

FAMILY LINKS

The Centre for Emotional Health



**PARENT PROGRAMMES
FOR YOUR FAMILY HUBS**

PARENT PROGRAMMES FOR YOUR FAMILY HUBS

Since 1997, we have reached over 1.3 million parents and children by training over 38,000 professionals who work with families. Our range of parent programmes are suitable for parents and carers of children from 0-19 years and they help families to develop and maintain good emotional health and positive relationships.

All of our programmes are underpinned by the Nurturing Programme which is relational and empowering. It strongly aligns with the aims of Family Hubs, particularly *“relationships at the heart of family support”* (Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide - HM Government, August 2022)

Our programmes are already successfully embedded in many Family Hubs and are also being delivered throughout the UK by practitioners in local authority services, schools, the voluntary sector, health, prisons and faith organisations.

“Parents and carers should feel supported and empowered in caring for and nurturing their babies and children, ensuring they receive the best start in life. This in turn will improve health and education outcomes for babies and children and enable them to thrive in later life.”

Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide - HM Government, Aug 2022

“What we like most about using the Nurturing Programme approach with families is that it takes such a relational approach. It’s a joy for our workers to use and the parents get so much out of it right from week one.”

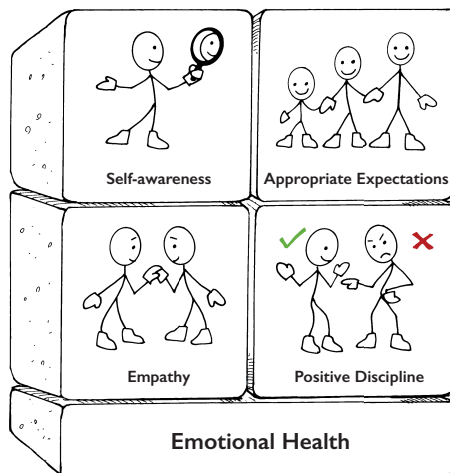
Diane Gray–Stephenson, Senior Parenting Practitioner
Early Help Parenting Team, Manchester City Council

THE ETHOS BEHIND OUR PROGRAMMES

Our programmes take a holistic and inclusive approach to parent support which make them particularly suitable as part of the Family Hubs offer. Some local authorities use them universally whilst others, such as Edge of Care teams, choose to use them in a more targeted way.

Exploring self-awareness, empathy and self-regulation, our focus is on the relationship between the adult and the child and on building the adults' capabilities, which is crucial for positive, sustainable outcomes for families.

We know a stable, responsive environment is essential for children to develop the foundations of resilience and strong lifelong emotional, mental and physical health (Harvard, 2023).



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With the Nurturing Programme as their golden thread, all of our programmes focus on behaviour in the context of feelings and relationships, because we know that feelings drive behaviour. The combination of programme content, resources and our method of facilitation provides an empowering and transformative experience for many parents and carers.

“We’ve fully embraced the Nurturing Programme ethos in our work with families. Parents really appreciate the non-judgemental, inclusive and empowering nature of it.”

Jayne Foster, Family Support Services Team Manager
Children’s Services, Buckinghamshire Council

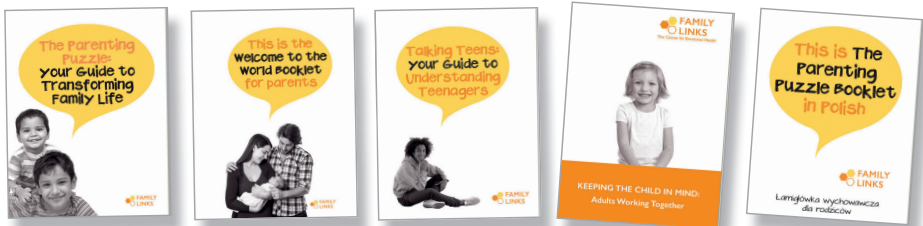
10-WEEK NURTURING PROGRAMME

This Programme for parents and carers of children of all ages is our flagship programme and most widely used. It improves the emotional health of both adults and children and strengthens family relationships. It is a cognitive-relational programme, providing parents with new skills in listening and communicating with their children and it develops an understanding of behaviour in the context of relationships. It works particularly well for the 3-12 years range, as we have other age specific programmes.

The Nurturing Programme enables parents and carers to take time to think about their children. The flexibility of the Programme takes into account the circumstances of all parents including those of children with additional needs and parents in prison. We have an adapted version with Islamic values for Muslim parents and a series of short guides to the principles of the Programme in Czech, Polish, Slovak, Somali, Urdu, Welsh and Ukrainian.

The Programme supports the Family Hubs vision that *“all families should have access to the information and tools they need to care for and interact positively with their babies and children, and to look after their own wellbeing.”*

Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide - HM Government, Aug 2022



“The Family Links course has been a life changer. Informative, fun, and eye-opening. I have gained invaluable knowledge and tools that have all improved family life pretty much immediately...I feel empowered to be the best version of myself with the children and the ripple effect of this is vast.”

