

Worcestershire Fostering Foster Carer Training Programme 2024-25

Dear Carer

Welcome to the April 2024 to March 2025 Foster Carer Training Programme. Courses are available to all Worcestershire Fostering Foster Carers, Kinship Carers, and Carers with a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangements Order (Residence Order)

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Core Training Courses

Emergency First Aid (Initial and Refresher)

Facilitated by Cognet Occupational Health and Safety.

This course is designed to give foster carers the understanding of the importance of dealing correctly with a first aid or pre-hospital emergency, and how they fit into the chain of survival. Carers will gain the knowledge of the differences in supporting small children (0-5 years) and older children and in a first aid, or pre-hospital emergency.

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify emergency situations and carry out appropriate actions including summoning emergency services.
- Demonstrate CPR on infants, children and adults.
- Describe how to clear obstructed airways in infants, children and adults.
- Explain how to control severe bleeding.
- Identify a range of childhood illnesses and conditions, and deal with appropriately (e.g. Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Croup, Meningitis and Sepsis)
- Explain how to deal with burns and scalds.
- State the requirements of a first aid kit.

Family Time Initial

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

This course enables carers to understand the complexity of the issues involved in planning and managing family time with birth parents, and to develop the knowledge and skills to play their part with confidence. Carers will understand the emotional and practical issues associated with family time and will explore their own role in promoting and improving it.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand the legal framework surrounding children having contact with their birth parents.
- Identify some of the difficulties from the perspective of carers, birth parents, and social services.
- Explore the emotional impact and the way it is managed.
- Become more aware of what is expected of foster carers.
- Become more comfortable in your role of managing and supporting family time.
- Able to offer ideas to enhance the quality of family time.
- Discuss family time in the digital age - challenges and opportunities.

Family Time Refresher

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Covers the Initial session learning outcomes as above.

The session will also:

- Refresh the legal framework.
- Refresh the difficulties of family time for carers and birth parents.
- Highlight the importance for children.
- Understand the expectations for carers to support family time.
- Understanding any personal challenges and how to plan for this.
- Discuss family time in the digital age - challenges and opportunities.

Carers will come away with a personal development plan to put in place with their supervising social worker.

Safeguarding Initial

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Aim: to ensure participants' knowledge and commitment to safeguarding is current.

Learning Outcomes:

- What is safeguarding and what is considered to be abuse?
- How can we and others prevent the likelihood that a child's experience of childhood will include being abused?
- What may indicate that a child is being abused or at risk of abuse? To include behavioural, emotional, intellectual, communication, developmental, educational and relationships.
- Why are fostered children and children with disabilities particularly vulnerable? Is there any way of reducing this additional risk?
- Why is it essential to recognise the importance of sensible boundaries in relationships with fostered children?
- What is the current legislative and policy guidance? What are a foster carer's role and responsibilities under the Children Act 1989/2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)?
- What are the local boundaries and expectations in Worcestershire?
- What to do and where to get help if you suspect child abuse? To include local routes to report within the foster system and to the LA or police directly.
- How should you respond to a disclosure from a child?
- Acknowledge the threat posed by a child's presence on line, in social media, by email, games platforms, chat rooms, even text and consider how to approach safeguarding the child while encouraging exploration and social contact

Safeguarding Refresher

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Aim: to ensure participants' knowledge and commitment to Safeguarding is current and their required knowledge is refreshed.

Learning outcomes:

- Ensure the key messages of the full safeguarding training are refreshed and reinforced
- Enable participants to share experiences and for the group to reflect on those experiences
- Update participants' knowledge of the law and local policy
- Develop strategies to take forward in their fostering and kinship roles

Safer Caring Initial

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning outcomes:

- Give carers the opportunity to consider the impact of abuse/previous life-experiences on a child and how it might influence how we care for a child
- Discuss what carers can do to help keep everyone as safe as possible, specifically:
 - Safer care in the home
 - Safer care in the community
 - Safer care in the digital world
- Consider how carers can support a child's recovery
- Managing and balancing appropriate risk

Safer Caring Bitesize/Refresher

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning outcomes:

- Refresher - what is safer care?
- What are the children's experiences and how do we respond?
- Introducing updated policy including social media
- Safer care in the home
- Safer care in the community
- Safer care in the digital world

Carers will come away with an action plan for safer care to discuss in supervision with their supervising social worker.

