

AiMH UK NATIONAL ONLINE CONFERENCE

Thursday 21st November 9.00am - 3.30pm

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Creating Emotionally Safe and Responsive Parent Baby Relationships: 'Supporting Parental Mentalisation & Sensitivity in the First 1001 Days'

Join us for a ground-breaking conference focused on innovative approaches to enhancing parental sensitivity to babies.

The event features expert talks and workshops from leading psychologists, psychotherapists and practitioners, including **Michelle Sleed, Gerry Byrne and Julia Manning-Morton**. Highlights include a workshop on using mentalising approaches to foster safe parent-child relationships and presentations from frontline practitioners, offering moving case studies and inspiring examples to enhance professional practice.

This event will develop your knowledge and skills in:

- Helping parents recognise and respond to their baby's communications
- Promoting sensitive parent-baby interactions
- Increasing parent-infant connection
- Fine-tuning your own sensitivity as a practitioner

TICKETS

Members of AiMH UK: £35
Non-members: £55

JOIN AIMH UK

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CPD Hours - 5

Add to your IMH Portfolio on the AiMH UK IMH CPD Programme
<https://imhcpd.aimh.uk>

REGISTER TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE HERE

www.aimh.uk



9:00am Jane Barlow, President of AiMH UK
Welcome

Morning: Supporting Mentalisation in the First 1001 Days

9:10am Michelle Slead, Senior Research Psychologist at the Anna Freud Centre
How to be a Mentalising Practitioner

10:10am Joanne Greenway, Therapeutic Family Time & Intervention Service Manager – The Daisy Programme
Promoting Mentalisation Skills in Parents from Pregnancy to Early Infancy

11:10am Break

11:25am Gerry Byrne, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist (Tavistock), The Lighthouse Parenting Programme
Workshop: Using Mentalisation to Foster Safe Relationships between Parents and their Young Children

12:55pm – 1:30pm Lunch

Afternoon: Supporting Sensitive Responses to Babies

1:30pm Gwent Parent Infant Mental Health Service
Helping Parents Tune Into and Respond to Pre-verbal Babies

2:30pm Julia Manning-Morton, Early Childhood Consultant, Trainer & Group Facilitator and Karolina Joiner, Pikler UK
The Pikler Approach in Practice: Attentive & Respectful Communication with Babies

3.30pm Close

CPD HOURS 5 - All attendees will be sent a certificate.
Add to your IMH Portfolio on the AiMH UK IMH CPD Programme
<https://imhcpd.aimh.uk>

The AiMH UK Online National Conference is dedicated to professionals who are passionate about supporting parent-baby relationships. As proud members of the 1001 Days Movement, we are excited to present this conference. Stay informed with the latest research and gain insights from leading UK programs focused on strengthening parent-baby bonds. Join a workshop designed to enhance mentalisation skills in parents. Engage with presentations from frontline practitioners, featuring impactful case studies and inspiring examples to enrich your professional practice.

This event will enhance your knowledge and skills to:

- Help parents recognise and respond to their baby's communications
- Promote sensitive parent-baby interactions
- Increase parent-infant connection
- Fine-tune your own sensitivity as a practitioner

The morning of the conference focuses on mentalisation, as having a parent or carer who can mentalise is foundational to infant well-being and future mental health.

Mentalisation is the two-fold ability firstly, to understand our own minds and secondly, the ability to enter another's mind and to respond with understanding. Babies whose caregivers can mentalise (both for themselves and for their baby) are soothed and grow to understand their feelings and experiences and ultimately, have an accurate sense of themselves as a person.

Michelle Sleed, senior research psychologist at the Anna Freud Centre, will present current findings on understanding and assessing parental mentalising. Michelle's research lens will also illuminate the essence of being a mentalising practitioner!

Joanne Greenway and Gerry Byrne, who both lead programmes which support parental mentalising will share with us the sensitive, practical and applicable approaches that practitioners can take to support parental mentalisation. We are delighted that the morning will end with a workshop led by Gerry Byrne on how to support parents to develop mentalising skills.

