

Modular therapeutic Interventions for maltreated children and young people: A focus on the mental health of unaccompanied refugee minors (URMs) or children on the move in Europe

ISPCAN XX11 International Congress
Prague, Czech Republic
2-7.9.18

Dr Eileen Vizard CBE

Ms Jenny Gray OBE

UCL Institute of Child Health & Child & Family Training



© Child and Family Training 2017

1

The aims and objectives of the presentation

To **Review the relevant literature** on the mental health needs of:

- *unaccompanied refugee minors (URMs);*
- *To look at overlaps between the mental health needs of URMs, victims & perpetrators of abuse, trafficked children and child soldiers*
- **To introduce the HfCF Intervention Resources** and discuss how a modular approach with selected guides could be adapted for use with very severely damaged children and families who have been in flight from various types of severe abuse

© Child and Family Training 2017

2

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URMs)

Recently, Heads of State, Governments and High Representatives explicitly guaranteed to protect children as follows:

'We will protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all refugee and migrant children, regardless of their status, and giving primary consideration at all times to the best interests of the child. This will apply particularly to unaccompanied children and those separated from their families; we will refer their care to the relevant national child protection authorities and other relevant authorities. We will comply with our obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.'

UN General Assembly 2016

© Child and Family Training 2017

3

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URMs)

- Around the world, children and adolescents are forced to flee their homes due to war, persecution, organised violence, and political or religious unrest (UNHCR 2014)
- **Unaccompanied refugee minors (URMs)** – 'a person who is under the age of 18 and who is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom has the responsibility to do so' (UNHCR 1997, p. 1)
- At least **300,000** arrivals of unaccompanied and separated children recorded across 80 countries in 2015-2016 (Unicef 2017)
 - Of all children arriving through the Central Mediterranean Route, 92% were URMs
 - 91% adolescent males (European Union Committee 2016)
 - 10,000 missing children (European Union Committee 2016)

© Child and Family Training 2017

4

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URMs)

- **Risk:** family separation, exploitation, detention, sexual violence, physical and psychological harm
- **Prevalence of mental health disorder** (Fazel & Stein, 2004; von Werthern & Vizard in press)
 - PTSD – 17-73%
 - Depression – 13-23%
 - Anxiety – 26-35%
 - Externalising Disorders – 2-5%
- **Cumulative traumas** witnessed or experienced can lead to biologically embedded 'toxic stress' in URMs due to prolonged exposure to unpredictable stressors (Harvard Center 2017)
- **Confounding factors** may include number of traumatic experiences, age and gender (Bronstein et al et al. 2012; Seglem et al. 2011)
- Higher frequencies of mental health difficulties in Unaccompanied Refugee Minors compared with accompanied refugees (e.g. Von Werthern & Vizard, in press; Hodes et al. 2008)

© Child and Family Training 2017

5

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URMs)

- **Prevalence of mental health disorder** (von Werthern & Vizard in press)
- Impact of experiencing war, observing torture & murders upon the mental state of boy & girl URMs – *PTSD, dissociation, flashbacks* common
- Loss of a Moral Compass with the absence of a stable caregiver and in the company of other traumatised children on the move and unpredictable, violent adults
- Limited/absent education – *inability to think independently & challenge abuse, lack of a sense of empowerment, poor prospects of employment & independent living*

© Child and Family Training 2017

6

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URMs)

Sustainable solutions in children's best interests:

- A rights based approach
- A durable solution which addresses child protection & the child's own wishes for his/her future
- To occur as soon as possible after an assessment of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor child
- Durable solution to analyse possibility of family reunification

Bhabha & Dottridge 2017

© Child and Family Training 2017

7

Intervention with child maltreatment: Use of the Hope for Children and Families Intervention Guides for Practitioners

child
and
family
training

© Child and Family Training 2017

8

The literature

- There is an **extensive literature** of interventions to ameliorate and prevent abusive parenting and the associated impairment of children's health and development: Macdonald et al. (2016) described more than 60 interventions
- However, literature reviews on interventions in maltreatment, including sexual abuse, highlight the need for a **'practical approach to assessing children's needs'**, including a structured model of assessment and data analysis (Cox et al. 2009; Vizard 2013, p. 507; Bentovim & Elliott 2014)
- But, what is striking is the **limited use of such approaches in the UK** (Macdonald et al. 2016) and internationally

© Child and Family Training 2017

9

Explanations for limited utilisation of evidenced based approaches

- There is **little consistency in approach**. The range of effective interventions is extensive – psycho-dynamic, cognitive-behavioural, video-feedback (MacMillan et al. 2009).
- The **range of foci is wide** – individual, parent, and family.
- **Utilising approaches they are familiar** with – e.g. applying the CYP-IAPT approach for a diagnosable mental health needs, but not complex co-morbid problems, and latent vulnerability, applying TF-CBT to all situations
- There is **inconsistent research on outcomes**, some single forms of abuse being studied more extensively, complex forms not studied
- The practitioner needs to **choose between competing effective models**, which require differing levels of skill and training, not surprisingly the approaches are not utilised.

