



Reducing Parental Conflict Newsletter 3

Hello and welcome to the third newsletter for the Bristol area, focusing on Reducing Parental Conflict compiled by your RPC programme lead, Emily Ingle (Emily.ingle@bristol.gov.uk)

Ideas welcome: Please get in contact if you have anything you would like to be added to the forthcoming newsletters.

In this edition:

Webinars

1. Recording of DWP - Reducing Parental Conflict Partnerships Oct 6th 9.30 – 11.00am
2. EIF - SEND Community of Practice 2/11/22 10 - 11am

Training

3. One-day in-person Supporting families experiencing persistent parental conflict training aimed at front-line practitioners who case hold on Tuesday 8th November. To book a place click [here](#)
4. Understanding Parental Couple Conflict, Its Impact On Children's Outcomes And What We Can Do To Help Booking information for a half day online workshop aimed at everyone on November 22nd 2022 book [here](#) and Jan 24th 2023 or [here](#) (9.30 - 1pm).
5. RPC e-learning for practitioners in 3 x 45 min modules
6. RPC e-learning for managers and supervisors in 1 x 45 min module

Blogs

7. A parent's story of relationship distress and what helped
8. What does Reducing Parental Conflict mean to perinatal mental health and parent infant relationships?

Free resources

8. For professionals
9. For parents

1. Reducing Parental Conflict Partnerships DWP webinar

Recording from Thursday 6th October

DWP are hosted a webinar on RPC partnerships on October 6th. Please see the agenda and click the link below if you would like to watch the recording. Contact Emily.ingle@bristol.gov.uk for a copy of the slides.

- Next Steps to progress RPC partnerships and influencing change

Agenda:

- How to use theoretical frameworks to aid working together – Dr Dulcie McBride | Director at Goldfinch I Design, implementation and evaluation of complex services & interventions
- Exploring Westminster’s practical example of a shared approach to early help management and case recording – Bridie Collins – Early Help Service & Partnerships Manager, Westminster
- How Rotherham deliver Children and Family Services with an inter-parental relationships focus – Susan Claydon | Head of Services, Rotherham

[File and folder sharing \(glasscubes.com\)](https://www.glasscubes.com)

2. SEND Community of Practice 2/11/22 10 - 11am

EIF are inviting you to join them for the first of a series of webinars exploring EIFs practical guides on supporting healthy relationships.

We are holding a SEND Community of Practice which will focus on learning from the supporting healthy relationships among parents of children with behaviours that challenge guide. During this session we will introduce an overview of the research, hear a local area case example and consider how to navigate and apply the guidance before the opportunity to discuss this in more detail.

The discussion will focus on one of two topics. If you would like to attend, please do let us know when you register on the link below which feels most relevant to your work so we can organise the breakout rooms accordingly:

- Using research evidence and data to inform local strategies
- Engaging parents of children with behaviours that challenge

If you would like to attend the community of practice, please sign up [here](#) and hold the time in your diary. You will receive a calendar invite and the link to join the session ahead of the event.

3. Understanding Parental Couple Conflict, Its Impact On Children's Outcomes And What We Can Do To Help

This training has been arranged for practitioners across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Led by Honor Rhodes, OBE, Director of Strategy at Tavistock Relationships, it will take place on MS Teams.

Outline programme and specific learning outcomes

- Refreshing our understanding of the evidence, parental couple conflict research, established and new
- Understanding of the nature and impact on the child of parental conflict, parental gatekeeping, the child who is trying to manage relationships with separated parents
- Starting the conversation about relationship quality with parents, using some measures and tools to help

Choose from two dates:

- Tuesday 22nd November 9.30 – 1.00 Book your free place [here](#)
- Tuesday 24th January 9.30 – 1.00 Book your free place [here](#)



4. Supporting Families Experiencing Persistent Parental Conflict

This training will support practitioners to identify parental conflict, start a conversation and provide support.

This training is suitable for Bristol practitioners supporting children and their families and particularly those working within children's social-care, health or education when their role supports early identification of harmful inter-parental conflict.

