

Emerging Minds Webinar Series

Infant and Child Mental Health

**Emerging
Minds.**

National Workforce
Centre for Child
Mental Health



Webinar 2

Engaging parents of school-aged children

7:15 pm to 8:30 pm AEDT
Monday 15th October 2018

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Emerging Minds and MHPN wishes to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands across Australia upon which our webinar presenters and participants are located.

We wish to pay respect to the Elders past, present and future for the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Indigenous Australia.



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Webinar series

This is the third webinar in the Emerging Minds, Infant and Child Mental Health series.

Future webinars:

- Engaging parents with children approaching adolescence (Wednesday, 7th November 2018)
- Supporting children's mental health after trauma (2019)
- Engaging with children and parents with complex needs – a systems approach (2019)



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Tonight's panel



Nicola Palfrey
Psychologist



Sarah Seekamp
Occupational Therapist



Mandy Walsh
Child & Family Partner
and Lived Experience
Consumer



Facilitator: Dan Moss
Workforce Development
Manager,
Emerging Minds



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Ground rules

To help ensure everyone has the opportunity to gain the most from this live webinar, we ask that all participants consider the following ground rules:

- Be respectful of other participants and panellists. Behave as you would in a face-to-face activity.
- For help with any technical issues, click the Technical Support FAQ tab at the top of the screen. Need further support? Call the Redback Help Desk on 1800 291 863.
- If a significant issue affects all participants, an announcement will be made.



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Learning outcomes

Through an exploration of child inclusive practice that focuses on children's social and emotional wellbeing participants will:

- identify strategies to facilitate positive child-focused conversations with parents and children that uncovers their relationship strengths and vulnerabilities
- describe practitioner tools that help parents to focus on the developmental needs of their children when facing adversity, conflict or separation
- recognise the importance of regular shared playtime between children and their parents.



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Psychologist perspective

What we are told

Charlie has been referred for therapy:

- Behavioural issues
- Anger management
- Aggression/violence
- Disengagement from school
- Non-compliance



Nicola Palfrey



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Psychologist perspective



Nicola Palfrey

What I hear

- Angry boys = Sad boys;
 - Often 'scapegoated'
 - Shut down
 - Unlikely to want to engage in therapy initially

- People need to be understood in their context



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Psychologist perspective



Nicola Palfrey

What to do?

- Set context from the outset:
 - First session/s will be with parents
 - Expectation that both parents will attend
 - Family process – not just Charlie's 'problem'
- Empathy plus accountability:
 - Listen until they can
 - Unconditional positive regard
- Name greatest fears and instil hope



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Psychologist perspective



Nicola Palfrey

Together – Apart – Together



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Psychologist perspective

Keep your eye on the prize



Nicola Palfrey

- What outcomes are you hoping for?
 - Mum's sense of competence will increase.
 - Dad's control and frightening behaviour will decrease.
 - Charlie's emotional needs will be seen and met.
 - To shift any of these things, people need to feel heard, supported and feel capable.
- Your work is as a conduit for this change.
- To moderate, translate, initiate.
- Families lose their confidence in how to connect with each other. Help them find their way back.

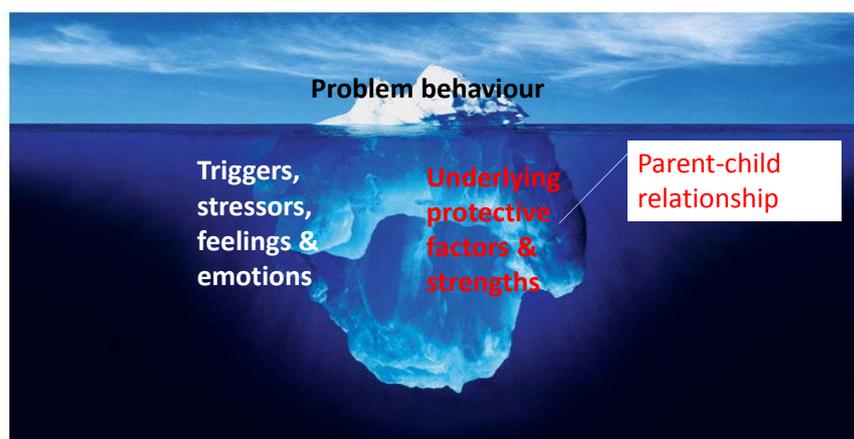


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Occupational Therapist perspective



Sarah Seekamp



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Occupational Therapist perspective

Investing in the child - parent relationship



Sarah Seekamp

- Shared leisure time / play is a key opportunity for nurturing relationships.
- Filling the cup to support the hard work.



