

UK Council for Psychotherapy

Criteria for Mental Health Familiarisation in Child Psychotherapy Trainings (2019)

Mental Health Familiarisation is a required component of UKCP accredited trainings, this document must be read in conjunction with UKCP Standards of Education and Training (2019) The Minimum Core Curriculum: Child Psychotherapy.

UKCP recognises the evolving field in which mental health services are delivered to children, adolescents and their families, and the impact of socio-political forces on service provision. Accreditation with UKCP is at Masters Level or equivalent and the title of 'Psychotherapist' assumes some generic knowledge and understanding about how differing models of personhood and community understand mental wellbeing and mental illness.

College-level SETs will have specific criteria on how to approach curriculum content in this area. This must include the opportunity to achieve practical experience which might include multi-disciplinary and systemic practice around the child within the context of the trainee's clinical placement, but must not include clinical practice hours. This must involve a cumulative total of no less than 60 hours, in contexts where child and/ or family mental health is a factor over the period of training and can include:

- Discussions with mental health professionals such as psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, GPs etc.
- Looked After Child (LAC) reviews
- Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) meetings
- Case conferences
- Multi-agency and Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings

These hours must be evidenced and assessed against the criteria detailed below and include a range of no less than 4 case examples.

We expect that all UKCP accredited Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy trainings will embrace the following:

Awareness of Diagnosis and Treatment

This should include knowledge and awareness of:

- Diagnosis in line with DC:0-5/ICD/DSM categories (for adults and children).
- Treatment in the context of UK mental health care services including NICE guidelines.

This will also include an understanding of and experience with:

- How mental illnesses are classified.
- How to recognise the early signs / onset of complex, significant or enduring mental health issues.
- Differential possibilities attributable to manifest behaviors (e.g. trauma, abuse, dissociations, sensory processing, attachment, Autistic Spectrum Disorders).
- Understanding of the consequences of labelling and diagnosis for the child / parent / others both in the present and for their lives.
- The functioning of the different services in order to manage case referrals appropriately.
- The importance of the functioning of the child's environment (home, school, care context etc.) in the support and management of their difficulty.

- Consequences of parental mental, emotional or physical health on child well-being.
- Impact of minority status, diversity, sexuality and poverty on the diagnosis and management of children's mental health.
- Social, political, cultural and financially motivated trends of diagnosis.
- Impact of transition between levels of service as a result of the growth of the child.
- Role and use of medication/treatment to manage child mental health, emotional and behavioral issues.
- Extent to which the child's voice is taken into account, the role of advocacy and the impact of this on the child.

A Range of Models of Assessment

Training Organisations will ensure that students and trainees gain a critical understanding of a range of models of assessment. Models of assessment will include (but not be restricted to) learning about how the medical model understands mental wellness and mental illness.

A medical model of assessment will include as a minimum, coverage of the following in its curriculum:

- Assessment and formulation.
- The place of safeguarding and risk in assessment.
- Diagnosis and classification of mental illness.
- Collaborative care: access to appropriate services.
- Recognising complex, significant and enduring mental illness.
- Awareness of current debates around evidence based research, practice, and treatment.
- How and when to refer.

Working Within a Social Responsibility Framework

Child Psychotherapists will require an understanding of their role within a system of restoring balance and justice towards better treatment of people with exceptional needs and prevention of additional mental health distress caused by normative social expectation and exclusion.

Opportunity for trainees to develop this contextual reflexivity should include as a minimum relevant coverage of the following:

- Historically and culturally sited models of mental health, mental illness and mental health care.
- The influence of socio-economics, class, gender, disability, age, culture, religion, displacement, race and sexuality on the incidence, definition, diagnosis and treatment of mental illness and mental health.
- The intensifying impact of intersectionality (where a child/adolescent/family belongs to more than one marginalised group).
- Familiarity with the role of minority community organisations and mental health advocacy organisations and how to engage with them.
- Practices for non-discriminatory service provision.

Working Within a Wider System of Care

Child Psychotherapists will also require knowledge, understanding and experience that equips them to work within or alongside other mental health services, with clients who have extraordinary needs and with family members of mental health service users.

Trainees should therefore be introduced to the wider contexts and considerations of mental health provision, in order to develop sensitive and reflexive practice of psychotherapy appropriate to the needs of children and families who experience greater social, emotional and mental distress.

This would include understanding and appreciation of, and experience with:

- The role and impact on mental health service users and their families of diagnosis, stigma, normativity and minority experience.
- The specific impact of receiving a diagnosis.
- Different professional and personal roles in mental health care.
- The psychotherapist's role in provision of collaborative care.
- The psychotherapist's role in provision of non-discriminatory service.
- The relationships between mental health professionals, education, social care, youth, community leaders and criminal justice systems.
- The role of medication (prescribed and non-prescribed), and its impact.
- Ethical and Legal considerations pertaining to the above, including appropriate familiarity relevant current legislation pertaining to children and families