Understanding Behaviour and Attachment Initial

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Aims:

- Develop an understanding of the context of children's behaviour
- Help carers to respond effectively to a range of behaviours

Learning outcomes:

- Describe the impact of child development, attachment and trauma on behaviour
- Explain why punishing approaches for managing behaviour are not appropriate
- Consider effective strategies for managing behaviour which reinforce positive discipline
- Understand that behaviour is a form of communication; look at answering the communication to reduce the behaviour

Understanding Behaviour and Attachment Bitesize/Refresher

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning outcomes:

- Refresher- understanding the context of children's behaviour
- Why punishing approaches for managing behaviour are not appropriate
- What are the children's experiences and how do we as carers respond (strategies)?
- Understand that behaviour is a form of communication; look at answering the communication to reduce the behaviour

Carers will come away with an action plan to discuss in supervision with their supervising social worker.

Valuing Difference Initial

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning outcomes:

- Have a deeper understanding of relevant terms such as 'diversity', 'ethnicity', 'culture' 'disability', LGBT, 'race' and 'religion'.
- Gain an insight into the 9 protected characteristics.
- Gain a deeper understanding of how important their religion, spirituality or atheism is to people.
- Gain an understanding of gender identity and sexuality.
- Discuss how to approach potentially difficult questions and conversations with children
- Understand the importance of the cultural web and how this impacts on others.
- Feel more confident in how to challenge discrimination, and to support a child too, in a way that positively promotes change rather than creating conflict.

Valuing Difference Refresher

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning outcomes:

- Update and refresh participants' knowledge on Valuing Difference as it relates to foster and kinship carers.
- Ensure the key messages of the full Valuing Difference training are refreshed and reinforced.
- Enable participants to share experiences and for the group to reflect on those experiences.
- Update participants' knowledge of the law and local policy.
- Develop strategies to take forward in their fostering and kinship roles.

What Is Health Initial

Facilitated by Anchor

Learning outcomes:

- Appreciate the holistic nature of health
- Develop a greater awareness of the factors influencing health and wellbeing
- Apply this increased knowledge and understanding to promoting the health of children who are looked after, particularly in relation to how you can support the children in your care to achieve better health

What Is Health Refresher

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning outcomes:

- Update and refresh participants' knowledge on the What Is Health Core training as it relates to foster and kinship carers.
- Ensure the key messages of the full What Is Health training are refreshed and reinforced.
- Enable participants to share experiences and for the group to reflect on those experiences.
- Develop strategies to take forward in their fostering and kinship roles.

Developmental Training Courses

Adoption Transition

Facilitated by Adoption Central England (ACE)

Aim: To enable foster carers who are supporting children to move onto their adoptive families to understand the theory and research behind the transition planning used by ACE and how they can best support the children through this process.

Learning Outcomes:

- To learn about the expectations that will be placed on you as foster carers moving a child on to an adoptive placement.
- To think about how you care for a child, how you prepare a child and how you pass on your knowledge and skills to adopters.
- To give you an opportunity to think about how the transitions process may affect you and your family members.
- Opportunity for learning and asking questions – want you to feel relaxed and able to think through issues we raise and ask questions

Alcohol Awareness

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Learning outcomes:

- What are the drinking guidelines? Who decides? How do we enable people to understand the concept?
- What is Alcohol Abuse? How can it affect the adult, their family and society?
- How can it impact on foster care? The parent, child, foster carer?
- What physical and psychological impact does alcohol use have on people?
- What are the scientific explanations of dependence, tolerance, withdrawal and overdose?
- When does alcohol use become misuse? Who decides? What signs do you see?
- How do we guide people to the help and support they may need? What support is available?
- What happens if they don't see an issue and don't want help?

