

Online multimedia  
training to help  
stay connected



Online learning resources  
and support



STRENGTHENING PRACTICE®  
DEVELOPING SKILLED AND VIBRANT PROFESSIONALS



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# Introduction

## **It is clear that it is not going to be business as usual for some time.**

Staff who work with children and families are adaptable and will find a way to be helpful. Some of the ideas that have been developed during the COVID -19 pandemic will be seen as opportunities for improving practice in the future.

We want to be part of that journey, and our staff have consulted with Local Authorities to prioritise their learning and development needs over this unique period.

Our offering centres around the knowledge that social workers practising in the virtual reality of their own living rooms will want to keep connecting. Relationship is at the heart of all our practice. Creating and maintaining ethical, fair, helpful and authentic relationships virtually, will stretch our skill base. Strengthening Practice is offering support, coaching and learning to any practitioner who wants to continue developing their practice during these challenging times.

The core of our offering, which we believe to be unique, is our coaching service. Skilled, empathic and reflective social work practitioners offer space and time for social workers to bring their issues, worries and practice dilemmas. We offer guidance, frameworks for testing decision-making and knowledge, and tools to support critical thinking during each session.

*"I think we are developing something here  
which folks are valuing tremendously"*

*AD working with Strengthening Practice to develop the Socially Connected Coaching Service*

# So how does it work?

## Local Authority organisations sign up to the platform.

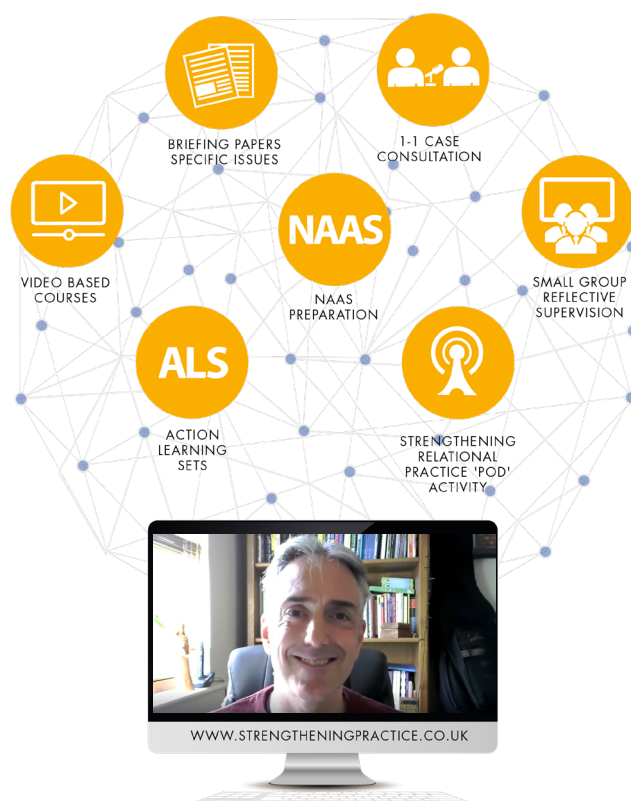
Currently we are offering a three-month contract for three days coaching each week. This gives the authority a chance to test out the service and see how helpful it is during this time of COVID-19.

The platform itself has been developed for ease of use with Local Authority IT, offering a range of good functions alongside a simplicity that makes for ease of use.

On the platform you will find slots for coaching, which you can book either as an individual or as a team.

One of the Strengthening Practice Social Workers will contact you to confirm your time and check out what you hope to gain from the session, so that we can prepare. Your booking page will look like this:

In terms of the learning pods, once again you can sign up individually or with your team. The pods have 8 members and you might find yourself mixing with practitioners from other authorities where you can share best practice, and reflect on the complex issues arising as a result of COVID-19. Each pod will receive notes of the conversation afterwards so that they don't have to try and remember the whole conversation.



*"The platform itself has been developed for ease of use with Local Authority IT"*



# Other services also offered

We also deliver a number of workshops that are on topics we have picked up from the coaching sessions that would be more usefully explored in a learning environment. We also develop specific learning topics based on individual authority need – as we have always done in our face to face work.

Our 1 ½ hour workshops will be publicised on the site and you can sign up. The maximum numbers for these interactive workshops are 12 people. These workshops can be signed up for individually or as part of a team session.

The workshops centre around the latest practice advice and guidance, as well as the collected experience of workers across a number of authorities, and around a number of topics.