© Child and Family Training 2017

10

Background to establishing an intervention approach

- The need to develop intervention resources
- Beginning to explore the idea of **common practice elements** (Garland 2008; Chorpita and Daleiden 2009)
- **Arnon Bentovim** conducted **research** with **Ian Elliott** and **Lucy Faithfull Foundation**; and collaboration with David Kolko and Bruce Chorpita to distil **'common practice elements'** from gold standard RCTs on preventing and addressing abusive and neglectful parenting and the associated impairment of children's health and development

© Child and Family Training 2017

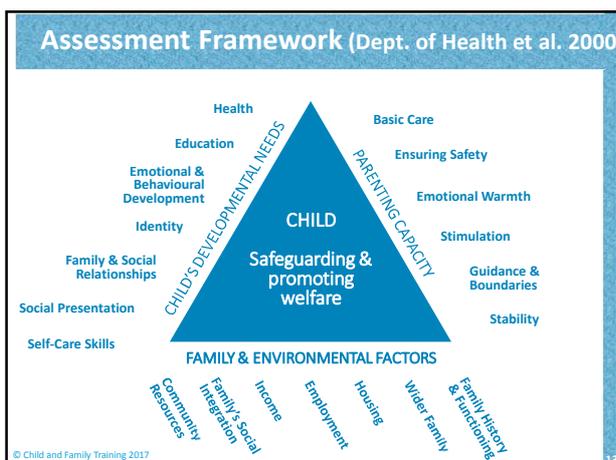
11

Research background to intervention resources

- **A broad review of the literature** on treatment protocols working with the **different forms of maltreatment** (systemic, cognitive behavioural and dynamic) (Bentovim & Elliott 2014)
- **'Common practice' elements** that characterise the approach distilled, and the main steps of that practice approach set out with guidance on how to carry them out.
- **Common factors** were defined such as **promoting an alliance, client motivation, and relationships common to all interventions**, creating a sense of hopefulness and effectiveness
- **The various steps are integrated** into the modules, and in turn the modules are integrated into a series of intervention guides for practitioners, **The Hope for Children and Families Intervention resources** (Bentovim and Gray (eds) 2016) modelled around the **Assessment Framework** categories

© Child and Family Training 2017

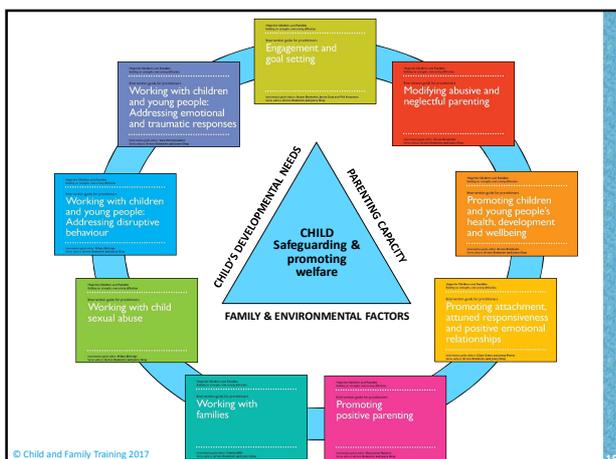
12



The intervention guides for practitioners

- Each guide presents a consistent, step-by-step approach to intervention, bringing together effective practice that can be used by a wide range of practitioners working in different contexts
- Appropriate modules are selected to meet the complex needs of the child and family
- Working with children and young people responding with emotional and traumatic responses; disruptive behaviour; utilising MATCH-ADTC basic modular approaches (Chorpita and Daleiden 2009)
- Modifying abusive and neglectful parenting, promoting secure attachment, promoting health and development, and positive parenting practices
- Working with the family as a whole to promote positive communication, and counter violence and dysfunctional process
- working with sexual abuse, including working with children and young people displaying sexually harmful behaviour

© Child and Family Training 2017



Intervention guide for practitioners

Hope for Children and Families
Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties

Intervention guide for practitioners

Working with children and young people: Addressing emotional and traumatic responses