Allegations For Foster Carers

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning Outcomes:

- Obtain a greater knowledge and understanding of allegations and how this differs from complaints and standards of care issues
- Know specifically what support is available in the event of an allegation
- Understand the allegations process, outcomes and what to expect
- Understand how to reduce the risk of allegations
- Have some understanding of why children and young people may make allegations
- Understand the importance of allegations being taken seriously to ensure, where they are justified, that they are responded to appropriately
- Discuss the importance of the 'Voice of the Child'

This course is suitable for both recently approved foster carers and as a refresher for those with more experience.

ASDAN Awareness

Facilitated by staff from Worcestershire Fostering.

ASDAN is the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network.

We are offering an opportunity to foster carers, supervising social workers, and young people to gain a better understanding of independent living skills, areas of opportunity to develop skills to be tenancy ready and also ASDAN qualifications.

Any carers and social workers can attend, but priority/focus is on carers who have young people aged 15 years above, who have short term/long term placements, to support them in developing independence skills and gaining an ASDAN award.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Awareness

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aim: To raise awareness of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Learning outcomes:

- Describe symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Be aware of the process of ADHD diagnosis
- Be familiar with treatment options for ADHD
- Explore some of the practical considerations of caring for a child with ADHD
- Address some of the theories about the causes of ADHD

Autism Awareness

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aim: To raise awareness of the diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition

Learning outcomes:

- Recognise behaviours commonly associated with the Autism Spectrum Condition
- Be familiar with the diagnostic criteria for Autism
- Be aware that the term Asperger's Syndrome has recently been changed in some literature to 'High Functioning Autism' without any significant changes to meaning
- Appreciate that Autism is associated with high levels of anxiety
- Dispel some of the myths and stereotypes around a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Identify appropriate communication and engagement processes with people on the Autism spectrum

Bereavement and Loss in Children

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aims: To understand the impact of loss, transition and bereavement for children. Whether it be moving out of the family home, changing school, losing family, friends and pets.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand the loss/bereavement/grieving process for children at different ages and stages of development
- Describe how to help children and families prepare for loss, transition, or bereavement
- Impact on children of loss, transition or bereavement, including: being removed from home, moving schools, losing touch with family/friends
- Supporting children after loss, transition or bereavement has happened
- Understanding the longer-term implications of separation and loss

Children's Mental Health

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

This course provides an understanding of child mental health. It explains some of the common emotional, behavioural and hyperkinetic disorders, how you can identify and support a child who may be struggling, and how to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand the common mental health problems that children and young people face and the impact they can cause.
- Know the common signs of mental health problems in children.
- Understand the factors that are likely to increase the risk of a child developing a mental health problem.
- Understand the impact external factors, such as social media, can have on a child's mental health and how to promote positive mental health in your environment.
- Develop the skills needed to broach sensitive subjects with children and young people and be aware of the role you have in supporting positive mental health.
- Know what actions to take when you consider a child to be at risk of a mental health problem.
- Understand the interventions that organisations can introduce to help improve a child's mental health, including the benefits of play therapy.

Compassion Fatigue in Fostering

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Foster carers need to understand and manage the particular risks they may face, while helping children to have as normal a childhood as possible. So, the key to on-going due diligence is about foster carers being aware of the risks involved for particular children in different situations, and making well thought through decisions, in partnership with the child's social worker and the fostering service. This transparency and support will go some way to preventing carers becoming overwhelmed by compassion fatigue.