The afternoon of the conference focuses on how practitioners can support reciprocal and attentive parent baby interactions. Practitioners who work on the ground will share creative and sensitive approaches to working with babies and parents. We are delighted that the **Gwent Parent Infant Mental Health Service** will be sharing some of their work – including the use of music therapy to enhance parent-baby connections - and that the conference will be bringing the **Pikler approach** to a wider audience. Originating in Hungary and widely used throughout Europe – the baby-led nature of the approach means its principles translate seamlessly for supporting dyadic work with parents and infants.

Join us at our annual National Conference and leave inspired and equipped with fresh ideas to enhance your practice!

Michelle Slead – How to be a Mentalising Practitioner

Michelle will present a review of the current research on parental mentalisation and will link this research to practice to demonstrate how we can understand and assess parental capacity for mentalising. Michelle will also present recent findings on practitioner mentalisation: for example, what triggers make a practitioner lose their mentalising capacity and jump to quick judgments; the connection between practitioner capacity for mentalising and recognising risk to infants; the importance of recognising pre-mentalising modes in parents (the inability to hold their baby's mental states in mind or malevolent attributions to the baby).

Michelle's talk will help practitioners to:

- Take in the latest research on parental mentalising
- Understand how they can develop their own capacity for mentalising
- Use their mentalising capacity to recognise risk to infants

Joanne Greenway – The Daisy Programme: Promoting Mentalisation Skills in Parents from Pregnancy to Early Infancy.

Joanne will describe the sensitive work of the Daisy Programme which is a pre-birth and early infancy programme which supports parents whose babies are on the edge of being taken into care. The programme aims to promote positive parent-infant relationships and to prevent the need for parent-infant separation and care-proceedings by providing intensive attachment and mentalisation-based support to vulnerable parents as they transition to parenthood.

Joanne will demonstrate how parents with traumatic early histories are helped to understand their own story with compassion, to understand their previous harmful responses to children who were taken into care and how they are then prepared and equipped to be sensitively responsive to their babies when they are born.

Whilst the Daisy Programme was piloted for women with babies on the edge of being taken into care, its principles are relevant to work with any parents who may be struggling with their relationship with their baby.

Joanne will describe the Daisy programme's 'Mentalise & Attach Pathway' and will provide practical tools for professionals to:

- Help parents to look back and make sense of their own narrative, so that they are better equipped to make thoughtful responses to their baby.
- Help parents identify trigger points that have led them to make unsafe choices for themselves, their baby and any other children.

Gerry Byrne – The Lighthouse Parenting Programme – Fostering Parental Curiosity and Safe Relating between Parents and their Young Children.

The Lighthouse Parenting Programme aims to create safe parenting experiences for babies by enhancing parental mentalising. Its strength lies in engaging hard to reach parents, who typically do not benefit from parenting programmes.

The Lighthouse Parenting Programme is designed to foster in parents an active curiosity about their baby or child's inner world and a readiness in parents to reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, and reactions. It supports parents to make sense of misunderstandings in their relationship with their young children, including misunderstandings that arise from unresolved difficulties in the parent's own attachment history. It equips parents to inhibit harmful responses in those moments of misunderstanding and to repair ruptures arising from these misunderstandings in their relationship with their child. The Lighthouse Programme has an evidence base including a randomly controlled trial.

Lighthouses have traditionally warned sailors of hazards, helped establish their position, and served as a beacon for navigational aid, guiding them to their destination. In the same way, the Lighthouse Programme serves to warn parents of hazards in relating to their child, helps to establish their position as an emotionally receptive and responsive parent and serves as a beacon, guiding parents to the safe harbour of healthy parent-child relating. <http://lighthouseparenting.net>

Gerry will use video case examples from the Lighthouse Parenting Programme and participant discussion to help professionals to:

- Foster parental curiosity about their child's experiences
- Support parents to inhibit angry responses towards their young child
- Help parents to relate to their child in an emotionally healthy way

Gerry will also bring the morning full circle and guide us as to how we can put into practice the essence of Michelle Sled's research findings.