Intervention guide editor: Tara Weeramanthri
Series editors: Arnon Bentovim and Jenny Gray

© Child and Family Training 2017

Working with children and young people: Addressing emotional and traumatic responses (1)

Modules:

- Developing a child-centred approach
- Psycho-education about the effects of maltreatment
- Safety Planning
- Coping Skills
- Relaxing and calming
- Describing and monitoring feelings
- Activity selection
- Problem solving

Ten Things I Can Do to Feel Good!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

© 2009 ProEducation, LLC

© Child and Family Training 2017

Intervention guide for practitioners

Hope for Children and Families
Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties

Intervention guide for practitioners

Working with children and young people: Addressing disruptive behaviour

Intervention guide editor: Hilary Eldridge
Series editors: Arnon Bentovim and Jenny Gray

© Child and Family Training 2017

Working with children and young people: Addressing disruptive behaviour

3.

Obstacles	How to overcome them
My aggressive behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn how to manage my anger better Think about the consequences of my behaviour and how this will stop me reaching my goals for my 'New Life'
Being part of a gang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join a football club Make friends outside of my gang (e.g. at school, at a football club) Improve my social skills Use my sense of humour to help me make new friends
Feeling angry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk in my sessions about why I feel angry and get some help on how to feel less angry about my past
Feeling confused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk in my sessions about what happened in my past that makes me feel confused Ask my team to help me understand more about my past

© Child and Family Training 2017

- Modules:**
- Enhancing children's competence: 'the good life'
 - Coping with disruptive behaviour
 - Assertiveness training
 - Positive relationships

Intervention guide for practitioners

Hope for Children and Families
Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties

Intervention guide for practitioners

Working with child sexual abuse

Intervention guide editor: Hilary Eldridge
Series editors: Arnon Bentovim and Jenny Gray

© Child and Family Training 2017

Working with child sexual abuse

Modules:

- Working with parents/carers with children harmed sexually in the family or community
- Children or young people who display sexually harmful behaviour
- Working with parents, children under 12 adolescents (age 12+)

Traffic lights

© Child and Family Training 2017

Intervention guide for practitioners

Hope for Children and Families
Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties

Intervention guide for practitioners

Promoting positive parenting

Intervention guide editor: Rosemarie Roberts
Series editors: Arnon Bentovim and Jenny Gray

© Child and Family Training 2017

Promoting Positive parenting: Guidance and boundaries

Modules:

- Praise
- Attention and ignoring
- Giving effective instructions
- Rewards
- Shaping challenging behaviour
- Modifying disruptive behaviour

© Child and Family Training 2017

Intervention guide for practitioners

Hope for Children and Families
Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties

Intervention guide for practitioners

Promoting attachment, attuned responsiveness and positive emotional relationships

Intervention guide editors: Clare Gates and Jenny Peters
Series editors: Arnon Bentovim and Jenny Gray

© Child and Family Training 2017

Promoting attachment, attuned responsiveness and positive emotional relationships

Modules:

- Promoting attachment, attuned responsiveness
- younger children
- older children – one on one time
- in adolescence, providing emotional support



© Child and Family Training 2017 25

Discussion



© Child and Family Training 2017 26

- **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION POINTS**
- Need for multiple interlocking theoretical models to understand complexity
- Impact of horrific abuse/torture upon victims and perpetrators of all four types of abuse
- Impact of above on professionals in the field & need for supervision & support
- Use of C & FT guides + other treatment modalities with victims and perpetrators
- Need for long term support for victims & perpetrators

© Child and Family Training 2017 27

In Summary ...

- Training of staff is essential in dealing with highly distressing, complex forms of trauma
- Care required in the timing of specific trauma related ‘debriefing’ of victims and perpetrators
- May be better to safeguard and secure placement first and intervene therapeutically later
- Need to include risk assessments for child victims who also perpetrate serious abuse and murder e.g. child soldiers
- Work with local communities to prevent rejection of trafficked children in flight from abuse

© Child and Family Training 2017 28

SELECTION OF REFERENCES

References

Bartlett J, Barto B Griffin J, Goldman J, Fraser, Hodgdon H, and Bodian R (2015) Trauma-Informed Care in the Massachusetts Child Trauma Project Child Maltreatment 1-12 DOI: 10.1177/1077559515615700

Bentovim, A and Elliott I (2014) Hope for Children and Families Targeting Abusive Parenting and the Associated Impairment of Children *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*

Bentovim, A. and Gray, J. (eds.) (2016) *Hope for Children and Families Intervention guides for practitioners. Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties.* York: Child and Family Training.

