



## Harmony Family Center Training Catalogue

(Updated August 2024)

Harmony provides nationally recognized training on trauma responsive techniques and therapeutic practices to caregivers, foster parents, adoptive parents, children's services and education professional, clinicians, social service organizations and faith communities. Our trainers use the latest research, combined with their lived experience as parents and professionals, to present practical approaches to real-life challenges.

### Topics include:

- **Adoption Training**
- **Trauma Responsive Practices**
- **Therapeutic Parenting**
- **Education Advocacy**
- **Crisis De-escalation Strategies**
- **Self-Care and Reflective Practice for Professionals and Agencies**

Harmony can customize in-person and virtual training to meet the needs of specific agencies, schools, community organizations, and conference events.

For more information or to inquire about trainings, please contact us at [training@harmonyfamilycenter.org](mailto:training@harmonyfamilycenter.org) or reach out Keith A. Bailey, Ph.D., Professional and Community Development Director, at [keith@harmonyfamilycenter.org](mailto:keith@harmonyfamilycenter.org)

### Adoption Training

#### **Adoption Awareness**

The Adoption Awareness Training is a two-part web-based training with the goal of increasing the overall understanding of the adoption process in the State of Tennessee. The targeted audience consists of DCS Permanency Specialists, Family Service Workers, Provider Agency Adoption Specialists, and any other DCS and Provider staff. Topics include introduction to the Adoption Best Practices Manual, the full disclosure process, pre-placement summaries, intent to adopt, termination of parental rights, preparing children for adoption, and the recruitment of adoptive families for children in full guardianship.

#### **Adoption & Guardianship Preparation**

Monthly Adoption & Guardianship Preparation trainings are offered statewide by Harmony Family Center. Completion of Adoption & Guardianship Prep training is required for all DCS foster families who have a child placed in their home for the purpose of adoption or guardianship. The curriculum consists of four psychoeducational

sessions, each of which are two hours in length. The curriculum is intended to help prospective adoptive and guardianship parents deepen understanding about themselves and their child. It is also intended to help build a lasting bond and commitment for families experiencing adoption or guardianship through the child welfare system. Harmony provides the training virtually, including offerings on Saturdays and weekday evenings.

## **Trauma Responsive Practices**

### **ACEs and the Neuroscience of Trauma**

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study and what it teaches us about the impact of trauma on health, mental health, at risk behavior, and life potential will be reviewed and combined with some of the latest neuroscience research to discuss how to prevent trauma, mitigate the impact of trauma, and heal from trauma.

### **Concepts from the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT)**

Harmony Family Center has been an NMT Site Certified agency since 2017. Based on the work of Dr. Bruce Perry, M.D., Ph.D., NMT is a “developmentally sensitive, neurobiologically informed approach to clinical work” and how the impact of both trauma and relational health on brain development and behavior. Concepts include: the impact of trauma and relational health on brain development; trauma responses, such as dysregulation and dissociation; a “sensitized stress response”; the “intimacy barrier”; the “6 R’s” of Positive Development; the “Therapeutic Web”; and, the sequence of engagement to “Regulate, Relate, and Reason.”

### **Healing from Trauma through Caregiving and Community Relationships**

We often think that seeing a professional or taking the right medication will ultimately bring healing from trauma. Although these can be foundational guides and aides in the process, the neuroscience research and ancient wisdom shows us that we heal through the healthy relationships with those we spend the most time with. We will explore the whole brain, whole body, whole community approach to healing and the healing interventions that non-clinical professionals, volunteers, and caregivers can offer in their everyday relationships.

### **Becoming a Trauma Responsive Faith Community: An Introduction**

Trauma can negatively change the brain and body of individuals, which impacts their health, emotional health, thinking, and social wellbeing. The good news is that relationships can have a healing and restorative impact on the lives of those who are living in the wake of trauma, and Faith Communities are uniquely called to be a part of these relationships and restoration.

### **Becoming a Trauma Responsive Faith Community: Roles and Responses**

We don’t have to be therapists or specialists to be a healing presence in people’s lives. In fact, people heal through the healthy relationships they spend the most time in. This session will help us to better listen to, look at, and understand what is being expressed during difficult times— by both words and behavior - and discern what is behind it. We will learn how to sit with people disclosing difficult information and how to offer helpful responses. Also, we will discuss how to walk alongside them on a journey of healing and find helpful resources in the community. We will learn together through demonstrations, role plays, and group discussions.

