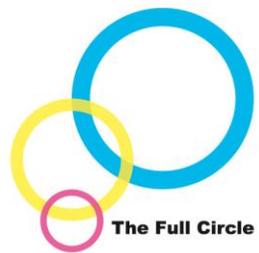


The Full Circle

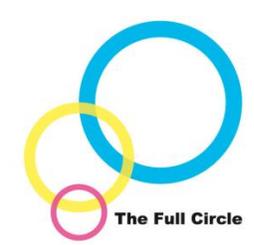
Michelle Summerbell
Team Manager, The Full Circle





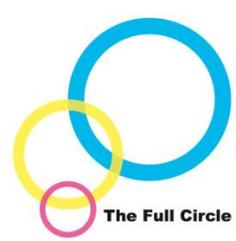
Background

- Durham County Council is unique in that it has employed a therapeutic team continuously since 1995 in order to meet the mental health needs of the children and young people being supported by the Local Authority.
- Durham's therapeutic team, The Full Circle sits under the umbrella of Countywide Specialist Services and is a specialised, integrated children's mental health service for children particularly for those who have experienced complex trauma through neglect and abuse.
- The Team consists of therapeutically trained social workers, a Clinical Nurse Specialist and a Consultant Clinical Psychologist (both employed by NHS). The benefit Full Circle can provide in addition to private therapy providers is a more holistic approach, having a good understanding of social work and close links with care teams and professional support networks around a family.
- Complex childhood trauma can lead to developmental trauma - it can affect the way the child views themselves, others and the world around them, brain development and subsequently their social, emotional and educational progress.
- The impact of developmental trauma can reach long into adulthood. Effective and targeted services are therefore essential to mitigate the impact of trauma and support children to heal.



How do we work and what do we offer?

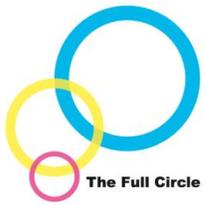
- The Full Circle service works right across children's services and early help, but the majority of our support is provided to children looked after and families seeking post-adoption support. This is because therapeutic support requires safety and stability around the children with all basic parenting in place.
- The Team has close links with agencies such as CAMHS and NSPCC and over time The Full Circle service has developed a positive and respected reputation, feeding into the development of local service provision.
- The Full Circle provides consultation, advice & guidance to parents, carers and a wide range of professionals.
- We also provide therapeutic support directly to children and young people (C&YP), their families and carers using a range of evidence-based approaches to therapeutic intervention.
- The Full Circle also provides training for professionals and carers around attachment difficulties, the impact of trauma on children and how to help them heal.



The Full Circle

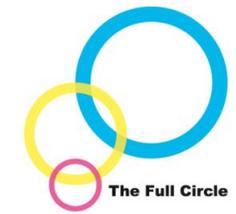
The benefits – a case study

- C was referred into Full Circle as the family were asking for some post-adoption support. C was 5 years old at the point of referral and her parents (adoptive) were experiencing challenges in caring for C whose past trauma had an impact as we know this is a factor even pre-birth.
- C was removed from her birth family at birth after assessment and periods of intervention due to concerns in regards to a chaotic home environment, substance misuse, violence in the home, inappropriate people frequenting the home and neglect and inconsistent care for C's siblings.
- C was subsequently placed in foster care and was adopted when she was 14 months old. C could often hit out, kick and bite others, this could also include other children in school. C required a high level of supervision and parents found it exhausting managing her behaviour all of the time. C's presentation and challenges in school also often meant her learning and social skills were significantly impacted.
- Training and direct therapeutic parenting support was provided for parents alongside school support and training and the outcome of intervention was a positive one. The situation was stabilised, C was more emotionally regulated and connected with her parents and those around her also gained a greater understanding of her hidden needs and how to meet these and help her to heal.
- Family feedback for Full Circle worker: *“Thank you so much for all of your help and support over the last year...you're help has been invaluable to us as a family and I really don't think we could ever thank you enough. It literally changed our family for the better! Thank you so much from the bottom of our hearts”*



Key developments in 2020-2021

- Adapted working practices – COVID-19 response
- Trauma Informed approaches strategy roll-out
- Virtual schools pilot to improve support offer to looked after C&YP
- Traded services to extend the offer of support available to children in County Durham – adding value to current provision.



Summary of outcomes

- 593 referrals were received in 2020-2021 with an average of 195 cases open for ongoing work/support at any one time.
- Outcome measures identified that, 75% of children who had been open to Full Circle had improved outcomes across a range of areas.

- Ofsted feedback:

“Most children in care are making good progress. Their assessed needs are understood and addressed by high-quality care plans. Children have access to a wide range of specialised support such as the Full Circle therapeutic team and the Supporting Solutions intensive support team.” (July 2021)

“The therapeutic service provided by Full Circle is invaluable. Using evidence based research, the service is making a real difference to children who have been traumatised by adverse childhood experiences, as well as supporting their carers. “ (September 2019)