Learning Outcomes:

- Analyse factors which lead to compassion fatigue in your work
- Identify coping strategies that you can use to increase your resilience
- Develop ways to find support for yourself and give support to your colleagues

Cultural Competency

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning Outcomes:

- Explore what we mean by 'cultural competence' and why it is important in practice, and in a fostering role.
- Appropriately care for children from different backgrounds
- Supporting children to develop strategies to deal with racism and other forms of cultural bias.
- Consider how an understanding of cultural competence can improve your confidence, help partnership working, critical thinking, and observations.
- Have confidence in cultural competence which may support holding difficult conversations with people, family members, children and colleagues
- Make the links between an ability to challenge constructively and cultural competence

Curls and Coils Workshop

Facilitated by Ivy Wild

The Curls and Coils workshop will help foster carers and children in care acquire the skills and information needed to holistically care for afro, curly, and wavy hair types. Experienced hair professionals offer tips and suggestions for hairstyles to support cultural celebration. The trainers will provide live demonstrations to show how to maintain children's hair, in addition to answering questions around language and identity.

The aim of the session is to assist foster carers and children in providing a healthy lifestyle, establishing a sense of identity, and preserving a child's cultural heritage by teaching them how to properly take care of their hair.

The workshop covers:

- Understanding textured hair needs
- Daily care products and routine insights
- Terminology and appropriate language
- Cultural celebration relating to hair
- Cornrow & braiding demonstration and tutorial

Workshop benefits:

- Enhanced bonding for carer and child
- 3 hours of lifetime knowledge
- Children are welcome to take part
- Cultural appreciation and awareness

The Curls and Coils workshop includes:

- Products suitable for textured hair and all equipment
- Daily maintenance routine

- Identity, culture, and hair
- Exploring appropriate language
- How to braid with and without hair extensions

De-Escalation (2 days)

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning Outcomes:

- Explore personal experiences and behaviour that trigger anxiety and feeling the need to 'control' a situation, and situations they find frightening or overwhelming.
- Consider 'the essence' of trauma informed approaches (TIA) and interventions, allowing time for carers to reflect on their own scripts and how these might impact when engaging with a child or young person expressing distress.
- Discuss the use of language and vocal tone, body language and physical positioning.
- Consider key aspects of how a child or young person may experience an adult's presence as threatening and also their recognition and interpretation of facial expression.
- Explore how anxiety, the physiology of stress, and patterns of escalation are central components, as is the identification of potential triggers (delivered in the context of TIA).
- Allow time to answer carers' questions and modelling interactions.
- Cover the law as it applies to the use of self-defence at this stage of training.

Delegated Authority (Making Everyday Decisions For Children Who Are Looked After)

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the implications of Delegated Authority on the lives of the young people placed
- Learn what the law says about Delegated Authority
- Explore what barriers exist around Delegated Authority and consider ways to overcome these
- Consider ways to support children to understand why Delegated Authority is in place and that is for their best interests.
- Learn about the theory and research around Delegated Authority

Drug and Novel Psychoactive Substances Awareness

Facilitated: Syed and Quinn

Aims: Provide an introduction to the range of commonly used substances; identify appropriate support services and their referral pathways.

Learning outcomes:

- Identify what the commonly used drugs look like and how they are used
- Describe the reasons why people use substances
- Identify related physical and psychological risks
- Describe the legal classifications and penalties
- Describe support services available and how to access them

Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aims: Raise awareness and promote better understanding of FAS/FASD

This is a companion session to the one-day Alcohol Awareness course. The courses support each other and it is recommended, but not essential, to attend the Alcohol Awareness course to ensure an appropriate level of knowledge is in place prior to this session.

Learning outcomes:

- Outline contemporary research regarding the impact of alcohol use on the developing foetus.
- Describe the potential physical mechanisms of harm to the unborn child with their related symptoms.
- Discuss patterns of incidence and prevalence.
- Demonstrate enhanced confidence in raising the issue with service users.

Working with FASD Children

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aim: This course is aimed at those who have already completed the FASD Awareness training. It examines in more detail the emotional, cognitive and behavioural challenges faced by those people, young and old, who were exposed to damaging levels of alcohol in the womb.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand that although much of the functional damage to brain and body may be irreparable, we have an opportunity to provide an environment which fosters the development of healthy self-esteem, meaningful relationships, confidence and quality of life.