It takes place over one day. It aims to:

- improve understanding about parental conflict, it's impact on children and young people
- help practitioners distinguish between parental conflict and domestic abuse
- help practitioners to identify relationship distress
- improve communication with parents
- provide initial support and help

7th Dec - Recognising and supporting parents in parental conflict

14th Dec - Working with parents in conflict

Next dates: 7th and 14th December 9.30 - 12.45

5. Practitioner training modules (non BCC staff)

For BCC staff please access [here](#)



Module 1 – Understanding Parental Conflict and its impacts on child outcomes
https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/sscp-training/module1/story_html5.html



Module 2 – Recognising and supporting parents in parental conflict
https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/sscp-training/module2/story_html5.html



Module 3 – Working with parents in conflict
https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/sscp-training/module3/story_html5.html

6. Manager / supervisor training module

For BCC staff please access [here](#)

Module 4 – Role of the supervisor

https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/sscp-training/module4/story_html5.html



Laura-Jayne tells her story in her own words, of early abusive relationships, becoming a parent, raising her children, becoming a blended family, managing her child's distressed behaviours and her own poor mental health and being on the brink of relationship breakdown before embarking on life-changing relationship support.

"I felt like I could no longer cope with Joshua's behaviours, I felt completely alone and it didn't help that it started to come between me and Anthony. We would argue over discipline mainly; how I either wasn't doing enough to discipline or how I wasn't happy with the way Anthony would discipline, our communication between each other was awful, we could go days with hardly speaking until (usually me) would just blow and every single thing I had been keeping in for the last few days and weeks would come out."

After support for her relationship, Laura-Jayne went on to say,

"I truly believe the sessions helped us communicate better, become stronger together and ultimately save our relationship."

Read how [Am I just? Who am I? - Reducing Parental Conflict - Knowledge Hub \(khub.net\)](https://www.khub.net/blog/am-i-just-who-am-i-reducing-parental-conflict)

7.2 What does *Reducing Parental Conflict* mean to perinatal mental health and parent infant relationships?

Family Hubs and Start for Life programme

It was exciting to attend the perinatal mental health board yesterday with colleagues from health and the voluntary sector. This was an opportunity to talk about Family hubs and the Start for Life programmes particularly the funding to primarily target universal perinatal mental health and parent–infant relationship needs. The guidance says, "together with the open access focus of the parenting support funding (0-2), this is an opportunity to prevent difficulties before they emerge and to better support families with a wide range of difficulties." See annex I page 80 [Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme Guide \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

I would want to add, "together with open access of the parenting support *and support for parental relationships funding*" from DWP who are grant funding approaches to reducing parental conflict and have partnered up with several government departments (DHSC, DfE and DHLUC) to ensure reducing parental conflict is firmly on the agenda of the Supporting Families programme, as well as the Family Hub and Start for Life agenda.

The guidance goes on to suggest that perinatal mental health for fathers and co-parents should be enhanced with this funding. "There is a Long Term Plan commitment to offer an evidence-based assessment to partners of women accessing specialist perinatal mental health or maternal mental health services for their mental health and be signposted to support as required. This funding could be used to develop the support that fathers and co-parents are referred to. Limited support is available for partners of women who do not access specialist perinatal mental health services."

Expectant parents services

Our 2019 Bristol JSNA recommends PMH and infant mental health input into antenatal classes so there is a universal offer alongside support found on [Your bump 2 baby wellbeing guide](#) which includes mental health support for pregnant mums and new mums from Bluebell care, [Dads in Mind](#) for dads experiencing mental health difficulties surrounding pregnancy and a birth of a child or supporting a partner who is having difficulties and targeted support group programmes such as antenatal Rockabye, Welcome to the World and [Peep Antenatal Programme](#)

Programmes that also focus on fostering positive couple or co-parenting relationships are shown to support sustainable outcomes. I welcome the renewed focus from the Start for Life programme on fathers and co-parenting and consideration of their mental health and quality of relationships and the important role of co-parenting supporters.

There are existing preparing for parenthood evidenced based programmes that have significant impacts on postnatal depression, improved parenting sensitivity and warmth, fostering positive couple or co-parenting relationships and establishing positive child regulation such as [‘Family Foundations’ – transition to parenthood programme for dads and mums: The Fatherhood Institute](#)

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7.2 continued

Me You Baby Too is a digital programme designed to help parents understand the impact of a new baby on the couple relationship, and to help them find constructive approaches to managing conflict and coping together. It is currently available in North Somerset and South Gloucestershire and likely to be available in Bristol following some scoping and needs analysis work. The resource comprises Behaviour Modelling Training videos, activities and psycho-educative information to help users adjust to parenthood. Evaluation findings showed a statistically significant reduction in levels of conflict and a significant improvement in relationship satisfaction. Throughout their use of the programme, parents also demonstrated:

- Understanding and awareness of couple conflict and coping.
- Understanding and awareness of the impact of a baby on their couple relationship, and the impact of the couple relationship on the infant.
- Parents also reported putting learning into practice by using communication techniques suggested in the programme:
- Listening to one another more.
- Sharing problems and feelings more with their partners.
- Becoming more aware of the role and impact of stress and how to handle it more constructively as a couple.

