



The Solihull Approach

A Manager's Briefing

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Background

- The Solihull Approach was first developed in 1996 by joint working between Health Visitors and Psychotherapists in Solihull.
- The approach was initially designed for Health Visitors to work with families with children with feeding, sleeping, toileting and behaviour difficulties.
- The Solihull Approach has developed further and is **now used by a wide range of professionals from different agencies to work with families.**

Why The Solihull Approach?

- Research at a national level has established that the Solihull Approach is the **evidence-based recommended tool** to improve a broad range of Professionals' knowledge and skills in promoting attachments and supporting / containing families through emotionally difficult periods.
- It is recommended in 'Child Health Promotion Programme: Pregnancy and the first five years.'
- Testimonials from other Local Authorities suggest that the training is very **informative and useful to frontline workers.**

What are the benefits?

It is anticipated that introducing the Solihull Approach in Nottingham will result in;

- A more confident workforce at tiers 1 & 2 to safely support and contain families and young people
- An improved shared language and conceptual framework for discussion about a child or young person's emotional well-being and developmental needs
- Improved interagency working
- More appropriate referrals to specialist services



- Other Local Authorities found that training universal tier one and two workers **ensured that children remained in universal services.**
- Because the approach is available to all workers there was **no stigma** associated with any information and advice that the workers shared with families.
- Workers developed a **common language and conceptual framework** which improved Common Assessments around emotional, social and behavioural development.
- **The approach is universal, acceptable and preventative.**

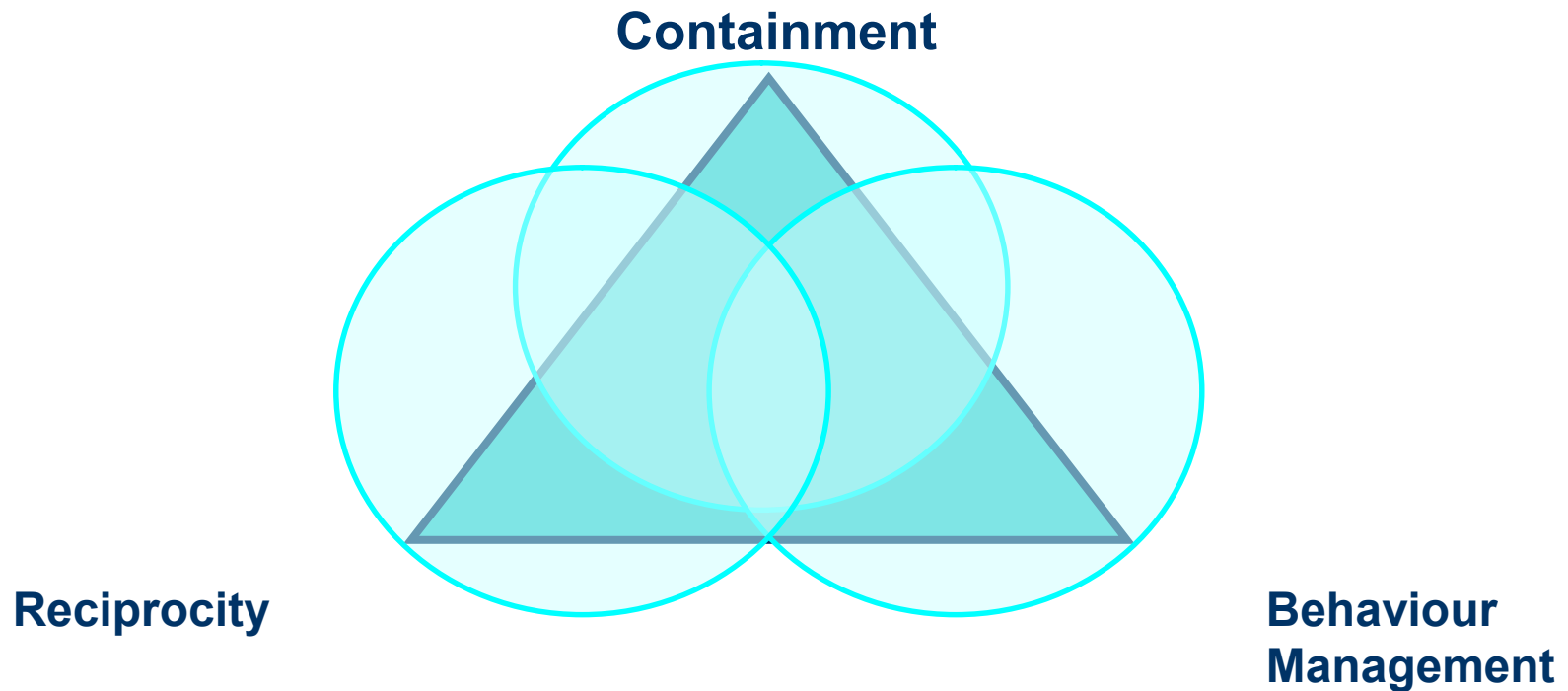
What is The Solihull Approach?