Foundations For Attachment Group

Facilitated by Just Say Training

Built around the 'Foundations for Attachment Model' this is a programme which helps carers to:

- Understand the challenges of parenting developmentally traumatized children
- Understand therapeutic parenting which combines emotionally connecting with children alongside behavioural management
- Understand the importance of looking after themselves with particular attention to understanding own attachment history and how to notice and get out of states of blocked care

The programme is ideally suited for new fostering or kinship carers wishing to increase their understanding of the challenges of parenting children who have had difficult relationship experiences. It is also suitable for experienced carers who wish to gain a foundation level understanding of relationship difficulties and therapeutic parenting. The programme can be completed as part of preparation for fostering as it does not require the carer to have a child living with them.

The Foundations For Attachment Programme sits before the more intensive Nurturing Attachments Programme but is not a pre-requisite for the Nurturing Attachments Group.

Gender and Identity

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aim: To enable foster and kinship carers to have an improved understanding of the tensions and dilemmas facing children when they are developing and coming to an understanding of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

Learning Outcomes:

- To support the development of understanding of biological sex, sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity.
- To look at the roles of foster and kinship carers in talking to a young person about their gender identity and sexual orientation
- To explore real experiences of participants and reflect on how they supported the child and were supported themselves.
- What can be challenging?

- Where can you get advice and support?
- What emotional issues face LGBT+ young people?
- Where are we with society's view of the LGBT community?
- How to support a child/young person to be resilient in the face of stigma.
- How to respond and support young people who are expressing confusion or specific sexual orientation.
- How to support a child or young person who is being bullied about their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Get Safe Briefings - Raising Awareness of Exploitation and Vulnerability

Facilitated by the WCC Get Safe Team.

Safeguarding Children, young people and vulnerable adults is everybody's responsibility. This raising awareness of Exploitation and Vulnerability course aims to raise your awareness of:

- Vulnerability
- Adverse childhood experiences
- Organised crime groups/gangs
- Modern-day slavery
- Consent for sexual activity
- Child sexual exploitation
- Criminal exploitation
- Appropriate language and use of language
- National Referral Mechanism
- GDPR/Disclosure
- Pathways/diversionary/sharing of intelligence

Learning Objectives:

- Highlight personal and situational factors of vulnerability, thereby raising the awareness of adverse childhood experiences and ways to address them.
- Definitions covering vulnerability, consent, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern-day slavery, OCGs and gangs.
- Develop an understanding of indicators that may show within various forms of exploitation/modern-day slavery, with push and pull factors.
- Understand the National Referral Mechanism, knowing whether their agency is a first responder and if not, how to raise concerns to ensure the vulnerable are protected.
- Identify the key considerations necessary when receiving a disclosure and the impact of trauma on any disclosure.
- Understand the individual's professional accountability and responsibility for sharing under GDPR, thereby recognising the importance of documentation and record-keeping in the effective protection of those identified as vulnerable, ensuring non-victim-blaming language is used and relevant and appropriate intelligence/information is shared.
- Understand the processes to get the right help at the right time for the identified vulnerable person(s), being fully aware of agencies/services that people can be signposted to within the local borough, pathways inclusive of the PCC's diversionary portfolio.

Life Story Work

Facilitated by Sally Steele, Social Worker, Safeguarding Team

Aims: To provide an understanding of Life Story Work.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand why life story work is so important to children and young people
- Explain what everyone's role is in relation to life story work
- Discuss the importance of foster carers recording and passing information/memories on
- Develop a set of tools and techniques to create children's and young people's memories and help them to understand their story

Managing Behaviour

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aims:

- Understand the behaviour displayed by the children and to link this to their internal experience
- Explore why traditional behaviour management strategies may not help the children to feel secure
- Discuss how to manage behaviour whilst also building trust and security for the child

Learning outcomes:

