



TOOLS TO SUPPORT RELATIONAL PRACTICE IN THE CLASSROOM AND IN INTERVENTIONS

PACE, Emotion Coaching, Attunement.



Emotion Coaching to support emotional regulation

Emotion Coaching (Gottman, 1997) is an evidence-based way of responding to children when they are dysregulated. It can be helpful to create some scripts as a staff body to support staff to know how to implement an Emotion Coaching approach to respond when children are dysregulated.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFmudedDtgY>



PACE

PACE is a set of principles to help promote safety when interacting with children and young people who may have experienced trauma or who may have insecure attachments.

PACE stands for:

- Playfulness
- Acceptance
- Curiosity
- Empathy

Children and young people often tell us how they feel and what their emotions are through their behaviour. This behaviour isn't always positive.

PACE is structured to help the adult to connect with the emotional part of the child's brain. Once they feel the adult has connected, the child can stop showing you how they feel through, often, unhelpful behaviour.

With PACE, the child can start to look at themselves and let others start to see them or get closer emotionally. In short, they can start to trust again.

Playfulness

Playfulness is about creating a less intense atmosphere. You should use a light tone to your voice. The playful essence is based on the strength of the relationship being stronger than any irritations or poor behaviour. Playfulness reduces the shame of when something has gone wrong. The goal is for the children and the adults to enjoy being together.

Acceptance

Accepting the child's wishes, feelings, thoughts, urges, motives and perceptions unconditionally, and understanding that these are the reasons for different behaviours. It is accepting the inner child without judging or evaluating. Accepting their feelings and emotions but not the unwanted behaviour. Do not challenge children's feelings, even if they are about themselves, accept them with curiosity and empathy.

Curiosity

'Curiosity involves a quiet, accepting tone that conveys a simple desire to understand the child.' Dan Hughes. With curiosity, the adult is conveying their intention to understand why and to assist the child. The adult should be curious about the child's thoughts, feelings, wishes and intentions and showing the child that you are interested in what is going on for them.

Empathy

Empathy is validating and empowering. IT is stepping into the child's shoes for a moment, imagining the experiences and feeling a small portion of what they may be feeling. It is sowing the child that their feelings are important to you and that you want to be with them in hard times.

The following two excellent resources cover the PACE attitude in much more detail.

Oxfordshire Council



Cardiff and Vale University Health Board



Developing relationships through Attunement

It can sometimes be difficult to know how to begin developing a relationship with a child, particularly when their social communication behaviours appear different to those we might typically expect. The below diagram demonstrates how we can support the development of our relationships with children in our everyday interactions. This shows how we can consider where our relationship currently is with a child and how we might be able to move from the bottom layer of the pyramid to being able to guide a child on the top layer.



Connected Moments

Principles of Attunement

Connected Moments
Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)
Reassuring, encouraging and inspiring support.

Guiding & Supporting



Attuned Together



Receiving



Encouraging



Being Attentive



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Connected Moments uses Video Interaction Guidance (VIG). VIG has a very strong research base and is recommended by The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE).