### **Historical and Community Trauma**

Trauma is not just limited to individual experiences. Entire communities can experience single-event or on-going trauma ... and some communities have experienced trauma for centuries. Individual trauma is exacerbated when there is historical and community trauma present. It is not just the trauma narratives that are handed down from generation to generation, but the new science of epigenetics helps us to understand how ongoing trauma can change how our genetics are expressed in our body responses across generations. We will explore the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services' Administration (SAMHSA's) of healing processes for trauma responsive communities.

### **Diagnosis in Trauma Treatment**

Most children who have been in the child welfare system carry with them a "laundry list" of diagnoses. The behaviors and symptoms of kids with adverse experience histories can be difficult to sum up in a single diagnosis. This training will provide clarification on common diagnoses we see in the trauma field, the advantages and disadvantages of diagnosing, as well as how we can understand diagnosis within the framework of complex and/or developmental trauma.

### **Sexually Reactive Behaviors**

Like many other trauma responses, sexual reactivity in children is often a typical response to an atypical event—the event of being sexually abused. Parenting youth who engage in sexually reactive behavior can be incredibly overwhelming and frightening for foster/adoptive parents. This webinar will cover risk factors for developing such behaviors and reactions, understanding and responding to these behaviors and caring for children (and ourselves) in ways that are healthy and encourage healing.

### **Trauma Responsive Sports Coaching**

This three-part, web-based video series helps sports coaches to understand the impact of high stress and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on some of the children and teens they coach and how sports can be healing, if they are presented in a trauma responsive setting. It also gives coaches relational and regulation strategies when a player acts out or checks out during practice or games and helps them to use trauma responsive strategies for running practices and even disciplining players. Finally, de-escalation strategies are discussed from crisis situations. (This series was developed by Harmony Family Center and the Emerald Youth Foundation through an Innovation Grant funded by the City of Knoxville, TN.)

### **Using Rhythm and Movement for Regulation and Healing Trauma**

As a support to traditional therapies, the use of rhythm and movement has been found by both modern neuroscience and ancient wisdom to have healing qualities. We will explain how attunement and entrainment can be achieved, and levels of dopamine and oxytocin can increase through rhythm and movement. Music, dance, drumming, games, sports, play, and even walking and talking are rhythmic strategies that can be used by caregivers and professions for promoting regulation and healing from trauma.

### **Sensory and Somatic Interventions for Regulation and Healing Trauma**

Some children and even teens and adults are not ready to benefit from traditional talk therapy. As Dr. Bessel van der Kolk expresses in his book, *The Body Keeps the Score*, the impact of trauma is not just stored in the memories of the mind but is kept in the cells and structures of the body itself. A variety of sensory and somatic (body based)

strategies that can be used by caregivers and therapies that can be used by professionals for promoting regulation and healing from trauma.

### **Animal Assisted Therapies for Regulation and Healing Trauma**

Sometimes petting a dog or riding a horse can be the best therapy! The power of the relationship between a human and an accepting, non-judgmental animal can help us to feel calm, regulated, safe, connected, and even empowered. Staff who are trained in equine and canine therapies will examine the benefits of animal assisted therapy and how best practices should be followed for therapeutic partnerships with animals in therapeutics spaces and in homes.

## **Therapeutic Parenting**

### **Therapeutic Parenting: Where Do I Start?**

Children who have been maltreated, neglected, substance-exposed or separated from their family of origin often struggle with relationships, don't appear to respond to typical forms of discipline, and challenge and frustrate their foster and adoptive parents. What's going on? Join Allison Cooke Douglas, adoptive mother, and Manager of Harmony Family Center's Resource Center in exploring how your child's history may impact their (and your) daily life and how shifting to Therapeutic Parenting can calm the chaos.

### **Therapeutic Parenting: Relationships Matter**

In this workshop we will explore attachment and how it impacts foster/adoptive families. Join Allison Cooke Douglas, adoptive mother of four and Manager of Harmony Family Center's Resource Center in examining the role of relational health in the life span, how foster care and adoption can impact a child's healthy relationships and how parents can build or strengthen a child's capacity to connect and create healthier relationships.