Bentovim, A. and Gray, J. (eds.) (2015) *Eradicating Child Maltreatment. Evidence-Based Approaches to prevention and Intervention across Services.* London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Bentovim, A. and Gray, J. (eds.) (2017) *Hope for Children and Families. Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties. Intervention guide for practitioners.* York: Child and Family Training.

Bhabha, J. & Dottridge, M. (2017). Child Rights in the Global Compact. Working Document presented at a Conference on 12.6.17 in Berlin. Available from: <http://www.world-psi.org/en/global-conference-children-move-berlin>

Bronstein, I., Montgomery, P., & Dobrowolski, S. (2012). PTSD in asylum-seeking male adolescents from Afghanistan. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 25*(5), 551-557

Chorpita, B. F., & Weisz, J. R. (2009) MATCH-ADTC: Modular approach to treatment for children with anxiety, depression, trauma, and conduct problems. Satellite Beach, FL: PracticeWise.

Chorpita, B.F., Daleiden, E., Alayna L. Park, et al (2016) Child STEPs in California: A Cluster Randomized Effectiveness Trial Comparing Modular Treatment with Community Implemented Treatment for Youth With Anxiety, Depression, Conduct Problems, or Traumatic Stress. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. Advance online publication.

Cox, A., Bingley Miller, L. & Pizzev, S. (2009) Assessing children's needs. A model of assessment, analysis, planning interventions and identifying and measuring outcomes for the child. Chapter 2. In A. Bentovim, A. Cox, L.B. Miller & S. Pizzev (Eds.), *Safeguarding children living with trauma and Family violence. Evidence-based assessment, analysis and planning interventions* (pp. 75-105). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

© Child and Family Training 2017 29

SELECTION OF REFERENCES

European Union Committee. (2016) Children in crisis: Unaccompanied migrant children in the EU. Retrieved from: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmefw/efw0212/efw0212.htm#footnote2>

Hodes, M., Jelicic, D., Charney, N., & Cornhill, A. (2008). Risk and resilience for psychological distress amongst unaccompanied asylum seeking adolescents. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 49*(7), 723-732.

McClure, E., & Widom, K. (2015). The theory of latent vulnerability: Reconceptualizing the link between childhood maltreatment and psychiatric disorder. *Development and Psychopathology, 27*, 483-505.

McClure, E., Gavin M.I., Vidig E. (2017) Child Maltreatment, Latent vulnerability, and the shift to preventative psychiatry – the contribution of functional brain imaging. *Journal of Child Psychology, and Psychiatry, 58*, 138-157

MacMillan H, Wadhen C. N., Barlow J., Ferguson D. M., Lavee-Shal J. M., & Traissig H. N. (2005) Interventions to prevent child maltreatment and associated impairment. *Lancet, 373*, 250-266

Macdonald G, Livingston, N, Henratty, J, McCarroll, C, Gilmore, R, Cary, M, Glass, D, Byford, S, Welton, N, J, Boppre, T, Bowen, L, Moorey, G, Fisher, H, L, Riches, W, Churchill, R. (2015) The effectiveness, acceptability and cost-effectiveness of psychological interventions for maltreated children and adolescents: an evidence synthesis. *Health Technology Assessment, Vol. 20*, No. 69, 09, p. 1-508

Rafford, L., Corral, S., Bradley, C., Fisher, H., Bassett, C., Howarth, N., McCallum, S. (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today. NSPCC. Available from:

UNHCR. (1997). Guidelines on policies and procedures in dealing with unaccompanied children seeking asylum. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/3d49f1e9.pdf>

UNHCR. (2014) World at War: UNHCR Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2014. Retrieved from:

UN General Assembly (2016) New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. UN Document A/71/L.1 para 5, 13th September.

UNICEF (2017) Five-fold increase in number of refugee and migrant children travelling alone since 2010. Retrieved from: <https://www.unicef.org/uk/press-releases/five-fold-increase-number-refugee-migrant-children-travelling-alone-since-2010-en017>

Sugden, K. B., Oppedahl, B., & Ressler, S. (2011). Predictors of depressive symptoms among resettled unaccompanied refugee minors. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 52*(5), 457-464.

Vizard, E. (2015). Practitioner Review: The victims and juvenile perpetrators of child sexual abuse: assessment and intervention. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 54*(5), 503-515.

Von Werthern M., & Vizard, E. (in press 2017). The Health and Wellbeing of Unaccompanied Refugee Minors -

© Child and Family Training 2017 30