

# Barnet Virtual School Carer Newsletter

Autumn 2022

Welcome to the Autumn 2022 edition of the Barnet Virtual School Carer Newsletter. We hope you had a good Summer break and the return to school has gone smoothly.

## FOSTER CARER TRAINING THIS TERM

### Supporting children & young people with their emotions

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 10.00am – 11.15am

Being able to manage emotions plays a key part in every child or young person's well-being and development. This workshop will share some top tips to support children and young people with their emotions and emotional regulation.



### Supporting young people through their GCSE studies

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 10.00- 11.15am

An opportunity to explore practical ways you can support young people during their GCSE studies, including how to support their wellbeing and reduce anxiety.

#### How to book your place

Contact Barnet Virtual School team: [barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk)

You will be given a *Certificate of Attendance* for each workshop that you attend.



### Other training options

We also have a range of training units you can access online. Options include:

ADHD  
Autism  
Child Sexual Exploitation  
Caring for a Child who has been Sexually Abused  
Children and Young People Who Run Away or Go Missing  
County Lines  
Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia  
Emotion Coaching  
Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder  
Fostering Asylum Seeking and Refugee  
Harmful Sexual Behaviours  
Introduction to Positive Behaviour Support  
Online Safety  
Promoting the Achievement of Looked after Children in Education  
Self-harming Behaviours Social Media  
Supporting the Mental Health Needs of Looked After Children  
The Impact of Domestic Violence and Abuse on Children  
The Impact of Trauma on Sensory Processing  
Trauma and the impact on Brain Development

If you would like to do any of these, please email: [barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk) stating which course you would like to do and we will set up access for you.

## Supporting change

The start of a new school year can evoke a range of emotions in ourselves and our young people, including excitement, curiosity, worries, sadness. Many young people may experience a range of emotions at different times during the first term at school, especially if they are going through a transition change (new school, new key stage etc). Some young people may find the changes and transitions challenging and therefore may need additional support from yourselves to help them feel safe, secure, loved and grounded.

**Emotion Coaching** is an evidenced based approach to pre-empt, or as a response to, challenging behaviour. It enables children to manage their behaviour through helping them to understand the different emotions they experience, why they occur and how to handle them.

### Emotion Coaching involves:

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Teaching children/young people about the world of emotion **'in the moment'**

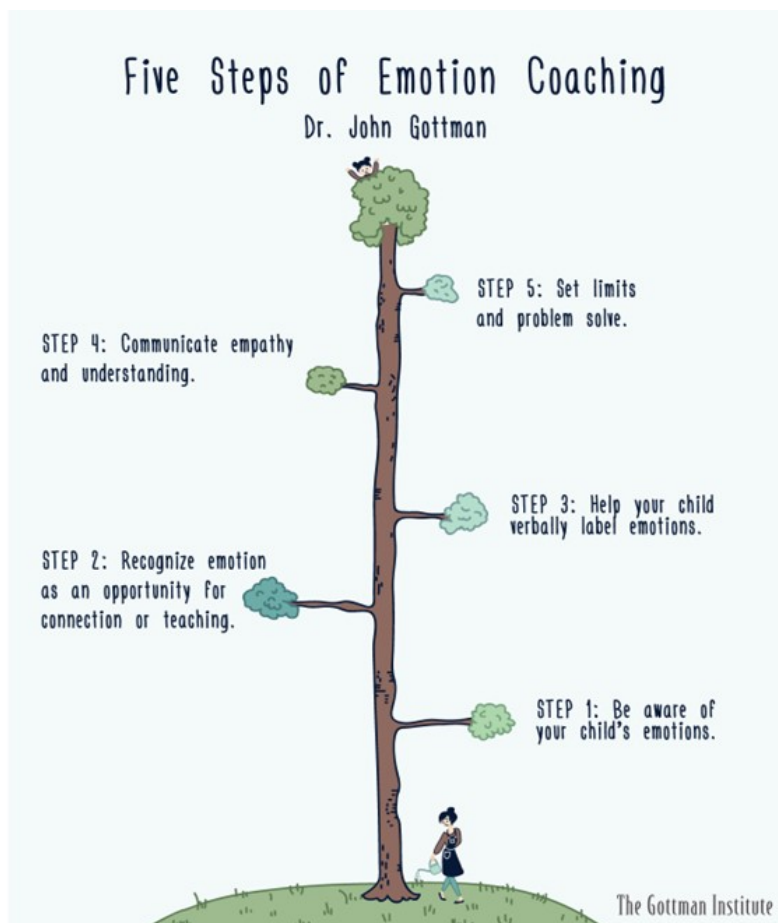
Giving children **strategies** to deal with ups and downs

Accepting **all** emotions as **normal**

Using moments of undesirable behaviour as **opportunities for teaching**

Building **trusting and respectful relationships** with children/young people

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**Empathise, validate and label.** Recognise all emotions as being natural, normal and not a matter of choice. Take on the child's perspective. Use words to reflect back the child's emotion. Affirm and empathise, allowing the child to calm down through co-regulation. Provide a narrative for the emotional experience, creating cognitive links through co-learning.