### **Therapeutic Parenting: Trauma Sensitive Discipline**

Children who have been abused, neglected or substance-exposed don't always respond to typical forms of discipline, challenging and frustrating many foster and adoptive parents. Join Allison Cooke Douglas, adoptive parent and Resource Center Program Manager at Harmony Family Center, in an hour long discussion of why old standbys like timeout, spanking and lectures don't work for our kids and how parents can shift to mindful, connected discipline techniques for difficult behaviors.

### **Therapeutic Parenting: Tuning In-Strengthening Attachment Quality through Increased Attunement**

Attunement is a parent's ability to sense, understand, and meet the physical, emotional, and developmental needs of their child and is critical to the formation of healthy, high-quality relationships; however, trauma, maltreatment, and attachment breaches, especially early in life, can create barriers that leave foster and adoptive families feeling out-of-sync and disconnected from their kids. This workshop will explore the deep human need for attunement, the harmful effect trauma has on attunement cues and the reception of those cues, examine the four aspects of attunement, and dive deeply into specific strategies and practices for parents.

### **Therapeutic Parenting: Nurturing Resilience**

Children with a history of trauma and maltreatment often struggle with attachment or behavioral issues. As parents, it is all too easy to become wrapped up in "putting out

fires”, focusing solely on discipline, our children’s negative behaviors, and other parenting challenges. This webinar will focus beyond behavior management and begin to embrace resilience. Join Allison Cooke Douglas, adoptive mom, and Resource Center Program Manager at Harmony Family Center to explore ways to help children rebuild healthy connections and self-perceptions after trauma, allowing them to thrive, not just survive.

### **Therapeutic Parenting: Reflective Parenting**

Reflective Parenting helps families discover what it might be like to evaluate their parenting decisions based on multiple factors and contexts rather than on absolutes, to focus more on how you are than what you do as a parent and to better understand children as well as ourselves. Based in the work of Peter Fonagy, Regina Pally and Arietta Slade as well as the self-compassion research of Dr. Kristen Neff, this workshop helps families to remember that there’s no one way to be a good adoptive parent.

### **Therapeutic Parenting: Compassion Fatigues**

Parenting, especially caring for children with high needs, can feel overwhelming, exhausting, and lonely. Two adoptive moms, who also work in the adoption field, will explore how parents can avoid compassion fatigue and burnout, while parenting therapeutically.

### **Parenting with PACE: A Therapeutic Approach for Foster and Adoptive Parents**

Dr. Dan Hughes’ PACE model is a parenting approach that allows foster/adoptive parents to support children’s healthy development, self-awareness and emotional regulation. Adults who learn to embody playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy (PACE), provide a safe and supportive environment for children to build their skills and make behavioral change.

### **Big Behaviors: A Panel Q&A with Foster and Adoptive Parents and Professionals**

Bring your biggest behavior questions to a panel of child development experts, therapists, adoptive parents and child welfare professionals. Questions will be chosen from those submitted at registration and via the chat in this truly interactive webinar staffed with pros who’ve lived with, treated or worked with kids with that, yes, that big, concerning behavior. No judgement- only collaboration, support and connection in this webinar facilitated by Harmony’s team.

### **Talking About the Tough Stuff: Honesty in Foster Care and Adoption**

It’s not always easy to talk to your foster or adopted child about their past. Often, parents find themselves struggling with how, when, or even if, they should share the truth with their child. This workshop will explore the importance of sharing with your child their unique story and developmentally appropriate ways to answer challenging questions about tough topics like criminal activity, abandonment and substance use.

### **Talking About the Tough Stuff: Taking to your Child about Sex**

It’s not always easy to talk to your foster or adopted child about their sex and sexuality. Often, parents find themselves struggling with when, and how, to bring up the subject. It can also be hard to decide how to answer certain questions that may arise. Allison Cooke Douglas, an adoptive mother and Harmony Family Center’s Resource Center Program Manager, will explore how to approach this important subject with your child and share developmentally appropriate ways to answer challenging questions.

### **Talking About the Tough Stuff: How to Talk with My Child about Suicide**

Talking about suicide is hard, and it's even harder to think about having to do this with your own child. Research and practice show that opening up lines of communication between parents and children can help reduce the likelihood that a child will attempt suicide. Offering concrete, real-life supports – especially nurturing relationships – reduce that likelihood even more.