Other perinatal programmes aimed at supporting relationships:

- [Podcast: Perinatal Mental Health | NSPCC Learning](#) discussing Baby Steps and [Pregnancy in Mind | Parental mental health service | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Solihull Approach online courses especially FREE Antenatal online courses and understanding your relationships \(£24\)](#)

With the cost of living crisis upon us it's important to understand **the role of poverty** and the additional stress it places on inter-parental relationships. The numbers of UK children living in absolute poverty defined as a state in which income is insufficient to provide the basic needs required to sustain life (that is, to feed and shelter children) is on the rise and has been since 2010.

Children who are on or on the edges of poverty are at risk of elevated and more poor outcomes; increased rates of family conflict, child neglect and abuse, intimate partner violence, adult substance misuse, depression and suicidality. In addition, their parents face multiple risk factors including common mental health disorders. Families facing the challenges of poverty can do better if there is:

- A perception of support for mothers;
- Effective coping strategies;
- Communication and problem-solving skills;
- Dispositional optimism; and expectancy that more good things happen than bad;
- Supportive communities and neighbourhoods;
- Support to children to manage their perception of conflict.

This suggests that these areas should be the focus of a system response that aims to support poor families with the impact of parental conflict. While research is not conclusive, we also know that while poorer parents do have good outcomes from parenting support in the short term, there is less evidence of longer-term impact.

The wider situation of the family, for example living in poverty or existence of parental mental ill health can further exacerbate risk, while supportive systems and services around families and individual communication skills can reduce the risk.

* See also Infant Parent Relationship programmes available in Bristol [Look, Say, Sing, Play early years resources to use and share with parents | NSPCC Learning](#), [VIG](#), [Circle of Security Parenting](#) and Solihull Approach

8. Free resources

Information about the national programme including evaluation

[DWP Reducing Parental Conflict programme and resources - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Join an online community for reducing parental conflict](#)

Toolkits

[Anna Freud National Centre for Family Hubs Parental Conflict Toolkit](#)

[Race Equality Foundation Toolkit to reduce harmful parental conflict](#)

Tavistock Relationships Policy and Evidence Briefings

[A short guide to working with co-parents](#)

- a useful resource for practitioners managing discussions with parents about their relationship.

[Tavistock relationships blogs and resources](#)

[The impact of couple conflict on children](#)

[Couple relationships and children's mental health](#)

[Infant mental health and couple relationships](#)

[Parents as Partners: a summary of findings](#)

The Early Intervention Foundation

[Why reducing parental conflict matters for the NHS](#)

[The Early Intervention Foundation, Harold et al. What Works To Enhance Inter-Parental Relationships And Improve Outcomes For Children? \(2016\)](#)

[Interparental conflict and outcomes for children in the contexts of poverty and economic pressure 2017](#)

[Reducing Parental Conflict Hub \(eif.org.uk\)](#)

Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

[Parents or Carers in Conflict | Resolving Parental Disputes | Anna Freud Centre](#)

[The impact of parental conflict on children](#)

[In conflict: child triangulation](#)

[In conflict: self-awareness and stress reduction](#)

DA/PC screening tools

[Resources for assessing harmful conflict - Cafcass - Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service](#)

[For Baby's Sake parental relationship spectrum](#)

Measures

[score_userguide.pdf \(corc.uk.net\) for the whole family](#)

[Parenting Problem Checklist for intact and separated couples](#)

[Relationship Quality Index for intact couples](#)

Child View Tool adapted from Child's Perception of Interparental Conflict (CPIC) for children ages 9-17 with intact or separated parents – click on

Adobe Acrobat Doc



Adobe Acrobat
Document

9. Further free resources for parents

[Click Relationship support from experts and the community](#)

[See it differently - Communication skills for parents](#)

[Relate | The relationship people](#)

[Getting On Better cards \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#)

[Separated Parents Information Programme factsheet](#)

[Advice for parents and carers in conflict or separating](#)

[Card Decks Relationship App - offers helpful questions, statements, and ideas for improving your relationship.](#)

[Links for Parents who are separating/separated - NACCC](#)

[Online Courses for Parents - Solihull Approach | Parenting \(solihullapproachparenting.com\)](#)

[Relationship breakdown and separation | Contact](#)

[Free course Parenting Post Separation – Fegans](#)

[Videos - Relation Kit](#)



[See it differently](#)

