

Reading List for Foster Parents

Supporting therapeutic care for children with trauma, loss, neurodivergence and disrupted relationships.

1. Foundational Frameworks for Therapeutic Parenting

Hughes, D.A. & Golding, K.S. (2012). *Creating Loving Attachments: Parenting with PACE to Nurture Confidence and Security in the Troubled Child*. Jessica Kingsley.

Introduces the PACE model for attachment-based parenting. Widely used in UK fostering and adoption contexts to support trust and emotional safety.

Baylin, J., & Hughes, D.A. (2016). *The Neurobiology of Attachment-Focused Therapy: Enhancing Connection & Trust*. Norton.

Explores the brain science behind therapeutic parenting. Helps carers understand how trauma impacts attachment and how to promote healing relationships.

Golding, K.S. (2013). *Observing Children with Attachment Difficulties in School*. Jessica Kingsley.

Practical tool for identifying emotional and relational difficulties in school settings. Integrates theory and observation to guide intervention.

Gerhardt, S. (2004). *Why Love Matters: How Affection Shapes a Baby's Brain*. Routledge.

Shows how early relationships influence brain development. Connects neuroscience with the emotional needs of young children in care.

***First Steps in Parenting the Child who Hurts* by Caroline Archer**

A compassionate guide for caregivers parenting small children who have experienced early trauma.

***Reparenting the Child Who Hurts* by Caroline Archer and Christine Gordon**

A practical and insightful guide for caregivers parenting young people who have experienced early trauma.

***What Every Parent Needs to Know* by Margot Sunderland**

Offers insight into children's emotional worlds, grounded in neuroscience.

***Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control* by Heather T. Forbes & Bryan Post**

Helps shift from behaviour control to emotional connection and regulation.

***The Body Keeps the Score* by Dr. Bessel van der Kolk**

Explores how trauma is held in the body and the importance of nonverbal and sensory-based approaches to healing.

Hold On to Your Kids by Dr. Gordon Neufeld & Gabor Maté

Highlights the importance of adult-child attachment and parental presence.

Additional Key Texts from Influential Authors

Axline, V.M. (1964). Dibs in Search of Self. Penguin.

A classic case study in non-directive play therapy, illustrating the healing journey of a traumatised child. Offers insight into child-led therapeutic processes.

Sunderland, M. (2007). Bothered: Helping children with feelings. Nibs Publishing.

A child-friendly therapeutic story from the 'Helping Children with Feelings' series. Supports emotional literacy and emotional regulation through metaphor and play.

Faber, A., & Mazlish, E. (2010). How to Talk So Teens Will Listen and Listen So Teens Will Talk. Piccadilly Press.

Offers communication strategies tailored for adolescents. Practical advice for building trust, respect, and connection during the teen years.

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish

Communication tools for respectful, empathetic parenting.

Maté, G. (2008). Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers. Vermilion.

Explores the effects of peer attachment versus adult attachment. Offers a compassionate view of parenting from a trauma-informed perspective.

Schwartz, R., & Sweezy, M. (2019). Internal Family Systems Therapy for Children. Guilford Press.

Introduces the IFS model adapted for work with children. Helps carers and therapists support internal emotional systems shaped by trauma.

Spring, C. (2018). Recovery is My Best Revenge: My Experience of Trauma, Abuse and Dissociation. JFP.

Part memoir, part psychoeducation. Offers validation, insight and strategies for living with the effects of childhood trauma.

Siegel, D.J., & Bryson, T.P. (2011). The Whole-Brain Child. Scribe.

A neuroscience-informed guide to parenting. Explains how to support integration between emotional and logical brain systems in children.

Hughes, D.A. (2009). Attachment-Focused Parenting. W.W. Norton.

Detailed exploration of the PACE model. Helps parents nurture emotional connection and support healing from trauma.

Crittenden, P.M. (2008). Raising Parents: Attachment, Parenting and Child Safety. Routledge. Applies the Dynamic-Maturational Model to real-life parenting. Focuses on how parents' own histories shape their caregiving and understanding of risk.

Perry, P. (2019). *The Book You Wish Your Parents Had Read (and Your Children Will be Glad That You Did)*. London: Penguin

This book offers practical guidance for parents to foster healthier, more understanding relationships with their children. Perry emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence and self-awareness in parenting, aiming to help parents support their children's mental well-being. It encourages reflective parenting practices that promote genuine connection and growth.

Perry, P. (2023). *The Book You Want Everyone You Love* To Read *and maybe a few don't* Cornerstone Press.

This book advocates for sharing meaningful insights and compassionate advice with loved ones to foster healthier relationships and personal growth. Perry emphasizes empathy, self-awareness, and communication as essential tools for strengthening bonds and navigating life's challenges. It serves as a heartfelt guide to improving understanding and connection among those we care about.

Perry, P. (2012). *How to Stay Sane. The School of Life Self Help Series. Pan Macmillan, 2012. Edited by Alain de Botton*

This self-help book explores strategies for maintaining mental well-being amidst life's pressures and uncertainties. Perry combines philosophical insights with practical advice to help readers develop resilience, emotional stability, and a sense of inner calm. Edited by Alain de Botton, it emphasizes mindfulness and self-compassion as key to staying sane in a chaotic world.

2. Complex Trauma, Neglect and Abuse

Perry, B.D., & Szalavitz, M. (2017). *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog. Basic Books.*

Case-based book explaining how trauma impacts the developing brain. Highly readable and foundational in trauma-informed care.

Treisman, K. (2017). *Working with Relational and Developmental Trauma in Children and Adolescents. Routledge.*

Combines theory and practical tools for trauma-informed practice. Widely used in UK therapeutic and fostering contexts.