Sadly, suicide is on the rise across all age groups and races in our country. A therapist and a parent will discuss why some children may be more at risk to attempt suicide than others and the signs to look for. They will also offer practical tips for how to plan your conversation, what to say and not say, and how to build in supports for your child. They will also discuss what to do in a crisis situation and what to expect when professionals are called upon to help.

### **Understanding and Responding to Developmental Trauma in Infants/Toddlers (Birth – 4)**

What happens to your child early in life, even in utero, can show up in surprising ways as they grow. Prenatal stressors and substance exposures, early neglect, abuse, and trauma impact children differently at every developmental stage. This webinar explores how developmental trauma may affect your infant or toddler's behavior, learning and path to meeting developmental milestones, as well as ways that caregivers and professionals can support children's growth and healing.

### **Understanding and Responding to Developmental Trauma in Children (Ages 5 – 10)**

What happens to your child early in life, even in utero, can show up in surprising ways as they grow. Prenatal stressors and substance exposures, early neglect, abuse, and trauma impact children differently at every developmental stage. This webinar explores how developmental trauma may affect your child's behavior, learning and path to meeting developmental milestones, as well as ways that caregivers and professionals can support children's growth and healing. This workshop will focus specifically on children ages 5-10.

### **Understanding and Responding to Developmental Trauma in Tweens and Teens (Ages 11-18)**

What happens to your child early in life, even in utero, can show up in surprising ways as they grow. Prenatal stressors and substance exposures, early neglect, abuse, and trauma impact children differently at every developmental stage. This webinar explores how developmental trauma may affect your tween or teen's behavior, learning, and daily living skills, as well as ways that caregivers and professionals can support children's growth and healing.

### **Adolescent Neurodevelopment: What Parents and Professionals Need to Know**

If you parent or work with adolescents, sometimes you may wonder, "Have they lost their minds?" The answer is, "No," – but they are actually losing parts of their brains ... which is a good thing for efficient brain functioning. In this session, we will explore how the brains of adolescents are developing and re-organizing, why they get so bored and take such risks, why they mis-interpret the looks we give them and think everyone is looking at them, and why they are wired for rewards. Implications for parenting and programming will be discussed.

### **Understanding and Supporting LGBTQ+ Foster/Adopted Youth**

Youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, or other diverse identity (LGBTQ+) are overrepresented in foster care. Multiple studies indicate that as many as 30% of foster youth identify as LGBTQ+. In order for children to thrive, foster and adoptive families need to understand and feel equipped to handle the unique risks that their children face. This webinar will support parents in walking alongside their child with support and affirmation.

### **Coparenting Adoptive Children after Divorce**

Co-parenting adoptive children after divorce presents extra challenges, since they have a history of broken relationships. This webinar will explore strategies to maintain boundaries, keep the peace and continue to build attachment with your children.

### **Communicating Through Pop Culture: Using Books, Movies and Television to Connect with Your Child**

Sometimes connection with our kids can feel elusive. As foster/adoptive parents it can be all too easy to focus on our children's challenges rather than building and strengthening our relationship. In this hour we will explore the use of pop culture (movies, TV and books) as a way to open lines of communication, talk about tough topics, explore emotions and personal histories and to build our kids skills while having fun.

### **Fostering Friendships**

For children who have experienced trauma or have challenging behaviors, finding friends can be difficult. We will discuss how to help your child create and maintain healthy friendships. We'll also discuss how to cope with the strong feelings navigating this experience can present for parents.

## **Education Advocacy**

### **Strategies and Support at School: An Overview of Education Supports**

Navigating the school system when a child is struggling academically, behaviorally, or emotionally, can be an overwhelming experience for parents. Whether it is informal support, a 504, or an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Harmony's Education Advocate will explain the steps to getting your child the help they need.

### **Strategies and Support at School: Anxiety**

Anxiety can affect students in a variety of ways, including social/ emotional growth, academics, and behaviors. For children with anxiety, school can often be an intimidating and frustrating experience.. Harmony's Education Advocate will discuss strategies for at home and at school to ease the stress and help your child get the most out of their school experience.

### **Strategies and Support at School: ADHD**

ADD and ADHD can present many challenges at school. Harmony's Education Advocate, will discuss techniques for students and parents to use at home to minimize chaos and maximize learning.

### **Strategies and Support at School: Autism**

Although autism takes many forms in the school environment, there are strategies that schools can use to support the autistic child. Whether behavior challenges, cognitive delays, academic deficits, or adaptive skills, supports are available. Learn more about accommodations and modifications for the autistic child at school from Harmony's Education Advocate.

