

Ako Ngātahi (Learning Together)



SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

<p>The 'WHY' behind the behaviour- Shield against Shame</p>	<p>Shame is a complex emotion that develops later than the development of more straightforward emotions such as anger, joy or sadness. It is part of normal, healthy development, part of the socialisation process. Shame is uncomfortable for children and therefore children will learn to limit shame-inducing behaviours. In this sense it is protective, because it helps children to behave in a way that is safe, socially acceptable and helps them to develop relationships. This experience of shame is therefore integrative (serving to integrate).</p>
<p>Healing Kids in Care: PACE is at the core of therapeutic parenting</p>	<p>By becoming PACEful and having a PACE attitude you are building a connection with the child, which is not possible with a narrower focus on managing the behaviour. This connection builds trust and security in the relationship, which has previously been missing from the child's experience. With this connection, the child will cope better with the normal boundaries and discipline that you need to provide.</p>
<p>The 'A', 'C', and 'E' in PACE: Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy</p>	<p>Children with highly insecure and disorganised attachment patterns of relating need a different relationship experience. They do not know how to relax and enjoy relationships within a family, but as they experience you caring for them with an attitude of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy) they will begin to develop a sense of confidence in being part of the family.</p>
<p>The 'P' in PACE: Playfulness</p>	<p>The first part of the PACE attitude is playfulness. Caregivers help children develop security in part by helping them to be playful. This is not just about providing appropriate toys and activities, however, for playfulness to build security it also needs to develop the relationship. Relationship building play is an important part of the parenting that children need.</p>
<p>Putting yourself in someone else's shoes: Mind-mindedness</p>	<p>We have talked about PACE in the last two sessions, but to really use PACE well we need to understand how to be mind-minded. We know that therapeutic care helps a child recover from trauma and loss. It is relationship focused, and builds connections through attuned, responsive parenting. This helps the child to emotionally regulate and to make sense of their experience. In order to be able to provide therapeutic care, there are some key capacities that you will need to draw on and this includes the ability to be mind-minded.</p>

Behaviour Support	This session follows on from our previous Ako Ngātahi sessions. It explores how to combine the use of parenting skills to connect with the children, using mind-mindedness and PACE, with the important task of supporting the child's behaviour. We reflect on the traditional behaviour management we use culturally and why this might be problematic with tamariki who are emotionally insecure.
Looking After Self	We have talked about DDP and PACE in the last few sessions. To maintain an attitude of PACE it is so important for us to look after ourselves. We cannot run on an empty tank! In this session we will explore feelings that you may experience in response to your children, and how understanding their emotional responses can help you to maintain a therapeutic stance in your parenting.
Parenting in a Healing Way: The DDP-informed therapeutic parenting approach	The therapeutic parenting approach that informs Caring Families Aotearoa's practice is based on the Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy and Practice model (DDP) developed by Dan Hughes (2009,2011). This is a model that is based on observations and understanding of early child development, alongside understanding the experiences that children have missed out on when their early development has occurred with parents who were not able to meet their developmental needs.
Reactive Children: Understanding the Volcano - Regulation based parenting with PACE	Regulation based parenting needs to take into account the arousal of the child. As stress increases arousal also increases, and this will change what the child is open to. Children's outbursts are similar to a volcano. Things can go along fine and then a trigger occurs. The child's behaviour begins to build up until an explosion occurs. After the explosion, there is a winding down stage that may be followed by remorse and then a return to calmness. Sometimes the triggers are unclear and the outbursts appear sudden and unpredictable. In addition the wind-down stage may be characterised by numerous further eruptions before calmness is finally restored.
Introduction to Attachment Theory	This session will provide a brief overview of Attachment Theory. Participants are provided with some understanding of why it might be a useful framework for understanding and helping the children in their care. Many children in care will be experiencing attachment difficulties to varying degrees. This session aims to increase understanding of Attachment Theory with a particular focus on the importance of attachment relationships and what is good and what is poor nurturing of children. We will then explore attachment behaviour and its relationship to exploratory behaviours.

<p>Gently Challenging Children's hidden needs - miscuing through hidden needs: Parenting and Attachment patterns</p>	<p>The way that parents respond to children determines whether children develop secure or insecure attachments. This session focuses on how children with insecure attachments express or hide needs depending on how they expect their caregivers to respond. This is described as miscuing. Caregivers trying to offer sensitive parenting can get pulled into these attachment patterns if they don't gently challenge to meet the hidden need as well as meeting the expressing need. Sound familiar? Join us as we explore children behaving in ways that maximise the chance that caregivers will be available when needed.</p>
<p>Helping your Child with Relationships</p>	<p>Relationships rest on making connections with others, and this may be something a child with attachment difficulties really struggles with. If a child is to feel secure within family relationships, they will need a good sense of boundaries alongside the unconditional love and acceptance that the family offers. This can be a challenging balancing act – helping the child feel accepted while also providing a clear structure and appropriate level of supervision. An important part of providing structure within unconditional acceptance is the ability to step aside from confrontation. When caregivers get pulled into confrontational interactions, security for both caregiver and child is lessened.</p>

