

five to thrive

An approach that helps bridge the gap between the latest neuroscientific theory and effective attachment-based practice in early intervention and positive parenting



“ We love **five to thrive** because it is simple and empowering... easy for every parent to understand and use from the day they hear the message ”

*Jenny Turner, Manager,
Churchfields Children's Centre*

“ five to thrive has given Barnardo's a common framework and straightforward language for its services to work with parents right across the UK. It is non-judgemental, effective, and complements every other parenting programme our commissioners ask us to work with ”

*Jonathan Rallings, Strategic Leader,
Barnardo's Early Intervention with Families project*



what is five to thrive?

five to thrive is a simple means of describing the process of attachment to those caring for babies and young children. It takes up to date scientific discovery of how children develop and learn and helps practitioners to easily express what they most often understand instinctively both between themselves and the families they work with.

Central to the **five to thrive** approach is the set of five key activities:

Respond • Cuddle • Relax • Play • Talk

These are our 'building blocks for a health brain'. They are drawn from research into the key processes of attachment and attunement that forge bonds between young children and their carers. Crucially, they are designed to support positive feedback processes, enabling practitioners to observe and reinforce positive interaction between parents and their children.

The success of **five to thrive** is founded on the fact that it is not a one-size-fits-all approach, but rather an array of resources, tools and training content that is available to help tailor the strategy which best fits with local needs and aims.

Our customers tell us that the reason they like **five to thrive** is that it can be used so flexibly in working with different levels of need - from providing simple helpful tips for individual parents to underpinning more intensive work with vulnerable groups. Its messages are also complementary with more rigid parenting programmes helping to enhance their impact at a fraction of the cost.

where is it making a difference?

Hertfordshire

The **five to thrive** approach was pioneered in a collaboration between KCA and Hertfordshire Council's Childhood Support Services team in 2011-12, with the **five to thrive** resources forming a key element of the council's 'My Baby's Brain' initiative.

The pilot roll-out saw KCA deliver training to 80 selected multi-agency practitioners, primarily from Early Years and Health settings, with the aim of enabling them to communicate effectively with parents and carers to promote healthy brain development.

An evaluation of this first year by the Family Matters Institute was published in July 2012 and its positive findings led to a further expansion of the programme for 2012-3. This second year comprised a broader roll-out of posters, guides and integration into the council's marketing communications, alongside training of more than 400 multi-agency professionals. Additional sessions targeted at Early Years carers aimed to equip them to meet the secondary attachment needs of children in placement.

Contact: css@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Barnardo's

five to thrive was originally rolled out as part of Barnardo's Early Intervention with Families Strategy in 2013-14 with an aim to train 100 settings working directly with babies under one. The visible effectiveness of the approach though quickly led to increased demand in the organisation and by 2016 over 350 services and 3000 staff had received the training.

Barnardo's has since worked more closely with KCA to adapt the **five to thrive** approach into other contexts: "Why People Need People: Five to Thrive for Life" has been used to apply the principles of **five to thrive** to Barnardo's services working with older children such as care leavers, or victims of sexual exploitation. "Five to Thrive for Children with Autism" was developed for some specialist services to help to explore the attachment needs of autistic children.

Although the Early Intervention with Families programme ended in 2016 Barnardo's has now embedded **five to thrive** as 'business as usual' continuing to deliver the approach in its Family Support services across all four nations in the UK

Contact: liz.kavanagh@barnardos.org.uk

who is five to thrive for?

five to thrive can be used by individual settings or across groups of services within a local authority, clinical commissioning group, nursery chain or voluntary sector provider. Pre-schools, children's centres, health visitors, midwives, social services, schools have all introduced five to thrive to great effect.

To ensure that practitioners fully understand the science behind the messages and are confident in using the five to thrive elements in their work, a range of face-to-face and online training sessions are available. All five to thrive training can be specifically customised in collaboration with commissioners so that it can be used most effectively to meet specific local objectives (e.g. working with different communities; addressing special educational needs).

what resources are available?

The **five to thrive** resources help parents and practitioners gain an appropriate awareness of the science of brain development while ensuring that the focus remains practical rather than academic. They support creative, individualised work with families as well as offering a range of suggestions to meet the needs of children at different ages.

Our current range of resources includes:

Banners • Posters • Leaflets • Scrolling video

Assessment tools • Drop cards • Training DVDs

Many of the resources are available for purchase by individual settings or at volume discount for distribution across local authority or health trust areas. Others are available via digital download for the widest possible implementation.



how can we start using five to thrive?

If your organisation would like to find out more about Five to Thrive then please contact KCA at contact@kca.training or ring 01453 488000 to be put in touch with one of our Business Development Managers

... or with any general enquiries please email **contact@kca.training** or visit **www.kca.training**

www.fivetothrive.org.uk



Thanks to...

Kate Cairns Associates

*KCA is a national provider of training, e-learning and consultancy for children's services and the creator of the **five to thrive** resources.*



Hertfordshire County Council

*Hertfordshire's Childhood Support Services team approached KCA in 2011 with the aim of developing a multi-agency approach to parenting support, based on current understanding of neuroscience and brain development. It was this 'My Baby's Brain' project that launched the **five to thrive** approach.*



CentreForum

CentreForum is an independent, liberal think-tank that seeks to develop evidence-based policy solutions to the problems facing Britain. Its 2011 research paper Parenting Matters introduced the idea of a healthy-brain version of the 'five-a-day' nutrition campaign that has been so influential in recent years.

