

Theraplay-Informed Circus Skills to Rediscover the Foundations of Attachment

Nurture-Psychology Service in collaboration with Skylight Circus Arts run this six week group for families. It is an adult-directed, structured play group that incorporates playful, cooperative and **nurturing activities that enhance the emotional well-being** of the whole family. The young person and child can be supported to **replicate missed early life opportunities**, such as learning to walk on stilts to replicate the 'learning to walk experience'. Gradually, positive messages from the group will become part of the young person's internal sense of self, meaning that the therapy is easily accessible and systemic in nature.

This type of intervention is of particular importance for those young people whose early experience of care has been disrupted. Working with families in this way enables adoptive parents and their child, or carers and their young person, to replicate important activities that in early life have not happened as they should have, or have been missed out, yet are key to the young person's future well-being and relationships.

The Co-director of Nurture Psychology Service states: "Having observed Skylight Circus Arts using stilts and encouraging parents to help a child walk was enlightening, a perfect replication of one of the many attachment experiences that happens in early life. It was incredible to watch, so I knew we had to have this at Nurture Psychology Service and adapt it to ensure it is fully informed by Theraplay and the supporting evidence."

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Nurture-Psychology Service Ltd, is a not-for-profit Social Enterprise led by Clinical Psychologists, who use their expert knowledge, research and experience to improve the mental health of children and families, and those who work with them.