use solution-focused approaches to address conflict
- **develop support networking for families**, to identify and promote informal and formal sources of support.

## Working with child sexual abuse – Hilary Eldridge

The approach includes ways of empowering protective parents with knowledge and tools to plan an active part in their children's recovery and future protection by understanding what sexual abuse is and protecting children from potentially harmful contexts. The guide supports the practitioner in their work with:



- **parents and carers to promote the safety of children and young people who have been harmed sexually in the family or by a trusted member of the community**
- **parents and carers where their child has been responsible for harmful sexual behaviour**, so they have relevant information, including about categories, origins and functions of harmful sexual behaviour, what behaviour is age appropriate and what is of concern
- **children under 12 who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour**, enabling collaborative work with children and their parents/carers to change inappropriate behaviours, and with children to learn positive ways of managing their sexuality
- **adolescents (aged 12+) who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour**, enabling the practitioner to work collaboratively with the young person and their parents/carers to enhance protective factors, help young people to develop appropriately with age appropriate sexual knowledge and understanding of what is OK and not OK, and know how to stay safe in the future.

### **Purchase and Licence Information**

Guides can be purchased from the Child and Family Training on-line shop, please visit: <http://www.childandfamilytraining.org.uk/126/Shop>

Each guide costs £25.00 plus postage and packing.

Individual purchasers are licensed to use the Intervention Resources in their work with children and families.

Agency licences are required to enable multiple users to access and use the contents of the Intervention Resources. These are available upon application and vary with the number of users.

To discuss an agency licence please contact Anne Guerri (see contact details below).

### **About Child and Family Training**

Child and Family Training is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to help professionals help children and families by:

- promoting children's and young people's health and development
- building on children, young people and families' strengths
- helping children, young people and families overcome difficulties
- using evidence-based approaches.

### **Training information**

Child and Family Training offer a range of courses on the use of the Intervention Resources.

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The Hope for Children and Families Programme: promoting children's health and development, building on strengths and overcoming difficulties using evidence-based approaches.

Child and Family Training is a not-for-profit training organisation working to promote evidence-based assessments and interventions with children and families Child and Family (UK) Training Ltd.

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