- On one level, it is a **brief intervention** used by professionals in their individual or group work with families.
- However it also provides professionals with a **framework for thinking about children's behaviour** that develops practice that can support effective and consistent approaches across agencies.
- It develops an **integrated model of working**, for care professionals working with families, babies, children and young people who are affected by emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Theoretical Underpinnings

- The Solihull Approach provides a framework for thinking about and working with the relationship between the parent and child.
- **Containment and reciprocity are the nuts and bolts underpinning attachment**, and give a theoretical focus for practical interventions.

The model incorporates three concepts



Containment

- Containment facilitates the **processing of anxiety and emotions so that the ability to think is restored.**
- One practical aspect of this is that the professional **actively listens** and puts the story together with the parent, before attempting to give any advice or behaviour management.

Reciprocity

- Reciprocity focuses attention on the **attunement between the parent and child**, enabling the professional to then work with this aspect of the relationship.
- The worker is encouraged **to model a reciprocating relationship** in the way they respond to the parent or carer.

Behaviour Management

- A child or young person's behaviour is usually the **presenting problem** or even the child or young person is presented as the problem.
- Often behaviour management is seen as the **first choice solution** to the presenting problem.
- In the Solihull Approach, these principles are used later in the process.
- This means that any programme of behaviour modification is **customised together with the family and this seems to make them more effective.**

The Training

- Solihull Approach training offers professionals a highly practical way of working with families within a robust theoretical framework.
- It is a two day course with a two week break between days 1 & 2 for workers to practice using the tool and familiarise themselves with the pack.
- The training is suitable for all professionals across agencies working with families with babies, children and young people.

Who is the Training for?

- Health Visitors,
- School Nurses,
- Nursery Nurses,
- Doctors,
- Psychologists,
- Speech & Language Therapists,
- Midwives,
- Primary Mental Health Care Workers,
- Family Health Workers
- Child Minders

- CAMHS
- MALT Teams
- Children's Centres,
- Learning Mentors
- Educational Welfare Officers
- Teaching Staff
- Behaviour Support Teams
- PEET
- SEALS workers
- YOT

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The Resource Packs

- The Solihull Approach has resource packs designed for professionals to use in their work with families;

The First Five Years The School years

- They contain material that explains the theory behind the Solihull Approach and how it relates to practice as well as leaflets that professionals can use with families.
- Training and resource packs have been developed to enable professionals to cascade the Solihull Approach Training to colleagues within their own area.

Practice Development Workshops

- Following the Solihull Approach training, it is expected that workers will attend Practice Development Workshops to **embed the approach into their practice** and ensure 'training transfer of skills and knowledge'.
- During these sessions **additional training needs may be identified** and these will be fed back appropriately.



Trainers Forum

- Facilitated regular sessions to co-ordinate trainers and identify needs
- Provide strategic direction and guidance for the training and **ensure effective delivery to frontline staff.**

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What has been done so far?

- The maintenance of the Solihull Approach has been raised at a strategic level.
- The initial pilot of the Solihull Approach training has been completed, leading to a planned roll out of future training events in line with the Nottingham Core Standard of Training
- Practice Workshops have been set up to support the implementation of the Approach into practice
- 'Train the Trainers' training has been commissioned for this cohort and the facilitator for the trainers forum has been identified.

What are the next steps?

- Evaluate the implementation for the initial cohort
- Arrange training sessions for further staff - the rest of Nottingham Children's Partnership workforce
- Ensure Practice Development Workshops and Trainers Forums are arranged and facilitated
- Continue to raise profile and encourage managers to support staff
- Promote Solihull Approach to hard to reach staff e.g. in schools, health centres and voluntary sector.