



# **Sensory Processing**

## **Building Underdeveloped Systems - Improving Sensory Processing in Traumatized Children**

### **Presented by Sarah Lloyd**

Early abuse and neglect can leave children dysregulated on a bodily as well as a psychological level. This physical dysregulation means that they may seem quite hyped up or frenetic in their activities in a way that feels different to the normal exuberance or energy of children. Their movements often lack the smooth, well-co-ordinated quality of typically developing children – they may find themselves bumping into things, tripping up or unable to do things like hold a pencil properly or use cutlery.

These children often struggle to settle into their new families and seem to keep reacting to things as if they were still in abusive situations. This usually overlaps with unresolved trauma, but it is often difficult for these children to make use of psychological therapies or become engaged in learning until they become more able to understand their bodies and tune into how they are feeling on a physical as well as a psychological level.

Sensory integration theory describes, on a neurological level, how different sorts of movement experiences taking place within a nurturing environment, build bodily awareness and functioning. These are the body's foundation systems on which emotional and social development can be built.

This training will describe a model (Building Underdeveloped Systems) for working with children with developmental trauma, focusing on bodily regulation as a starting point for work with the child, family and school. The model brings together sensory integration theory, child development, attachment and an understanding of the impact of trauma on the developing brain. We'll use this to think about the child's underdeveloped systems and think about how to empower parents and educators to rebuild these foundation systems. This model is different to working with children with sensory processing disorders in that it views these systems as underdeveloped rather than there being something wrong with the way the information is processed by the brain. By building these underdeveloped systems children can become better able to understand themselves and their bodies, regulate themselves physically and emotionally and really begin to thrive and tap into the kinds of social, emotional and cognitive opportunities school is able to offer as well as being more open to the love and care that is available in their new home.

**Day one** offers an introduction to the model. Using case examples and participants own observations, we will explore the development of the foundation systems in typically developing children and the impact of developmental trauma on this. We'll talk about how to notice what's happening for babies and children on a bodily level and how we might decide where to start to rebuild these foundation systems.

**Day two** will use more case examples to think in more depth about screening and assessing children and young people as well as giving ideas to begin to rebuild these foundation systems.

### **Suitable For**

The practical and informative training is suitable for foster and adoptive parents, teachers, social work / fostering and adoption staff and therapists.

### **About the Trainer**

Sarah Lloyd is a specialist Occupational Therapist and Play Therapist who has worked in CAMHS for over 25 years, and has a private practice offering training, therapy and consultation to children who have been looked after, their families and the network around those children. She has published a book, *'Improving Sensory Processing in Traumatized Children'*, which further explores the subject of this training day.

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019

**Time:** This is a 2 day course and each day will run from:  
10.00am – 3.00pm

**Venue:** Adoptionplus, Moulsoe Business Centre, Moulsoe, Nr. Milton Keynes,  
MK16 0FJ

**Price:** £250 + VAT for the 2 days (£300 inc VAT)  
Lunch and refreshments are included

**Booking:** For further information or to book please visit [www.adoptionplus.co.uk](http://www.adoptionplus.co.uk) or contact Alice Hollingdale on 01908 218251 or email [alice.hollingdale@adoptionplus.co.uk](mailto:alice.hollingdale@adoptionplus.co.uk)

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