BI-BOROUGH EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY CONSULTATION SERVICE NEWSLETTER | SUMMER TERM 2018-2019

City of Westminster

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

BI-BOROUGH EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY CONSULTATION SERVICE NEWSLETTER

Thinking about Child Development

Summer Term 2018-2019

Welcoming message from Dr Jeremy Monsen, Bi-Borough EPCS Principal Educational Psychologist:

Welcome to the latest newsletter

It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you our latest Service Newsletter. These have proved very popular not only with schools but with other services and parents/carers as well – thanks to the internet. This time we focus our attention on aspects of developmental psychology.

At its core educational and child psychology is about applying insights developed from developmental psychology to jointly problem solving with teachers/parents/carers to make positive differences for children/young people.

The three goals of developmental psychology are to - describe, explain, and to optimize development. To describe development, it is necessary to focus on both typical patterns of change and on individual variations in such patterns of change. Although there are typical pathways of development that most children/young people will follow, no two children are exactly alike. Educational Psychologists then seek to explain such changes in relation to normative processes and individual patterns of differences. Finally, we work in creative ways (see piece on VIG) to optimise development, and apply theories to help people in practical situations.

This edition shares some of these ideas and approaches. I hope you enjoy and find it interesting!

Many thanks, Jeremy.

If you would like to get in touch, please telephone and/or email me on **07739315819** or **jeremy.monsen@rbkc.gov.uk**

2019—2020 Traded Services

We are now online!

Our 2019-20 SLA for Tier 3 traded work in schools is available through: http://services2schools.org.uk/Services/4698

Our 2019/20 prices remain the same as 2016-2019! The EPCS has worked hard to keep its prices the same for the last three years!

The EPCS offers and provides traded EP Consultation visits to schools. The vast majority of state funded schools across the two boroughs, including Free Schools and Academies, have a Schools Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the EPCS.

The EPCS also has strong and positive relationships with schools and with other council and partner agencies, children's and adult's social care and health, as examples. The advice and support the service is able to offer is therefore very well integrated into the broader systems of support for vulnerable children and young people and those with SEN and their families. We also work to ethical and psychological principles, including supporting the right to equality of access and opportunity. EPCS work is undertaken with reference both to core corporate and professional practice standards (the Health Care Professions Council and British Psychology Society core competency standards). In this way a high quality targeted and specialist educational and child psychology service can be delivered on behalf of the two Local Authorities.

Traded Offer (Tier 3)

Examples below identify ways that our schools use their traded time:

- Pupil focused consultation, assessment, planning and review with staff and parents to develop their understanding of concerns and to generate ways forward.
- 'Drop ins' sometimes called Consultation surgeries: time to hold short consultations with individual staff on issues of concern about particular children and young people.
- Staff training and professional development: bespoke training in schools and staff development activities such as after-school INSET, work discussion groups and interventions.
- Supervision: for individuals and staff groups, e.g. ELSA's, leadership teams, teachers.
- Interventions with children and young people—either individually or in small groups, e.g. CBT, FRIENDS, Mindfulness
- Project work: including assistance with development of whole school systems and practices. Parent Workshops including, Understanding child development and the needs of children/young people with Special Educational Needs.
- Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) - An evidence based intervention through which a VIG practitioner and client (parent/carer/professional) reflect together on enhancing communication within the relationship and engaging in a process of change based on what they would like to be better or different in their relationships.

Bi-borough schools are also entitled to core statutory services uncharged

Please discuss your SLA with your link EP or a member of the EPCS Senior Management Team

In this Issue:

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

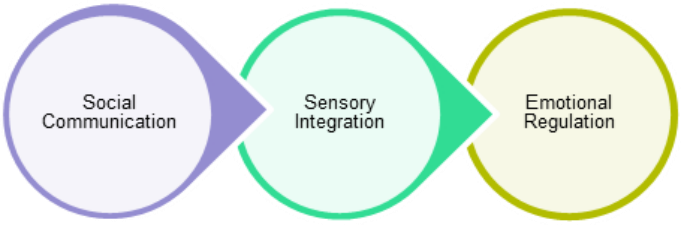
The core mission of the Bi-borough Educational Psychology Consultation Service is to contribute to raising the attainment and improving the well-being of children and young people, especially those with special educational needs and/or other barriers to their learning and development.

Autism: How can schools make a difference?

Claire Fardoulys (EP working in Bi-Borough schools)

Schools and settings which support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) often implement a range of strategies that are just as varied and unique as the children and young people themselves. While there is no 'one size fits all' approach, research from around the world has highlighted some effective ways of working with students with autism.

