

Emerging Minds.

Child-centred and family-focused practice with children with disability online course

By keeping the values, preferences, needs and views of all family members in mind, you will be able to effectively support the child you're working with.

About this course

Building on the knowledge introduced in Emerging Minds' foundation course, *Understanding child mental health and disability*, this course outlines strategies for supporting the important relationships in a child's life. It adopts a child-centred and family-focused approach to practice, which is about valuing and supporting the child's connection to their parents and siblings, and recognising the expertise of their family members.

The course introduces the ART approach to working with children with disability:

Acknowledgment, which prioritises a contextual understanding and curiosity of a child with disability, and their family members

Relationships, which examines the most important connections in a child's life and encourages important adults to help children to express themselves using appropriate social and communication methods; and

Time, which is about helping families to both recognise and acknowledge their challenges, while planning ways to best support each other through difficult times.

Why was this course developed?

Children with disability can often be more reliant on their family. Parents are more likely to experience social and financial strains, loneliness and challenges in relationships, while the wellbeing of siblings can also be affected by the added stress and pressure of caring for a child with disability.



Adopting a family-focused approach in your work will help you to be more responsive to each family's unique and dynamic situation. When a family's needs are supported, they're in turn better able to support the needs of their child with disability.

Who is this course for?

This course is suited to all practitioners who work with children and families, across a range of settings. It will help you to better incorporate approaches to your work that promote the social and emotional development and wellbeing of children with disability.

How was this course developed?

This course was developed in collaboration with stakeholders from academia, child and family services, child mental health experts and families with lived experience of disability.

What is included in the course?

This course features fictional video demonstrations of conversations between practitioners and parents and children, along with reading materials and reflective activities. It is designed to be undertaken individually, but can also be used as a prompt for conversations between colleagues.

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