

Emerging Minds Webinar Series

Infant and Child Mental Health

**Emerging
Minds.**

National Workforce
Centre for Child
Mental Health



Webinar 1

Working with parents and children affected by intergenerational disadvantage

7:15 pm to 8:30 pm
Wednesday, 22nd August 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.

We recognise that intergenerational disadvantage is experienced by Aboriginal families in a context of past and present injustices and related losses including the deaths of friends and loved-ones before their time and ongoing experiences of racism and exclusion.



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Webinar series

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

Future webinars:

- Engaging with parents and infants in the first thousand days (17 Sept)
- Engaging parents with school-aged children
- Engaging parents with children approaching adolescence
- Supporting children's mental health after trauma
- Engaging with children and parents with complex needs – a systems approach



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Tonight's panel



Mr Chris Dolman
Social Worker



Ms Nicola Palfrey
Psychologist



Dr Nick Kowalenko
Psychiatrist



Facilitator: Mr Dan Moss
Workforce Development
Manager



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Ground rules

To help ensure everyone has the opportunity to gain the most from the 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. If you still require 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 intergenerational disadvantage, the webinar will provide participants with the opportunity to:

- recognise risk factors and early intervention opportunities for children affected by intergenerational disadvantage
- outline strategies to engage parents in ways that are both child-focused and respectful to improve child mental health
- identify ways to have positive conversations with parents and children about children's mental health.



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Social work / counselling perspective



Mr Chris Dolman

- Circumstances surrounding Maxine readily reflect intergenerational disadvantage.
- Problems can each have significant impacts on
 - material conditions of family life
 - infant and child development, social & emotional wellbeing.



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Social work / counselling perspective



Mr Chris Dolman

Effects on families of intergenerational disadvantage

- Families can be drawn into a sense of feeling...
 - Trapped in their current circumstances
 - Limited in what's possible for their lives
 - Holding little hope and resigned to their predicament
 - Vulnerable to whatever comes their way.



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Social work / counselling perspective



Mr Chris Dolman

Effects on families of intergenerational disadvantage

- Contribute to a diminished sense of personal agency
- Contexts can draw parents away from their better judgement
 - Ripples into the everyday lives of children



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Social work / counselling perspective



Mr Chris Dolman

Effects on practitioners working from an 'intergenerational disadvantage' lens

- Helpful in foregrounding social inequality
- Potentially unhelpful
 - Small step from 'intergenerational disadvantage' to 'intergenerational pathology'
 - Position families as 'complex', 'vulnerable' and 'difficult'
 - Overwhelmed, uncertain about proceeding
 - Drawn away from working collaboratively
 - Apply unhelpful limits to families



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Social work / counselling perspective



Mr Chris Dolman

Practice intentions

- Create a context for Maxine to speak about
 - The problems that are concerning her
 - The broader context and circumstances surrounding her
 - What she might be hoping for from our work together
- Listening for entry points and being curious about
 - How Maxine has been responding to these concerns
 - What's important to Maxine, values, hopes
 - What these responses have made possible



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Psychologist perspective



Ms Nicola Palfrey

Where to start?

- With the relationship:
 - Nothing will be achieved without a sense of trust and experience of a lack of judgement
 - Willingness to hear Maxine's experiences of services in the past
 - Expressed desire to work alongside her in the best interests of her and her children
 - Parallel process in action



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Psychologist perspective



Ms Nicola Palfrey

Considerations

- Who is the client?
 - Maxine? Her children? The family?
- People need to be understood in their context:
 - Mother, daughter, partner, parent
 - We all bring slightly different characteristics to these roles
 - Exploring these can identify under-utilised strengths



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Psychologist perspective



Ms Nicola Palfrey

What to prioritise?

- Maxine's priorities: future focused/hopeful
 - Can use 'magic question'
- Identify skills required to move toward goals:
 - What already exists and needs bolstering?
 - What needs further scaffolding?



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Psychologist perspective



Ms Nicola Palfrey

What to prioritise? *continued*

- Can start with pragmatics:
 - How to prioritise and plan – concrete outcomes
 - What is assertiveness – use examples client has provided to demonstrate their competency
 - How to manage symptoms of anxiety – use interests of client to make examples relevant and encourage sharing of knowledge to boost confidence/sense of efficacy



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Psychologist perspective



Ms Nicola Palfrey

When to bring focus to the children?

- Interwoven throughout the process
- Pacing is important, but careful not to collude in minimising
- Be explicit about your belief in Maxine's desire to be the best parent she can be
- Emphasis the skills-based nature of parenting
- 'Hold and push'
- Expect capacity



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Psychologist perspective



Ms Nicola Palfrey

Utilise frameworks

- Attachment-based frameworks such as Circle of Security™ can be extremely useful
- Start simple and build on concepts
- Experience of competency critical
- You are the 'hands' for Maxine
- Set and review goals – need sense of achievement



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Psychiatrist perspective



Dr Nick Kowalenko

Identify strengths in current presentation after recent crisis

- Fled from Troy's violence to safety. *How else is she keeping her family safe?*
- She is keeping her family together, including her mum
- She is consoled by "kids haven't spent a day in foster care"
- Acknowledge crisis, and relative stabilisation she has achieved
- She identifies some challenges; her concerns about her children



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Psychiatrist perspective



Dr Nick Kowalenko

Kids' risk factors

- Family violence (including Jai's behaviour)
- Maxine's disempowerment, PTSD(?) and vicarious impact(?)
- Maxine's low mood anxiety and her social isolation
- Lucy's speech delay & Mabel's care
- Social isolation, social support and social work after domestic violence?
- Maternal grandmother drug and alcohol abuse in household
- Troy's parenting



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Psychiatrist perspective



Dr Nick Kowalenko

Engage for early intervention

- Map others engagement (social worker) and potential (friends, peers, schools, GP, family and parenting support)
- Trauma informed care, her agency and it is OK to ask for help
- She can best outline her children's needs. How is each responding?
- What are relationships like at home?
- Changes in each child - their responses? Do you have concerns?
- Does depression get in the way of your aims?
- Children have been through a lot; what have you done that kept them strong?



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Psychiatrist perspective



Dr Nick Kowalenko

Crisis, recovery and current threats?

- Current crisis (safety from current threats?)
- Previous foster placement and abuse and reunification (with mum)
- Her own experience of depression, mood, amotivation, withdrawal, guilt, fatigue, tearful (hypervigilance, sleep, flash-backs, irritability)
- Role for referral?
- "On her back" to "got your back covered"



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Q&A Session



Mr Chris Dolman
Social Worker



Ms Nicola Palfrey
Psychologist



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Psychiatrist



Facilitator: Mr Dan Moss
Workforce Development
Manager



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Resources and further reading

Other supporting resources associated with this webinar are 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.



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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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