### **Mental Health Disorders at School**

When children experience mental health disorders, school can be a challenging place. For children with challenging behaviors or anxiety, school is sometimes overwhelming. Harmony's Education Advocate will walk parents through federal and state guidelines so that children can receive the academic and behavioral support they need.

## **Crisis De-escalation**

### **Trauma-Informed De-escalation Tools**

The de-escalation techniques presented are from Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI), a curriculum that was developed by Cornell University and is now used in schools, residential treatment facilities, and foster homes. After understanding how the brain functions during a crisis, we will learn how to engage a child with a calm voice and a non-threatening stance. A variety of support techniques will be discussed along with strategies and phrases to reduce power struggles. You will learn to "say this....not that" to let children know you are an ally and not another obstacle in an already challenging situation.

### **4-Part Crisis De-escalation Series**

We want de-escalation strategies that will work across all ages and all situations. However, you may have discovered that it's just not that simple. Because each child, each caregiver, each setting, and each crisis is unique, simple prescriptions won't work across the board. This De-escalation series will explore the principles that should be considered in tailoring de-escalation strategies that meet the child where they are.

#### **Pt.1: De-escalation Series: Caregiver Regulation and Planning for a Crisis**

The best tool for de-escalating a child in crisis is a regulated adult ... and a regulated adult with a plan is even better. This webinar will focus on the caregiver's approach and how to be in a supportive role to the child. We will also discuss how to develop plans for averting crises and supporting children at different levels of an evolving crisis when it occurs.

#### **Pt.2: De-escalation Strategies Series: De-escalation Strategies**

There are different de-escalation strategies that can be used at the different levels of a crisis situation. This webinar will focus on when to use different strategies at different times, how to present yourself as an ally to a child and not be another obstacle within the crisis, and what to say and what not to say.

#### **Pt.3: De-escalation Strategies Series: Handling Violence Do's and Don'ts**

Even the best attempts to support and well thought out plans don't always work to avert a crisis. Sometimes, the child goes into fight (vs. flight or shutting down) as a way to protect themselves. This webinar will focus on what to do and not to



do when a child becomes violent. There are no great answers...but there are some things that make it worse that we need to learn to avoid.

#### **Pt.4: De-escalation Strategies Series: When and How to Turn a Crisis into a Learning Event -The Life Space Interview**

We want to prevent crises, and better yet, help children to learn how to appropriately handle crises situations. However, getting the timing right for learning and these important conversations is crucial. This webinar will focus on when and how to move from crisis to learning by using The Life Space Interview.

### **Self-care and Reflective Practice**

#### **Absorbing Other's Trauma: Signs and Symptoms of Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and Secondary Trauma and What Caregivers and Professionals Can Do for Self-Care**

For those working in the "helping" professions, trauma exposure symptoms, compassion fatigue and burnout are very real, and quite normal responses to their much-needed work. This workshop assists professionals in identifying the signs they may be close to being overwhelmed, proactive ways to avoid this, and the responsibilities of both workers and their employers in creating environments where professionals can have healthy, sustainable careers.

#### **Reflective Practice and Reflective Supervision/Consultation**

Reflective Supervision/Consultation promotes and supports professional development for those engaged in relationship-based work. It creates the time, space, and safety for supervisees to explore their feelings, responses, beliefs, and values and to regulate their internal experiences, while still considering the experiences of those they serve. Reflective practice explores biases, increases self-regulation and develops attunement and awareness, allowing service-providers clear access to their higher-level thinking skills, and internal wisdom, even when working in complex and emotional situations. Group and individual consultation as well as classroom instruction and practice can be tailored to your group's specific needs.

#### **Developing a Trauma Responsive Workplace**

For professionals working with children and adults who are living in the wake of trauma, the waves of their trauma reactive behaviors are often a challenge to us – both professionally and personally, both mentally and physically. We will examine the layered approach that agencies can put in place to support those who are helpers and healers in this work.

The agency leaders must be trauma informed to acknowledge the work that their staff do and how it impacts them and must put into place trauma responsive structures of support. This can include training for staff and managers, developing trauma informed policies and procedures for staff care, and offering external supports, such as an Employee Assistance Program, and internal supports, such as Reflective Supervision.