*Oh dear. That's not nice when someone breaks your Lego. That must be really disappointing when you've worked hard at something then someone else breaks it. It's OK to feel cross about that. I would too.*

*Mmm. I wonder if you're worried about getting it wrong. It's normal to feel a bit anxious when you're learning something new. Learning new things can feel hard sometimes.*

## Supporting change contd

**Set limits on behaviour.** First, establish rapport. Model how to regulate and do this with the child and connect. E.g. eye contact, arms open, sympathetic body language, tone of voice. The adult should set the emotional tone. Help them to calm by showing your calmness then engage the child's social and emotional brain (getting them to link actions/behaviours to feelings/emotions). Then the teaching and co-learning can happen. State the boundary limits of acceptable behaviour. Make it clear that some behaviours cannot be accepted.



e.g. *It's really important in our school/family, that we have kind hands with each other, and with our things. It's not OK to hit people, or to break or throw things when we are sad.*

*Part of coming to school and growing up is about being brave and taking risks in our learning. When we make mistakes, we learn for next time. It's OK not to get it right the first time. We are all learning new things all the time. It's important not to run off, because we need to know where you are, to keep you safe and make sure you are OK.*



**Problem-solve with the child.** When the child is in a relaxed state:

Explore the feelings that gave rise to the problem, behaviour or incident. Remember that all feelings are acceptable. We manage our feelings by making choices

about how we respond.

Scaffold alternative ideas and actions that could lead to better outcomes. Trust the child to come up with ideas. Don't jump in with solutions.

Empower the child to believe they can overcome difficulties and manage their own feelings and behaviours

e.g. *If someone pulls a mean face to you/ breaks your lego in the future, what could you do?*

*If you're stuck with your work, or you don't feel like writing, what could you do?*

*That's a sensible idea. That way, you can share how you feel and everyone will be safe. And you won't get into trouble! It's OK for an adult to help us when we feel sad/ when we get stuck.*

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## Contacts at the Virtual School

**Head Teacher:** Sarah.deale@barnet.gov.uk

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**Senior Education Lead—children with a social worker:** Nicola.axford@barnet.gov.uk

# 10 top tips to support your young person in education

- 1. Every young person has a caseworker in the Virtual School. Please do contact them if you have any concerns e.g. attendance, behaviour, progress, bullying—once you have raised these issues with school**
- 2. Attend termly PEP meetings and advocate for your child**
- 3. Encourage your school to make a request for funding from the Virtual School to support your young person's education (Reception to Year 11). This must be to improve educational outcomes. We do not generally fund School Trips, Breakfast Clubs, holiday clubs, school uniform, After School Clubs etc. However we do fund one to one tuition, laptops, for Year 6 upwards, interventions which will improve outcomes ... anything that overcomes a barrier to learning and helps a child make educational progress**
- 4. Encourage your young person to have high aspirations—talk to them about opportunities and possible careers**
- 5. Take up any enrichment opportunities offered by the Virtual School**
- 6. Make sure your young person has good attendance:**
  - No holidays should be taken in term time
  - If a pupil has an illness which prevents them from attending school, they should be taken to their GP for a GP opinion. Most day to day illness' do not require a pupil to be absent from school.
  - Unless it is an emergency, appointments for the doctor or dentist must not be made during the school day.
  - With other appointments keep time missed from school to a minimum e.g. if an appointment is arranged for 2.00pm, the pupil should be at school in the morning
- 7. If your child is primary aged, please read with them every day**
- 8. Support your young person with their home learning**
- 9. Come on the training offered by the Virtual School and let us know if there is any education related training you would find useful.**
- 10. If your young person is having tuition, please make sure they attend and support them with their engagement**

**Thank you for all your support.**



Follow us twitter to keep up with news and opportunities to support our young people.

You can read more about the Virtual School and find useful resources by going to

[Virtual School | Barnet Education & Learning Service | London \(bels.org.uk\)](https://bels.org.uk)



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