- Reflect on how they currently manage behaviour
- Understand the parenting task when parenting an insecure child relating this to an understanding of developmental trauma and attachment styles
- Consider the connections between experience, feelings and behaviour and relate this to the concept of therapeutic parenting
- Explore traditional behavioural management and how it might be modified for the insecure child
- Explore a range of parenting skills to manage behaviour whilst building security
- Understand a range of parenting principles for parenting insecure children
- Understanding that behaviour is a form of communication; look at answering the communication to reduce the behaviour

Men Who Foster

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

The role of a foster carer can be both extremely rewarding and, at the same time, extremely challenging. Being a male foster carer has, arguably, even more challenges. Women are traditionally seen as the care-givers. Often, a man who devotes his life to caring for children is viewed with suspicion. This course explores the roles men play in care as main carers. It explores the idea of the 'positive male role model', as well as expectations and stereotypes in care.

Learning outcomes:

- To provide carers with confidence in all aspects of supporting children who are in placement
- To highlight that you are in a unique position to support children to gain positive attachments and build healthy relationships with men
- To consider the role of men in fostering
- To explore the struggles that men face within their care role
- To explore the attributes that constitute a positive male role model for foster children
- To provide an insight into the allegation process and to not be scared of this process
- To understand the importance of the Safer Care Policy
- To learn how to support children in a safe manner that doesn't restrict you as a carer

NB – this session is for male Mainstream and Kinship carers only.

Mindfulness

Facilitated by Richard Allsup, WCC Corporate Trainer

In the hurly burly of living, we can often be preoccupied with worrying about the future or dwelling on the past. Mindfulness provides us with an opportunity to discover how the world is affecting us, finding who we are - beyond our roles and the things we do for others. By focusing our attention and living in the present moment with compassion and acceptance, we can re-vitalize ourselves and find our inner resources to live more satisfying and 'contactful' ways of being.

This introductory workshop considers the values of mindfulness, integrated with principles of humanistic psychology, as well as practical techniques as a foundation for practice.

Moving Children On – Strategies For The Fostering Family

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Learning Outcomes:

- Consider the wellbeing of the foster carer in the moving on process
- Discuss the potential impact on birth children and the wider fostering family
- Identify the strategies which can be used by the fostering family to support a child to have a positive transition
- To provide foster carers and their family members with strategies to meet their own emotional needs in the transition process

National Minimum Standards Overview For Foster Carers

Facilitated by DCC-I

Learning outcomes:

- Understand what the regulatory framework and national minimum standards (NMS) are for and the values that underpin them.
- Understand the role of the carer in putting the standards into practice with children in their care.
- Understand how all carers have a duty to support and uphold the NMS and what to do if they are concerned that standards are not being met.

- Know how to respond to a 'Notifiable Incident' under Standard 29 as set out in the Worcestershire Fostering Policy.

Nurturing Attachments Group

Facilitated by Just Say Training

This is a 12-session programme which helps those attending to:

- Gain an understanding of attachment theory, patterns of attachment and the importance of therapeutic parenting to meet attachment needs
- Provide a secure base for children whose security is challenged by their previous experience
- Grow a relationship with the children; building on this security and helping children experience unconditional love and acceptance even when their behaviour is challenging and discipline and boundaries are being used

The Nurturing Attachments Programme invites participants to reflect upon the experiences of the child they are caring for, and to apply the principles of therapeutic parenting at home, between sessions. In order to do this, group members need to have a child living with them whilst completing the group.

NB – each Group comprises of 12 sessions. Participants must commit to attending each session in a Group.

Nurturing Attachments Group Refresher

Facilitated by Just Say Training

This training is for carers who have already attended a Nurturing Attachments Group. An opportunity to revisit the learning outcomes for the Nurturing Attachments Group, refresh with new developments or ideas, and time for sharing of experiences and reflection.

Online Safety Briefings

Facilitated by Samantha Brace

Exploitation and Vulnerability Trainer, Prevention Hub, West Mercia Police.

This 60-minute course is designed to upskill carers with the knowledge they need to keep their children safe in an increasingly digital world. The first part of the course will give attendees an understanding of what exploitation is, who is more likely to be at risk and how to spot the signs that your child may be being groomed/exploited. In the second half, we focus more particularly on online safety; apps carers should be aware of, how to tackle the impact of internet influencers such as Andrew Tate and where you can turn to for practical help and support.