Gwent Parent Infant Mental Health Service: Helping Parents Tune Into and Respond to Pre-Verbal Babies

This session aims to deepen the understanding and practical approaches for working with pre-verbal infants, particularly focusing on fostering strong parent-baby connections. The Gwent Parent Infant Mental Health Service is dedicated to supporting the mental health of both parents and infants by promoting secure attachments and emotional responsiveness. (speakers Orion Owen & Belinda Lyon)

Orion Owen - Bridging Theory and Practice:

Orion will explore the critical intersection of theory and practice in the field of infant mental health. Emphasizing the need for a robust theoretical foundation, Orion will discuss how understanding infant development, attachment, and early relationship dynamics can inform more effective interventions with pre-verbal babies.

The session will highlight how these theoretical principles are applied within the Gwent Parent Infant Service to encourage and nurture closer bonds between parents and their infants. This understanding is crucial for practitioners who aim to support healthy emotional and psychological development during this critical early stage of life.

Belinda Lydon - Dyadic Therapeutic Work & Music Therapy:

Belinda will share moving case-work demonstrating dyadic therapeutic work in practice.

Belinda will also showcase the innovative use of music therapy in promoting parental sensitivity, attunement, and responsiveness. Music therapy has been shown to be an effective tool in creating a calm and engaging environment that helps parents tune into their baby's needs and emotional cues. This approach not only strengthens the parent-child bond but also supports the infant's emotional and social development.

Julia Manning-Morton and Karolina Joiner

The Pikler Approach in Practice: Attentive & Respectful Communication with Babies

The Pikler approach promotes close and trusting relationships between infants, young children and their carers. Julia and Karolina will focus on the following tenets of the Pikler approach, presenting video material of the Pikler approach in action and giving attendees key take-aways to support positive relational and care experiences for babies:

- **Relational Responsiveness:** The Pikler approach prioritizes caring for infants in a manner that is deeply responsive and attuned to their individual needs. This involves engaging in co-operative dialogues during care routines, where the child feels secure, recognized, and valued.
- **Respectful Care and Free Movement:** A central tenet of the Pikler approach is the emphasis on respectful care, which includes allowing natural motor development through free movement and encouraging autonomous play. This supports the child's growth and development in a way that honors their pace and individuality.
- **Observation in Practice:** The role of observation is crucial in the Pikler approach. Caregivers are encouraged to observe children closely, using these insights to tailor their interactions and support each baby's unique developmental journey.



Dr. Michelle Sleed is a Senior Research Fellow in the Child Attachment Psychological Therapies Research Unit (ChAPTRe) and Deputy Programme Director of the Doctorate in Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy at the Anna Freud Centre/ University College London. Her research is focused on evaluating preventative interventions for families, and particularly the role of parental mentalizing as a mechanism of change. She has conducted randomised controlled trials of psychoanalytic and mentalisation-based treatments for families experiencing complex difficulties, including interventions for parents in prison, parents with perinatal psychiatric difficulties, and families with child welfare involvement due to potential maltreatment concerns.

Dr. Sleed is a trainer in the Reflective Functioning coding system for the Parent Development Interview, and has used the measure extensively in evaluations and therapy process research. Her research has also investigated and addressed issues of measurement of parental mentalization, particularly pre-mentalizing modes, in the assessment of relational trauma within the parent-child relationship.



Joanne Greenway is currently a therapeutic family time and intervention service manager within children's services, Walsall & designer of the DAISY programme, which is an intensive attachment based perinatal programme for parents at risk of infant removal. The DAISY programme is underpinned by AMBIT (adaptive mentalisation based integrated treatment) and the DMM (Dynamic maturational model of attachment)

Joanne is also an AMBIT trainer within her local authority and offers training to practitioners that are working with parents that have experienced trauma & are open to social care.

