



Family Futures

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Neuro-Physiological Psychotherapy (NPP)

NPP – Phase 1

The focus is on regulating the primitive brain responses to interpersonal interactions also the focus is on regulation of sensory processing and understanding how the body process sensory information. Traumatized children respond to many normal situations with primitive brain responses – fight, flight or freeze. As a consequence, children who have been traumatized primarily in their relationship with parent figures cannot form secure attachments easily, even in a new, caring and safe environment. Therefore the focus of initial Family Therapy interventions with traumatized children focuses on regulating the primitive brain responses to interpersonal interactions. The sessions focus on understanding the various triggers (of the fear response) and focus on developing a broader spectrum of ways in which the child can feel calm in their body and feel regulated and safe. Safety is a key focus in this stage of the therapy and the work aims to support the child and their parent figure in feeling safe in all areas of their lives. Central to our model is that alongside helping the child to cope with traumatic responses, the child needs help to repair missed developmental stages and their ability to manage their sensory environment. If a child is dysregulated in any of their senses this will impair their ability to make sense of the world, to remain regulated and to interact with primary caregivers in a way that is conducive to forming secure attachments. For this reason, the collaboration and co-working between psychotherapists, paediatric occupational therapists (trained in sensory integration) and parents is an essential ingredient in helping a child to stabilise and to feel safe. Occupational therapy is integrated into the overall NPP therapy programme and focuses on regulation of sensory processing and supporting the child and parent figure in understanding how the body processes sensory information.

NPP – phase 2

This phase is about getting some understanding of the child's inner working model of relationships. It's also about what their relationship is with important people in their lives are there rescuers in their narrative or not etc. Whilst the first phase of treatment is essentially body-based fear reduction work with the parent and child dyad, the second stage of treatment moves more toward the model of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) developed by Hughes (2004). Family Futures also employs art therapy approaches in its DDP work. Engaging the child in creative arts activities provide a medium for communication, exploration and symbolic representation of the child's internal world especially given the limiting impact that Developmental Trauma has on the child's capacity to experience and verbally articulate the full repertoire of feeling and body states that they experience. Family Futures also integrates Theraplay (Booth and Jernberg 2009) into NPP which is a structured approach to engaging the child in interaction and to relieve them of the burden of control.

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Family Futures CIC, a community interest company registered in England and Wales with registered company number 08423617, whose registered office address is Wellesley House, Duke of Wellington Avenue, Royal Arsenal, London, SE18 6SS.

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NPP- phase 3

This phase is about integrating the child's life story with their feelings and behaviour to develop reflective capacity and coherent narrative. When parents and children are able to achieve moments of calm and reflection, it is possible to help the child to begin to make sense of their early experience and the effect it has had on their feeling states, behaviours and relationships. In our NPP model at Family Futures, we enable the child to begin to address the trauma through a form of life story work using the DDP model as mentioned earlier. It is important to remember that the ultimate aim of therapeutic work with Developmentally Traumatized children is not just to give them information about their past, but most importantly to integrate the information with their feelings and behaviours which then enables the development of understanding. From this position, with the parent and therapist, the child can develop and use their reflective capacity and their cortical capacity for integrative left-brain right-brain thinking to begin to think about themselves, their current relationships and their past without the distorting lens of trauma.

Family Futures Approach to Child Therapy



Family Futures has a reputation for carrying out the most comprehensive and integrated therapy programmes for children who have experienced trauma or attachment difficulties and are living with adoptive or birth parents, foster carers or special guardians. [Click on the image to watch this video and find out more about our approach.](#)

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