Expression of Interest – Solihull Train the Trainer

**Context**

In 2024, the National Infant Mental Health Network working group published ‘Frameworks for Foundation Level Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Professional Development’. This framework emphasizes the importance of advancing and integrating theory into practice by providing training, building upon the National Healthy Childhood Programme IMH eLearning modules available on HSELand.

**Agreed Frameworks: Building and IECMH Training and Networks in Ireland**

The agreed core guiding framework maps the following as an initial entry into IECMH training and practice.

1. National Healthy Childhood Programme 3 eLearning Units plus the half days skills-based training currently in design.

2. Solihull 2 Day Foundation workshops and services

4. Ongoing Learning & Development Pathway including IMH 2 Day Masterclass, Circle of Security, NBO etc

To support cohesive implementation, a National Solihull Approach working group was established in January 2025 to support the national rollout of the Solihull Approach across counties and work sectors.

We are currently recruiting a group of interested Facilitators to be trained as facilitatros in the Solihull 2 Day Foundation workshops.

Solihull Train the Trainer Requirements

Facilitator Experience

1. Two years of reflective peer facilitation – either facilitating an Infant Mental Health Network group or within one’s professional context, or
2. Experience in supporting practice-based learning within one’s professional journey.
3. Practice-based experience in IECMH is required. Practice-based experience is defined as:

* experience working with children and having practice-based experience in child development.
* experience working in parent support contexts in a clinical / home or early learning environment, including facilitating parent support programmes and groups.
* experience using reflective facilitation skills with parents in a one-to-one or group context.

Facilitator Competencies

1. Knowledge of best practice in adult or practice-based learning skills.
2. Reflective practice skills.
3. Facilitation skills, including supporting parallel processes.
4. Excellent communication skills.
5. Coordination and ability to make theory and knowledge relevant to various practice-based contexts.
6. Knowledge of IECMH-aligned relational parent programmes or similar sectoral-specific approaches.

Expectations

1. The Train the Trainer training will be one day in person training with. Two dates will be available; one is 19th August 2025 and a second to be confirmed for late Autumn. Applicants who have not already completed the Solihull approach 2-day foundation course will need to complete this in advance.
2. We are asking that Trainers would be supported by their managers to deliver at least two 2-day courses per year.
3. Where possible we will endeavour to have cross agency co-facilitation when delivering the Solihull training.

**Expression of Interest to become a Solihull Train the Trainer**

**CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS is 27th JUNE 2025**

**Please return completed applications to Debbie Scales at** [**scalesdebbie@hotmail.com**](mailto:scalesdebbie@hotmail.com)

1. Can you please detail how you meet the required experience as outlined above?
2. Can you please detail how you meet the required competencies as outlined above?
3. Any other comments to support your Expression of Interest

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Organisation |  |
| Role in organisation |  |
| Email and phone number. |  |
| Managers Name and email address |  |
| Can you please confirm if you have discussed this EOI with your Manager? |  |
| Can you please confirm if your manager has consented to your engagement with the Solihull Train the Trainer project? |  |
| Are you available to complete the Train the trainer day on 19th August and if necessary, the 2-day foundation course in July? |  |

**Appendix 1 – (Briefing Paper Public Health Authority NI)**

**How the Solihull Approach developed**

Dr Hazel Douglas MBE originally developed the model in 1996 whilst working as a Clinical Psychologist with a team of health visitors. An increasing number of referrals to child and adolescent mental health services was the initial driver for the development of the model. It quickly progressed in its usefulness across all disciplines and practitioners working with infants and children and is now delivered.

In over 200 areas. It is used by midwives, health visitors, family support practitioners, social workers, foster carers, and teachers to firefighters and prison officers and in homes, hospitals, clinics, companies, schools, and prisons.

There are many published research studies about the efficacy of the Solihull Approach, including an RCT.

**What is the Solihull Approach?**

The Solihull Approach is an *approach* to a way of working which has demonstrated through research improved outcomes for practitioners and parents. This includes current evidence on early brain development and sharing key messages from neuroscience. Teaching methodology recognises different learning styles to integrate the knowledge in a way that practitioners find transformational to their understanding of infant mental health. The Solihull Approach Foundation Programme is based on a robust theoretical model synthesising concepts from the psychodynamic approach (**Containment**) with practical child development (**Reciprocity**) and behaviour approaches. Through application of the model and implementation to practice, practitioners provide support to parents helping them to understand the importance of early relationships, being sensitively, attuned to the infant and how these lead to secure attachments. Understanding containment and reciprocity provides practitioners with the knowledge and observation skills to observe parent infant interactions and identify where further support and early intervention is needed.

The **Solihull Approach 2-Day Foundation Programme** is the starting point for all practitioners

**Variants** of the 2-Day Foundation Programme

1. Solihull Approach 2 Day Foundation training (**Generic programme suitable for all practitioners**)
2. Antenatal 2 Day Foundation training
3. Fostering, Adoption & Social Work 2 Day Foundation training
4. Adult 2 Day Foundation training ('Keeping Trauma in Mind')
5. 2 Day Foundation training for Managers
6. 2 Day Foundation training with 4 Work Discussion Sessions
7. Perinatal 2 Day Foundation training
8. Whole School training

**Delivery Options**

The Solihull Approach Foundation programme can be delivered to uni-disciplinary or multidisciplinary groups from a range of practice settings or as a whole team approach. Each method has distinct advantages. In which ever method is chosen, it is important that an infrastructure is developed to support practitioners by management. There are programmes available both face to face and online for CPD to facilitate the practitioner to become an Advanced Solihull Approach practitioner.

**Building organisational capacity**

The Solihull Approach can be delivered as a cascade model by practitioners who have completed the Solihull Approach Foundation Programme, a minimum of four Solihull Approach Practice Sessions and an additional 1-Day Solihull Approach Train the Trainers programme.