NSPCC (2022). *Learning from Case Reviews: Children Experiencing Neglect. NSPCC.*

Synthesises learning from UK serious case reviews. Helps foster carers understand patterns and systemic implications of neglect.

3. Neurodiversity (Autism, ADHD, FASD, etc.)

Bo Hejlskov Elvén (2010). No Fighting, No Biting, No Screaming. Jessica Kingsley.

Presents low-arousal, non-confrontational strategies for behavioural challenges. Often used in UK SEND contexts.

Kurtz, Z. (2013). Think Autism. Ambitious about Autism / Anna Freud Centre.

A practical, targeted support approach for children with autism and related conditions. Developed in a UK context for educators and carers.

Gregory, G., & Reddy, V. (2020). FASD: Neurodevelopmental Disorder and the Law. UCL Centre for Law and the Child.

Explores the intersection of FASD, neurodevelopment, and legal frameworks. Essential for those parenting children with suspected or diagnosed FASD.

The Explosive Child *by Dr. Ross Greene*

Offers collaborative strategies for children who are easily frustrated or inflexible.

Uniquely Human *by Dr. Barry Prizant*

Reframes autism with compassion and insight.

FASD: The Essential Guide for Parents *by Jeff Noble*

A clear and compassionate introduction to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.

NeuroTribes *by Steve Silberman*

A broad, insightful look into the history and rethinking of autism.

4. Sensory Processing in Children with Developmental Trauma

The Out-of-Sync Child *by Carol Stock Kranowitz*

A foundational book on sensory processing disorder (SPD) with strategies for helping children thrive.

Raising a Sensory Smart Child *by Lindsey Biel & Nancy Peske*

Practical strategies for understanding and supporting children with sensory sensitivities and trauma backgrounds.

Sensory Trauma *by Joanna Grace*

Explores how sensory processing difficulties are often overlooked in traumatised children and offers insight into sensory-informed care.

5. Loss, Separation, and Sibling Dynamics

Rustin, M. (2009). Thinking about Children. Tavistock Clinic Series.

Reflective essays drawing on psychodynamic and systemic approaches. Explores children's internal worlds, loss, and transitions in care.

Blythe, S., & Milner, J. (2019). Sibling Sexual Abuse: A Guide for Professionals. Routledge.

Addresses the sensitive issue of sexual abuse between siblings. Informed by research and best practice for safeguarding.

Neil, E., Beek, M., & Ward, E. (2015). Contact After Adoption. BAAF / University of East Anglia.

Reports findings from a UK-based longitudinal study. Provides insight into sibling separation and post-adoption contact.

6. Mental Health and SEMH Needs

Fonagy, P., et al. (2015). What Works for Whom? A Critical Review of Treatments for Children and Adolescents (2nd Ed.). Guilford Press.

Systematic review of evidence-based treatments for young people. An academically rigorous resource for practitioners and policy makers.

Batmanghelidjh, C. (2006). Shattered Lives. Jessica Kingsley.

Narrative-driven book exploring children's resilience and courage. Draws on stories from her work with Kids Company.

Department for Education (2021). Promoting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing: A Whole School or College Approach. Department for Education.

Policy and practice guidance for embedding mental health in schools. Offers useful frameworks for carers and educators.

7. Education and Exclusion

Geddes, H. (2006). Attachment in the Classroom. Worth Publishing.

Seminal text on how attachment difficulties affect learning and behaviour. Widely used in teacher training and Virtual School work.

Bomber, L.M. (2011). Inside I'm Hurting. Worth Publishing.

Practical strategies for supporting children with attachment difficulties in school. Advocates for trauma-informed education.

8. Stigma, Disadvantage and Identity

Gilligan, R. (2009). Promoting Resilience in Child and Family Social Work. BAAF.

Examines resilience in the context of adversity. Encourages strength-based approaches in social care and fostering.

Hollingworth, K. (2012). Participation in Social, Leisure and Informal Learning among Care Leavers in England. *Child and Family Social Work*, 17(4), 438–447.

Research paper on the long-term impact of exclusion and deprivation. Useful for understanding outcomes for care-experienced young people.

Cossar, J., Brandon, M., & Jordan, P. (2011). 'Don't Make Assumptions'. University of East Anglia / NSPCC.

Captures children's voices about child protection and care systems. Encourages carers to reflect on stigma, power, and empowerment.

9. Placement Breakdown and Systemic Understanding

Selwyn, J., et al. (2014). Beyond the Adoption Order. Department for Education / University of Bristol.

Landmark UK study exploring the challenges and disruptions after adoption. Provides evidence to inform post-adoption support planning.

Wade, J., et al. (2011). Caring for Abused and Neglected Children. Jessica Kingsley.

Research-led resource about permanence planning and reunification. Helpful for social workers and foster carers making long-term decisions.

Conway, Paula. *Falling Between Minds: The Effects of Unbearable Experiences on Multi-Agency Communication in the Care System*. N.p., 2009. Print.

Explores the systemic issues that influence placement breakdown and which impact on children.

10. Everyday Practical Tools

***Calm Parents, Happy Kids* by Dr. Laura Markham**

Tools for emotional regulation in both parent and child.

***When the Children Come* by Gabrielle Glaser**

Reflective stories from foster and adoptive parents.

11. Books for Explaining to Children

***The Invisible String* by Patrice Karst**

A gentle story about enduring connection and love.

***A Terrible Thing Happened* by Margaret M. Holmes**

Helps children process trauma and understand emotions.

***My Book About Foster Care* by Rebecca Daniel**

A child-friendly explanation of foster care to support identity work.

12. Bonus: Free or Low-Cost Resources

Beacon House Therapeutic Services (UK) by <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/resources>

Free downloadable guides on trauma, attachment, and regulation.

Child Trauma Academy by <https://childtrauma.org>

Educational content from Dr. Bruce Perry on child trauma.