Joanne developed the Daisy Programme Service and led the pilot of the Daisy Programme, which had positive outcomes in helping mothers who had previously had children removed to have healthy relationships with their babies.



Gerry Byrne has worked with children and families for over 30 years. His expertise is in parent-child relationships, attachment, and trauma. Gerry's passion is Mentalization-Based Treatment (MBT).

He trains and supervises MBT therapists in the UK, Ireland, Australia, and Germany. Gerry developed the Lighthouse Parent Programme; an innovative application of MBT, designed especially for parents, to benefit families.

Gerry is a Consultant Nurse, and a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist. He is the Head of Attachment and Perinatal Services in for Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, which include four specialist services for families in the UK: Infant Parent Perinatal Service (Oxfordshire); ReConnect (Buckinghamshire); Family Assessment and Safeguarding Service (Oxfordshire); Family Assessment and Safeguarding Service (Wiltshire & BaNES).

Gerry is a tutor for Psychoanalytic Observational Studies Masters programme at the Tavistock Institute, and a lecturer for the Clinical Psychology Doctoral programme at the University of Oxford.

**Orion Owen**

PhD RN RM SCPPHN-HV Trainee
Psychotherapist

Orion is a specialist parent-infant mental health practitioner, working within an NHS parent-infant relationship team, having previously worked as a midwife and health visitor. She delivers 1:1 therapy and group interventions for parents and infants referred to her service, as well as providing consultation, support and training for multidisciplinary professionals involved with infants and their families.

Orion is currently in the final stages as a trainee psychotherapist (UCKP registered) and, for the last 25 years has worked for a mental health charity providing group-based interventions and advocacy for adults suffering anxiety and co-morbid disorders. In 2010, Orion gained a research PhD investigating maternal postnatal mood from a normative perspective and currently serves as AiMH UK Director of Education & CPD.

**Belinda Lydon**

Is a HCPC-registered Music Therapist based in Neath, South Wales, with 16 years of experience working across the lifespan in adult mental health and with children with autism and learning disabilities. After completing her Music degree at the University of Bristol, she earned her Master's in Music Therapy from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London in 2009. Since then, she has worked in NHS mental health services in London and various educational and community settings.

Currently, Belinda works in the Gwent Parent-Infant Mental Health Service (G-PIMHS), using her music therapy skills to help mothers and babies connect through dyadic and group work. She also offers consultation, supervision, and reflective practice to early years workers. Passionate about introducing music early, Belinda believes it's never too early for parents to engage their little ones through singing. Alongside her clinical work, she has participated in international research projects, presented papers at conferences, and works as a supervisor to other Arts Therapists and trainees. Belinda is currently nearing the completion of her training as a Parent-Infant Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist (UKCP) at the School of Infant Mental Health.





Karolina Joiner

Karolina has been studying and working with young children and parents in different capacities in the UK for over 14 years and has been a parent and a carer of a child/adult with disabilities for over 28 years.

Karolina has set up and run a number of settings, including bilingual and outdoor parent and child groups, founded and managed her own outdoor nursery setting for over 7 years and has been involved in working with and studying the Pikler approach for over 12 years.

Karolina is currently in the final stages of achieving Pikler Pedagogue status through Pikler-Loczy Institute Budapest and a member of Pikler UK committee since 2018. She has presented a number of workshops for Pikler UK, presented at conferences in the UK and the Czech Republic on outdoor, age-appropriate and respectful childcare, and most recently as a member of Pikler UK for the Nursery World Conference in 2023.

Karolina is also currently studying a full time Psychology degree at Open University with a focus on child development and child psychology. She has a keen interest in investigating how the extensive research and understanding of the needs of babies and children developed by Dr Pikler and her colleagues can be applied in the care and psychological support work of young children and their families and caregivers in the UK and further afield.



Julia Manning-Morton

Is an independent early years consultant, trainer and group facilitator. She is secretary to the Pikler (UK) committee and is in the final stages of becoming a Pikler pedagogue.

