

## Trainer's notes

### Unit No. 20: Attachment, Trauma & Resilience

#### Unit objectives

- To revisit the basic framework of attachment
- To consider the impact of failed attachment on brain development
- To explore the effects of trauma on children in particular their capacity to learn
- To identify the importance of a resilience based approach in supporting looked after children
- To develop strategies for supporting children's learning informed by an understanding of attachment, trauma and resilience.

#### Outline of Unit

- PowerPoint presentation
- Video Helen Minnis
- Case study Discussion
- Large group discussion: effective interventions

#### Resources required to deliver unit

- Videos: Helen Minnis videos 1 - 4
- Hand-outs : Craig's case history,
- PowerPoint slides

#### Resources required to support this unit

All hand-outs and supporting material from Topics 6, 7 & 8.

#### Introduction to trainer

This unit provides a brief introduction to attachment, trauma and resilience and an opportunity for participants to explore these ideas through the case study example of Craig. It should take no longer than an hour but could be less if time is very restricted. It is aimed at groups of participants from single disciplines who may undertake this training at a number of different points in their professional development. Different participant groups may need to explore these ideas from their own particular perspective allowing for their previous knowledge level. You should make a judgement about what level of input will be appropriate. It is, however, possible that even experienced professionals may be coming to this material with little previous understanding or they may have

forgotten much of what they have learned in the past so check this out as you go through the material. You will need to select appropriate slides from the PowerPoint presentations available for these topics in the other units to construct your own presentation that will suit the group you are working with.

Be aware of the sensitive nature of the material and explain to participants that they may find the experience uncomfortable and that it is acceptable to withdraw if necessary either physically or emotionally if they are adversely affected by any of the material.

### **PowerPoint presentation**

Using the presentation and hand-outs from Units 6,7 & 8, select PowerPoint slides appropriate to the participants and create a presentation lasting no longer than fifteen minutes that focuses mainly on the impact of their experiences on children's capacity to engage with education and learn effectively. Ensure that participants understand the impact of very early difficult experiences as well as later adversity but make sure that they also understand the importance and power of a resilience based approach. Point out that successful engagement with school is the biggest predictor of good adult outcomes and that all professionals have a role in supporting children's education.

Show the video clips of Helen Minnis talking about attachment, trauma and neglect

### **Group activity Case Study**

Remind participants of the film of Craig's story. Hand out the case history of Craig. In small groups ask the participants to undertake the following task

- *Identify the attachment figures in Craig's life. What effect may his attachment history have had on him?*
- *What trauma has Craig experienced? How may this affect his functioning especially in school?*
- *What possible protective factors exist that may be used to develop Craig's resilience?*
- *Identify points in Craig's history when it might have been possible to intervene more effectively using the ideas presented in this module.*

### **Large group discussion: effective interventions**

Take very brief feedback from the groups but spend more time asking participants to identify strategies particular to their professional background that they might be able to use in working with looked after children. Do not allow participants to be drawn into what **other** professionals should do, but ensure you concentrate on their own skills and understandings. Before the conclusion of this

module, however, emphasise that although every professional group has a particular role to play in supporting looked after children unless this is done in conjunction with colleagues from other agencies or disciplines children will receive an inadequate experience.

### **Final Note**

As this is a very brief introduction it is important to direct participants to literature, websites and organisations that will allow them to explore these ideas further.