## Examples are:

- **Virtual Assessments – can they be done fairly?**
- **Supporting families where domestic violence is an issue**
- **Helping families care for their children where neglect is an issue during COVID-19**



  
SOCIALLY  
CONNECTED  
ONLINE TRAINING

# Socially connected training...



# Video based courses

The following subjects will be offered as 15-20 minute video-based courses, complete with downloadable resources.

**The following subjects will be available very soon.**



## Direct Work with Children: **Social Work Tools**

The focus of social work should be about understanding the child's journey and to be able to hear their story and voice in all the work we do. During these sessions we will look at some of the tools that social workers can use to enable us to do just that. It is important to remember that every child is unique, so we should cater the tools to the situation and to the child's age and learning needs.

The aim is to help social workers familiarise themselves with direct work tools and have the confidence to use them in their practice.



## Using the **'Window of Tolerance'** in times of anxiety

### Regulating and containing ourselves

Strengthening Practice will use the 'Window of Tolerance' model to think about how we can all regulate and contain ourselves in the current circumstances. With heightened anxiety and uncertainty, many will experience more emotional highs and lows than at other times. Using the 'Window of Tolerance' we will unpack some simple principles that help.

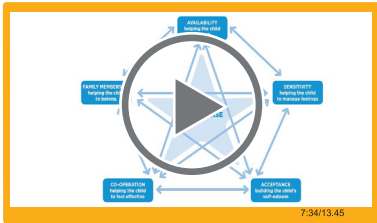


## Safe uncertainty: **Revisiting Mason's Model**

### When is it safe to be uncertain?

This may sound like one of those impossible to solve riddles crafted by a puzzle master in the dead of night, while insomnia and the flickering blue light of a computer screen conspire to rob her of all reason. But social workers deal with uncertainty all the time. We are quite familiar with it, but do we understand how to use uncertainty to support our analyses?

Using Barry Mason's original model, as well as Jo Williams's article from Research in Practice, we have put together a webinar to revisit this important concept.



## The Secure Base Model

The Secure Base Model is a framework for therapeutic care giving. The model promotes the need for care givers to provide positive secure relationships to promote the development of children in their care. Providing children with a secure base enables them to move towards greater security and building resilience. This model is based on the theories of attachment and resilience, as well as lessons from research about placements.

The aim of these sessions is to support social workers and professionals to promote attachment and resilience in foster care and adoption.



## Understanding Capacity Using the Jug Analogy: How to understand our own and others' capacity

When assessing parenting capacity, it is essential that we consider the individual holistically and spend time exploring with them what is 'filling up' their capacity. The same goes for us. For each of us there are many things that take our capacity – both in our personal and professional lives - and to be helpful we need to be able to offer any spare capacity we have. This simple and powerful tool uncovers the connection between our own capacity and that of the people we are seeking to help.



## Group Supervision Using Kolb's 'Experiential Learning': Staying socially connected and reflective!

Social workers are expected to be highly skilled at juggling numerous tasks, developing and retaining large amounts of knowledge and applying it in increasingly complex ways, and putting everything together so that the most vulnerable people in our communities benefit from our interventions.

Strengthening Practice will use the '**Solution Focused Questions**' card from Siobhan Maclean's Reflective Practice Cards pack, to encourage lively conversations about critical thinking and analysis.

### Other subjects in development

- Grounding techniques
- Building Resilience
- The Risk and Resilience Map Tool: A tool for understanding and assessing resilience
- Humane home visiting
- Building relationships differently
- The 'Impact on the Child' tool: Measuring the impact on the child
- **Biology, Behaviour and Environment: Being your best self in challenging times**
- **How to survive together at home during self-isolation**
- **Group Supervision Using 'Solution Focused Questions': Staying socially connected through learning**
- **Keeping grounded in uncertain times**
- **Tools for families to use During COVID-19**
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We will also offer...



## Briefing Papers - Specific issues

For example: Managing Risk During Coronavirus - D.A. & Mental Illness

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## 1-1 Case Consultation

To allow social workers to receive consultation on individual cases.

**Delivered live via webcam.**

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## Small Group Reflective Supervision

Reflective group sessions looking at current practice and support needs. **Delivered live via webcam.**

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## NAAS Preparation

**Masterclasses** – small group preparation for NAAS assessment,  
**Delivered live via webcam.**

**NAAS Coaching** – 1-1 (or up to 3 participants)

**Delivered live via webcam.**

## Action Learning Sets



Small group extended learning session using Strengthening Practice

**Materials for existing customers, delivered live via webcam.**

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## Strengthening Relational Practice 'Pod' Activity

Ongoing planned activity of Strengthening Relational Practice Pods -

**delivered remotely for existing customers.**





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