Parent

PROGRAMMES BASED ON THE 10-WEEK NURTURING PROGRAMME

8-week Welcome to the World *for expectant parents from 24 weeks of pregnancy*

This programme focuses on the emotional health of parents and their baby, the relationships between them, attunement and bonding during the first 1,001 days. It helps to make “the transition to new parenthood as smooth as possible, with an emphasis on the importance of sensitive and attuned caregiving” (Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide – HM Government, August 2022).

4-week Parenting Puzzle workshops *for parents of children under 4 years*

This programme, which supports young children’s development and school readiness, focuses on the foundations for positive, constructive relationships and calm, confident parenting.

2-week Playful Parenting workshops *for parents of children under 5 years*

This programme helps parents to understand the value and importance of play and its role in developing attachment.

4-week Talking Teens *for parents of young people 11-19 years*

This programme explores the importance of parents for teenagers and focuses on understanding teenage behaviour, communication and managing conflict.

4-week Keeping Your Child in Mind *for parents of children of all ages*

This is our version of what is often referred to as Reducing Parental Conflict and it focuses on relationships within the family, in particular the influence of parental relationships on children.

“Family Links parenting programmes have made a real difference. We use them with parents with children across the entire 0-19yr age range and our practitioners have seen so many positive changes to parent-child relationships.”

Sophie Wright, Children and Families Team Manager
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

EVIDENCE-BASED PARENT PROGRAMMES

We know that “a stable, responsive environment is essential for children to develop the foundations of resilience and good lifelong emotional, mental and physical health” (*Harvard, 2023*). This is why we focus on building the capabilities of the adults in children’s lives through our parent programmes.

We have a substantial evidence base showing statistically significant improvements across a range of parent and parent-reported child outcomes, including evidence of sustained impact 3 months after parents have completed our programmes.

Our parent programmes have been evaluated externally by independent research partners and internally by our Impact and Evidence team, including:

- Manchester Early Help Team: Learning Partnership Report 2021 and 2022
- Parents’ experiences of an antenatal nurturing programme (Jones, Jomeen & Wadephul, 2019)*
- Maternal and paternal expectations of antenatal education (Jones, Wadephul & Jomeen, 2019)*
** Published in the British Journal of Midwifery*
- Hampshire County Council: Learning Partnership Report 2019
- The Nurturing Programme with Islamic Values: Evaluation Report 2019
- Luton Flying Start Team: Parenting Puzzle Workshop Learning Partnership Report 2019
- Talking Teens: Evaluation of a National Dataset 2018
- The Colebrooke Centre: Development and testing of an Overarching Impact Measure (Ghate, 2016)
- An evaluation of our Welcome to the World Antenatal Programme (Jones, Jomeen & Wadephul, 2016)
- Parenting Puzzle Workshops: An evaluation of parenting self-efficacy (Harris, 2016)
- The 10-wk Nurturing-Programme: An evaluation of parent & child mental health outcomes (Villadsen, 2015)
- The 10-wk Nurturing Programme: An evaluation of parenting self-efficacy (Villadsen, 2015)
- Welcome to the World Programme: Outcome report (Kidd-Rossiter, Yang & Harris, 2015)

Read more on our website or get in touch via evidence@familylinks.org.uk

“What drew me to the Family Links programmes was the growing theory base behind it, and the focus on developing parental empathy; to get parents to walk in the child’s shoes and understand what it’s like to be parented in that way. Although we have a range of parenting interventions, I would say that with 90% of families we use the Nurturing Programme.”

Carmel Cameron - Team Manager
Intervention Hub, Cheshire West & Chester Children's Social Care

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR YOUR PRACTITIONERS

Our range of training courses will enable your workforce to support families* with children from 0-19 years in a relationship-centred way.

Our training style is facilitative, rooted in a partnership approach rather than a directive model. Practitioners know the parents and carers they work with better than we do, and parents and carers know far more about their children and young people than practitioners do.

Once trained in the Nurturing Programme approach, whether delivering groups or working one to one, your team will be able to help parents and carers build on their strengths and improve their interpersonal relationships by developing amongst other things their self-awareness, empathy and self-regulation. The parent groups that practitioners deliver provide a safe space for parents and carers to learn not only from the content, but also from each other both in the room and afterwards from peer-to-peer informal networks that form once the groups have finished.

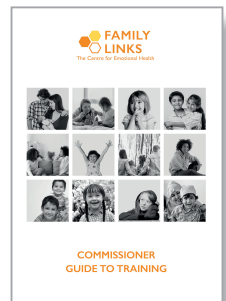
Further training is available to support practitioners in their work including Working One to One with Parents; Working with Families with Multiple Challenges; Parenting, Culture and Religion; Understanding Teenagers; Stress and the Brain in Children and Teenagers; Working with Muslim Families; Playful Parenting (version for those not running groups); Supervision Training and Parent Webinars.

For our full range of practitioner courses and to find out more about training with us, see our Commissioner Guide to Training on our website or get in touch via email development@familylinks.org.uk

*Family for us is an inclusive word and means not only those connected biologically. It can include anyone who is special in our life.

“Parents did so well in the group and commented frequently how nice it was to have such a safe and non-judgemental space to share their views and experiences.”

Practitioner





The Centre for Emotional Health

“Having responsive relationships with adults, growth-promoting experiences, and healthy environments for all young children helps build sturdy brain architecture and the foundations of resilience.”

**Center on the Developing
Child at Harvard University**

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