Parent and Child Placements

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

The course explores the developmental needs of children and the importance of attachment. Parent and child placement fostering is a specialist type of fostering, which entails a great deal of dedication and commitment.

Learning Objectives:

- Assist foster carers in developing their skills and knowledge in working with mother and baby placements
- Consider the different needs of the baby and parent in placement
- Gain an appreciation of the difference between caring for a foster baby and caring for a parent and baby placement
- Gain an understanding of the different requirements from local authorities, depending on the needs of the parent and child
- Look at recording information on parent and child placements
- Identify and explore risk in a parent and child placement
- Practise safeguarding in your home confidently
- Complete the appropriate assessment writing and documentation
- Understand the importance of Placement Agreement Meetings

Parenting Children With Attachment Difficulties

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aims: Increase understanding of Attachment Theory and the process of attachment

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify the relationship between early attachment development and later behavioural and relationship difficulties
- Understand what facilitates or hinders the development of secure or insecure attachments
- Identify parenting interventions that can be used to facilitate attachment development

Please note that the topic is covered in greater detail in the Foundations For Attachment Groups and the Nurturing Attachments Groups, so this session is not appropriate for those who have already attended one of the groups.

Pathological Demand Avoidance and Oppositional Defiance Disorder (new for 2024/25)

Aim

To give Foster/Kinship carers and staff a better understanding of these daunting sounding diagnoses, what they actually mean and the particular support the children with these diagnoses may need.

Learning Outcomes.

At the course participants will have had opportunity to:

- Understand the history and background to Pathological Demand Avoidance
- Gain an insight into what is Oppositional Defiant Disorder.
- Understanding of the challenges presented and the impact they may have;
- Gain an awareness of communication and sensory needs and issues.
- Practice strategies and techniques to address the barriers and modify impact;
- Explore ways to de-escalate challenging behaviour;
- Understanding of possible triggers and behaviour;
- Develop an understanding of the key principles and strategies of positive behaviour linked to the conditions;
- Work through some case studies to further develop ideas and share experiences.

Preparing For Independence – Carer and Young Person session

Facilitated by Luisa Warren, Outreach Team Manager

Aims:

- Discuss the role of Outreach and the support that we provide
- Identify the changes a young person goes through when they leave the care system
- Look at what benefits young people are entitled to when they turn 18
- Examine the housing application process and what to expect

Learning outcomes:

- Recognise the skills that young people need when they turn 18
- Support young people in the lead up to their 18th birthday with regard to claiming for benefits and housing applications
- Help young people to leave foster care at the age of 18 with everything in place for them to move on to independent living.

Provider Portal Workshop

Facilitated by the Fostering Finance Team

Shirley and Sue from Fostering Finance will be running some sessions on using the portal for looking at your remittances and putting in claims. This will include a demonstration on inputting various claims including how to easily add your monthly school mileage. There will be time for questions at the end of the session.

Relationship Based Play

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Play helps young children to learn and develop their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual skills through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. It is also how they learn to socialise, as children engage in learning experiences with other children and adults.

Learning Outcomes:

- To be able to state the general benefits of play
- To explore identity-specific skills that are learned through play activities
- To examine how to meet developmental goals with play activities
- To develop a list of ways that a carer can support and encourage learning through play
- To use observation to determine what a child is learning during play
- To be able to select and evaluate toys for learning

Resilience And Developmental Trauma

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aims:

- To increase understanding of what developmental trauma and resilience are and why they are often particularly relevant in fostered children.
- To provide an introduction to the potential impact of traumatic experiences on children's development and their experience of childhood.
- To provide opportunity to reflect on personal experiences of caring for children who have experienced trauma.
- To discuss what support carers need to support children in this often emotive and difficult area.