Julia's career in early childhood care and education spans 40 years and diverse roles as a practitioner and leader in a range of settings and as a university lecturer. She has delivered training and conference presentations nationally and internationally and is the author of several articles and books.

Julia's teaching, research and writing focuses on practices that support the well-being of children from birth to three and on enabling, empowering and enthusing early years practitioners to make positive contributions to the lives of babies, young children and their families. Her doctoral studies focus on physical care interactions between educators and babies and toddlers.



A photograph of a baby being held by a woman. The baby is wearing a light blue onesie and is looking down at the woman with a joyful expression. The woman is looking up at the baby. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting with a white curtain and a green plant. A large, semi-transparent teal triangle is overlaid on the bottom right of the image, containing the text for the membership.

AIMH UK MEMBERSHIP

THE UK'S LEADING MEMBERSHIP
ORGANISATION FOR ALL INFANT
MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS –
SUPPORTING YOUR WORK IN INFANT
MENTAL HEALTH

ABOUT US



Our mission is to promote understanding about infant mental health (IMH) and its importance, and to support the continuing professional development of all practitioners, early years workers, educators and students working to improve outcomes for parents, babies and toddlers.

AiMH UK, which was founded in 1996 and is an affiliate of the World Association for infant mental health (WAIMH), is a not-for-profit organisation and our primary function is to contribute to the raising of standards of IMH practice.

WHAT WE DO

- Raise awareness of the importance of Infant Mental Health for the child's future development
- Bring together practitioners working to promote the well-being of infants and toddlers in local AiMH UK hubs
- Provide CPD training events and conferences, delivered by experts in the field of infant mental health to update professional practice
- Provide practitioners with access to a range of resources that will improve their practice including the AiMH UK Best Practice Guides, the IJPE Journal, recommended IMH Books, articles and research papers.



Cited in the Family Hubs and Start for Life (SfL) Programme Guidance (2022)

THE AIMH UK IMH CPD PROGRAMME

Designed to enable you to map your skills, knowledge and practice experience against the UK national Infant Mental Health Competency Framework (IMHCF), to build your IMH Portfolio, and gain entry to the Infant Mental Health Recognition Register (IMHRR)



INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL

£65

AiMH UK Membership and access to the IMH CPD Programme

EARLY YEARS WORKER

£35

with a Level 2 or Level 3 childcare qualification/Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce/Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years workforce and the CACHE Diploma for Nursery Nurses

STUDENT

£30

Evidence of your University / College, course, and tutor must be provided to admin@aimh.uk

ORGANISATIONAL / TEAM MEMBERSHIP PACKAGES AVAILABLE

We offer several packages for your team / organisations to join AiMH UK. From a basic membership to a Bespoke IMH CPD package with access to events, support for building your teams IMH Portfolio and access to the IMH Recognition Register upon successful completion of the IMH CPD programme.

all valid for 1 year

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: ADMIN@AIMH.UK



<https://aimh.uk>

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MEMBERSHIP PACKAGES FOR TEAMS / CENTRES & ORGANISATIONS

BASIC PACKAGE

- AiMH UK Membership – giving access to member only resources on the Mighty Networks membership portal (see page 3)

£50

DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE

- AiMH UK Membership (page 3)
- Access to the IMH CPD Programme
- Review & Rating of Portfolio
- Registration on the Infant Mental Health Recognition Register (IMHRR) for 3 years

£125

BEST PRACTICE PACKAGE

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- IMH CPD Support – Quarterly workshops

£225

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- Access to the IMH CPD Programme
- Review & Rating of Portfolio
- Registration on the Infant Mental Health Recognition Register (IMHRR) for 3 years
- IMH CPD Support – Quarterly workshops
- All AiMH UK Conferences*

£355

All packages valid for 1 year

Prices per person: AiMH UK membership discounted for organisations / centres of 5 or more practitioners

*Includes AiMH UK Spring Workshop, AiMH UK IMHAW conference, AiMH UK National Conference

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: [INFO@AIMH.UK](mailto:info@aimh.uk)



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