Three main areas of difficulty are often observed by teachers of students with autism



Dr Dan Siegel conceptualises these difficulties as manifestations of the same central issue:

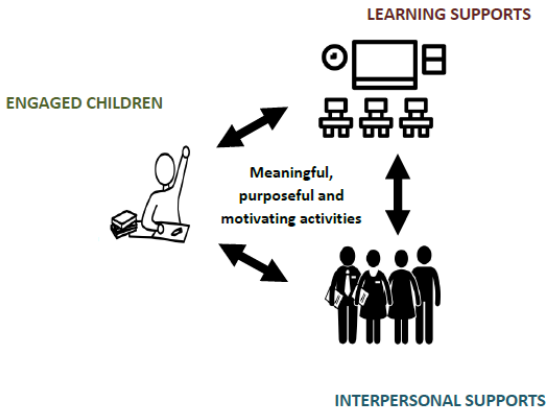
the way a person is able to integrate (that is, flexibly and adaptively incorporate) thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and logic within their environment.

Greater integration within the mind leads to greater resilience and health. For children and YP with autism, there can be an overwhelming input to the senses which causes sensory integration to be challenging. Similarly, the way social input is processed and filtered in the brain of a student who has autism can lead to an expression of behavioural strategies which may not be adaptive to the school environment, but are adaptive for the student as a way of self-soothing. This may look like stimming, repetitive behaviours, diminished attention, and poor eye contact. Without the skills to independently integrate their experiences, students with autism need adults to help them integrate these experiences.

So, what helps students organise all the incoming information from their senses so that they can manage the ebb and flow of their world? Relationships.

And the student-teacher relationship is a powerful one. By modelling a consistent, safe, and secure relationship, students with autism begin to learn that their world is predictable and safe. One way of supporting students with autism in the classroom is to look beyond the behaviour and ask, "What are these behaviours telling me? What needs to be different? How can I support this student in this moment?" By observing behaviours through this lens, we can help students organise the overwhelming input, and allow them to feel integrated in the school environment.

Schools and teachers also have an opportunity to adapt the learning environment to meet the needs of students with autism. Students with autism need the classroom to provide them with what they cannot easily access on their own: structure, predictability, communication supports, social supports, and emotion regulation (Brown & Brown, 2015). Hughes and Henderson (2017) suggest that 'The more structured an environment is, the less likely a student is to experience the withdrawals, shutdowns, and meltdowns so commonly experienced.'



These environmental and relational supports help students with autism to feel integrated within themselves, their school environment, and school relationships. All settings have the potential to create safe, predictable, and supportive learning environments which may change the lives of students with autism.

If you would like more advice and support around best practice for students with autism, please speak to your link EP.

Continuing Professional Development: some feedback following our events this term -

Separation, Loss & Divorce

"I was reassured to hear that we're doing the right kind of things"
"The knowledge shared and way the course was delivered was particularly useful"
"An informative and engaging evening"

Resilience, Recovery & Hope

"There were actionable things for teachers to take away"
"Brilliant to hear what amazing work is going on in schools"
"Uplifting and encouraging though tackling a hard subject"
"Particularly useful to hear how my colleagues worked together to bring hope back into the lives of children"

The Importance of Sleep in Child Development

Alexander Haswell (EP working in WCC schools)

Evidence shows that night time sleep is *just as important as healthy eating and exercise for children to develop*. Poor sleep is linked with behavioural issues; irritability & increased anxiety; hyperactivity, concentration & memory issues, as well as health conditions such as obesity, a lowered immune system, diabetes, etc.

When we are sleeping, our brains are very active. During sleep the information we have learned gets selected, consolidated and stored in the long-term memory, so it can be put to good use at a later date. In order to learn, a child has to be awake enough to be focused and attentive in the first place and then well-rested to recall those memories and use them to solve problems in future. Poor sleep can affect every stage of the learning process.

Average Sleep Needs by Age

Newborn - 2 months old	12 - 18 hrs
3 months - 1 year old	14 - 15 hrs
1 - 3 years old	12 - 14 hrs
3 - 5 years old	11 - 13 hrs
5 - 12 years old	10 - 11 hrs
12 - 18 years old	8.5 - 10 hrs
Adults	7.5 - 9 hrs

A bedtime routine is the best way to ensure that a child gets enough sleep. Encourage parents to devise a routine that lasts 30-40 minutes and includes a bath and the chance to read a story. If a child is going to have a slightly later bedtime at the weekend or holidays, this should only be changed by only around an hour. A child should also not be exposed to screen-time (television, smartphones, tablets, etc.) for an hour before bedtime, as the light from such screens is thought to suppress melatonin, an important hormone that helps regulate our sleep.

The EPCS has delivered many workshops in schools for staff, as well as parents, on the importance of sleep in child development. Contact your link EP if you would be interested in accessing some similar training.

Video Interaction Guidance

Dr Jasmine Spence (EP working in RBKC & WCC schools)

What is VIG?

Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) involves capturing what is going well on video to help build communication and interaction and support relationships. It is a strength based approach to working with parents, carers and teaching staff. An accredited VIG practitioner will take on the role of a VIG 'guider', guiding the client through the process of self-reflection, rather than providing direct instruction. We currently have 5 accredited VIG practitioners and several trainee practitioners in the Bi-Borough team who can carry out VIG interventions.

There is a growing body of evidence highlighting the effectiveness of VIG in improving relationships in many different contexts. VIG has been found to increase the quality of TA- child interactions and has been linked to improved TA confidence in supporting children in the classroom and in an individual support context, (Hayes et al, 2011). VIG is also proved to be particularly effective in improving one to one communication with children who have learning needs by supporting attuned interactions and promoting the development of effective learning characteristics, (Trevarthan, 2014).

How will it help me?

- It will highlight the strengths that you already have; you may not even be aware of them.
- It will help you to build on these strengths.
- When you see yourself communicating well it can be a very motivating experience.
- The VIG process will provide you with an understanding of communication that can be used in any interaction.

What do people say about VIG?

"The film helped me to see we were attuned"
"I didn't realise that I did so much"
"It helped build up my confidence in myself"
"So much of communication is non-verbal you pick this up on screen"
"It was hard at first seeing myself on screen, but it really helped"

AVIG uk
Association for Video Interaction Guidance uk

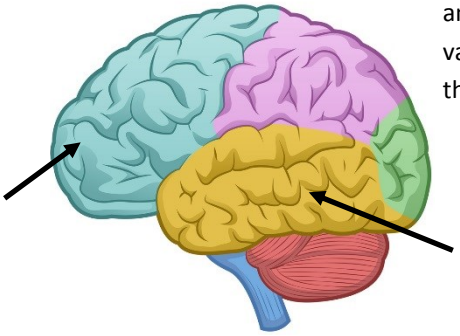
Brain Changes during Adolescence: Implications for Pupil Learning & Behaviour

Steph McLaughlin, Rose McGeown & Louisa Reynolds (EPs in training)

During adolescence, dramatic changes happen both structurally and functionally in the brain, in the transition from childhood to adulthood. Structurally, the brain undergoes a process called **'pruning'** which involves the non-essential neural connections in the brain being removed, allowing the most helpful and adaptive functions to remain. Whilst this pruning process takes place, other parts of the brain continue to rapidly develop including the prefrontal cortex (PFC), which sits at the front of the brain.

The PFC is responsible for sophisticated higher-order cognitive processes such as self-control, planning, inhibition, problem-solving, multi-tasking, social interaction, self-awareness and decision making. It is important to remember that although culturally, we begin to see adolescents as increasingly similar to adults, cognitively, these higher-order skills are still developing. This explains why secondary school pupils may find it difficult to inhibit inappropriate responses in the classroom or struggle to make decisions.

Most activity in a fully developed, adult brain happens in the frontal lobe ***(responsible for thinking, reasoning, planning)***



Most activity in the teenage brain happens in the centre ***(responsible for pleasure, reward, explorative urge)***

Secondary school pupils are also much more likely to engage in increased risk taking behaviours, especially if their peers are around, due to further changes in their brains, (Chein, Albert, O'Brien, Uckert & Steinberg, 2011). The brain is becoming increasing socially orientated and highly susceptible to social influence. Adolescents will seek social approval from their peers and are more likely to listen to their peers than their teachers and parents.

Brain development also plays a significant role in sleep patterns. Adolescents' sleep patterns differ from those of children and adults. Teens are often more difficult to wake up in the morning, tired during the day, and wakeful at night. This is because the brain's biological clock shifts forward. Similarly, the release of chemicals which help us to sleep (melatonin), start later at night and cease later in the morning, (McNeely, & Blanchard, 2010). **This means teenagers actually need more sleep than children.**

In current times, many teenagers experience sleep deprivation, given the demands of early starts for school and the increase in the use of technology and social media at night time. It is not uncommon for teenagers to be functioning on only 6 hours sleep per night, when research shows they need an optimum of 10, (Colrain & Baker, 2011). This lack of sleep can lead to uncontrolled napping, irritability, lack of motivation and inability to complete tasks. This means that sleep deprivation has a significant impact on teenager's ability to learn, their academic performance, attitude towards school, and overall well-being.

The EPCS works with schools and families to promote understanding around adolescent behaviours and development. One example of work that has been carried out is a parent workshop in a Westminster secondary school which focused on parenting through adolescence. This workshop explored what it means to be an adolescent today, developmental changes in adolescence (physical, cognitive, social and emotional), parenting styles and the impact of sleep in adolescent development. If you are interested in similar work, please discuss with your link EP.

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TEAM NEWS

This term, colleagues accessed training and CPD in a number of areas, including; gender diversity, dyslexia, child and adolescent mental health. Ask your Link EP if you would like to hear more.

We hope you are all enjoying the summer term!