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Occupational Therapist perspective



Finding space to do this despite...

- Acknowledge the challenge
- Collaborate to look for opportunities
- Start where families are at



Sarah Seekamp



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Occupational Therapist perspective



Providing the scaffolding

- Playing is not an inherent skill.
- Follow the child's lead.
- What is my child doing, thinking, feeling and needing?



Sarah Seekamp



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Occupational Therapist perspective

Key messages



Sarah Seekamp

- Help parents recognise that they are the most important people to their child and the benefits of a strong child / parent relationship.
- Help parents recognise how shared play / leisure time can strengthen relationships.
- Support parents to understand child-focussed play.



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Child & Family Partner and Lived Experience perspective

Charlie's Mum



Mandy Walsh

Mum carrying a huge load:

- Trying to survive in a relationship that entails verbal abuse and possibly domestic violence. She is probably frightened and embarrassed to disclose this to others.
- Working/career.
- Parenting.
- Being a wife.
- Has judgemental and unhelpful community support (i.e. the neighbour).
- Carries parental guilt (apologises to Charlie in the car).



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Child & Family Partner and Lived Experience perspective

Charlie's Dad

- Has a very 'authoritarian' personality.
- Living his love of football through Charlie.
- Doesn't respect the school rules of Charlie's school. This would be hard on Charlie.
- Is overbearing and forceful.
- May be carrying more than he can deal with (important to note that sometimes we expect a lot from dads but they too can be vulnerable i.e. we are becoming better at recognising depression and anxiety in mothers but maybe we are not good at understanding that depression and anxiety can happen to fathers as well).



Mandy Walsh



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Child & Family Partner and Lived Experience perspective

Charlie

- A timid boy.
- Is grieving for his dog and no one is addressing this.
- Frightened of his father (he anxiously jumps when his father calls out for him).
- He wants to follow the school rules and do what his teacher says but his father is not supportive of this.
- Is trying to survive as best as he knows how and is reacting to the situation with anger.
- Being a child of verbal and/or domestic violence is a difficult road to travel. You often feel unsafe at home, unsure and worried when the next argument might be and find school a safe place to be.



Mandy Walsh



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Child & Family Partner and Lived Experience perspective



Mandy Walsh

Family

- Could benefit from family counselling, especially important would be counselling if unsafe behaviours are happening at home.
- Charlie could benefit from counselling regarding loss and grief.
- Charlie's mum needs support regarding the abuse she is experiencing in the relationship.
- Parents could address the issue of grief through picture books around the topic etc.
- Need to be honest with the people around them (school, medical professionals etc.) regarding how the family functions i.e. violence etc.
- Need to know they are not alone and that all families have struggles (helpful when professionals point out that it is not just your family who has problems).



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Child & Family Partner and Lived Experience perspective



Mandy Walsh

School

- The family struggles could be mentioned to Charlie's teacher and school counsellor.
- Children's difficulties at home can on flow onto academic difficulties.
- Schools can help with family difficulties. It is a safe place to talk about family violence also.
- Families need to be encouraged to talk to teacher, principals etc about their struggles at home as this sort of communication is useful and can explain behaviours etc of child.
- School counsellors are spread rather thinly in many schools but be assured they will help and assist children and families.



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Q&A Session



Nicola Palfrey
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Workforce Development
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Resources and further reading

Other supporting resources associated with this webinar can be found in the Supporting Resources Tab at the bottom of the screen.

For more information about Emerging Minds, visit our website

www.emergingminds.com.au



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Thank you for participating

- Please ensure you complete the *feedback survey* before you log out.
Click the Feedback Survey tab at the top of the screen to open the survey.
- Certificates of Attendance for this webinar will be issued within four weeks.
- Each participant will be sent a link to the online resources associated with this webinar within two weeks.
- The next webinar in the Emerging Minds webinar series is titled Engaging parents with children approaching adolescence. It will be held on Wednesday, 7th November 2018.



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This webinar was co-produced by MHPN and Emerging Minds for the Emerging Minds: National Workforce Centre for Child Mental Health (NWCCMH) project. The NWCCMH is led by Emerging Minds and delivered in partnership with the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), the Australian National University (ANU), the Parenting Research Centre (PRC) and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).

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Thank You



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