Please note that the session aims are covered in greater detail in the Foundations For Attachment Groups and the Nurturing Attachments Groups, so this session is not appropriate for those who have already attended one of the groups.

Self-Harm Awareness

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aim: To understand the reasons why people self-harm or injure and how to assist young people.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand the distinction between self-injury and suicide whilst challenging and developing the participants' understanding of the subject.
- Define self-harm and the role it plays in people's lives
- Develop clarification for developing personal criteria for when self-harm, in the context of substance use, becomes a safeguarding concern.
- Describe the personal impact upon the carer in working with self-harm, and the method for assisting young people to find alternatives to self-harm and injury.

Staying Put Arrangements

Facilitated by Carol Johnson, Care Leavers Team Manager

Details: An awareness session to discuss Staying Put arrangements, with time for questions.

A Staying Put arrangement is where an "Eligible child", after ceasing to be Looked After, and on attaining the age of 18, remains in the former foster home where they were placed immediately before their 18th birthday.

Talking To Your Child About Sex and Relationships

Facilitated by Kate Wilson, NHS Health Promotion Specialist (WISH Worcestershire Integrated Sexual Health)

Aims: To enhance awareness of current sexual health and relationship issues and how this can impact on young people. The session aims to build the confidence and skills of parents and carers. This will enable them to initiate conversations about relationships and discuss the topic, openly and honestly with their children. This will subsequently support young people's sexual, social and emotional development.

Learning outcomes:

- Explore facts and information about sexual health.
- Understand how to access relevant information about young people's development, behaviour and needs
- Learn about local services and how to signpost young people to them
- Discuss the impact of feelings, attitudes and beliefs on young people's sexual and emotional development
- Practise skills that will enable effective communication with children

Teenagers – Caring For And Working With Teenagers

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aims: To explore the challenges around caring for and working with teenagers who are looked after, while developing some empathy for their situation.

Learning Outcomes:

- To explore the 'tasks' of adolescence and how this impacts on teenagers who are looked after particularly.
- To understand elements of the relationships between teenagers and their carers and how to take positive steps to improve them
- To know how to support the development of self-esteem in teenagers and understand why this may be difficult.
- To consider ways to open communication pathways with teenagers and understand these need to be individual and developed with knowledge of and interest in the teenager.
- To know how to support teenagers to manage their behaviour.
- To discuss how to constructively approach dealing with conflict with teenagers.

Training Support and Development Standards Workshops

Kinship Standards facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Mainstream Standards facilitated by Worcestershire Fostering Supervising Social Workers

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the requirements of the specific standard.
- Discuss examples of evidence that could be used to meet each standard.
- Carers are to come away with a personal plan to meet the specific standard

Understanding and Managing Stress

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aim: What is stress? How do we respond to it physically and emotionally?

Learning outcomes:

- Understand how we all experience stress, our perception of, and response to it can differ widely.
- Identify how we personally respond to stress physically and emotionally and what to do about it.
- Examine your own 'relationship' with stress, together with existing strategies to manage it, and how our own biases may affect our interventions with those around us.

Understanding and Working With Eating Disorders

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aim: Understand the conditions giving rise to eating disorders and to become familiar with helpful interventions

Learning outcomes:

- Recognise the range of eating disorders currently classified
- Be aware of the proposed causes of eating disorders, including biological and environmental explanations
- Identify the link between certain types of trauma and eating disorders
- Recognise the higher prevalence of certain types of eating disorders in those with learning disabilities
- Become familiar with various approaches to treatment and support for those with an eating disorder

Understanding Depression and Anxiety

Facilitated by Syed and Quinn

Aim: This course is for anyone with an interest in gaining insight into the subjective experience of depression and anxiety, the links between these states, suggested causes of dysfunctional anxiety and depression, and an overview of some of the most widely used treatment approaches.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand that these conditions are often, but not always linked and may be considered the fraternal twins of mood disorders.
- Explore suggested causes of anxiety and depression along with some of the most widely used treatment approaches (pharmacological, cognitive-behavioural, humanistic, integrative counselling, and other treatments)