



**NHS**

**Oxford Health**  
NHS Foundation Trust



# ReConnect

PARENT AND CHILD

Children and Young People Directorate

# ReConnect

Improving relationships between parents  
and children

## Introducing ReConnect

ReConnect is an innovative service aimed at improving outcomes for the most vulnerable children under the age of two.

This group will include children, as well as any unborn children, who are at high risk of developing a disorganised attachment through experiencing parenting breakdown, neglect and abuse, or parental mental health problems that impact on the child's emotional needs.

ReConnect aims at breaking the cycle of repeated abuse and neglect through offering intensive early intervention to high risk parents.

ReConnect is a small county-wide service across Buckinghamshire that includes a consultant clinical psychologist, clinical psychologist, senior mental health practitioner and social worker.

Every parent referred to the service is offered intensive evidence-based therapeutic interventions that are designed to improve the parent's capacity to hold the child's needs in mind as well as developing skills in responding sensitively to their child.

## Who can refer?

We welcome referrals from any professional working with the parent and child. These can include social workers, GPs, midwives, health visitors, community paediatricians, children's centre staff and mental health professionals.

## Referral criteria

Referral criteria **must** include the following:

- The referred child must be under the age of two. This can include unborn children.
- The family is known to social care. The child is on a Child Protection plan (CP plan) or is in Pre-Court proceedings (PLO).
- The parent acknowledges (either full or partial acknowledgement) the risks social care have identified in their parenting capacity assessment and is willing to undergo therapy.

and **at least one** of the following criteria to be present:

- current parental mental health problems
- parental history of childhood trauma or neglect
- history of domestic violence
- history of substance misuse
- history of severe parenting breakdown including permanent removal of previous children

## Referral process

The process is as follows:

- Referrals to ReConnect need to go through SPA (Single point of Access Team for Bucks CAMHS) by phone on 01865 901951; lines open 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The Reconnect team is happy to offer consultations on cases which can also be booked via the SPA team if required too.

## Treatments offered

Reconnect offers highly intensive treatment programmes aimed at improving the quality of the parent-child relationship. **Each parent** will receive a treatment package that includes the following:

- Weekly mentalization-based parenting groups (20 weeks duration)
- Individual mentalization-based treatment with parent alone (fortnightly sessions)
- Interventions focused on the parent-child relationship (e.g. video interaction guidance / watch, wait and wonder)



## Additional treatments may be offered if required:

- Trauma work (e.g. narrative exposure therapy)
- Individual CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy)
- Couple work

## What is mentalization-based treatment?

Mentalization-based treatment (MBT) is a therapeutic intervention originally designed for working with adults with borderline personality disorder but more recently applied to other patient groups including work with parents and families.

MBT aims at helping a parent develop skills in being able to notice, think about and consider a child's needs and how these might differ from their own needs.

MBT has been found to be effective in helping parents manage their own emotional arousal and improve their skills in interacting with others including their own children thereby increasing parental sensitivity.

## Consultations

We are happy to discuss any potential referrals and offer consultations to professionals working with parents and children.

## Outcomes

ReConnect aims to deliver high-quality interventions that improve parenting sensitivity and the quality of the child's attachment to the parent. Routine outcome measuring is integral to service delivery. ReConnect is being evaluated by the Anna Freud Centre, LGA and commissioners at Bucks County Council.

ReConnect measures:

- the quality of the parent-child relationship (for example, video coding of parenting sensitivity)
- parenting stress
- parental mental health
- service-user satisfaction

Over the long-term, it is expected to see improved social care outcomes with a reduction in foster placements, court cases and care proceedings.

## Contact us

ReConnect  
Sue Nicholls Centre  
Bierton Road  
Aylesbury  
HP20 1EG  
Contact: SPA - 01865 901951

For further information about ReConnect, visit our website on: <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/bucks/services/reconnect/>

## Feedback from parents

Here is what some parents have had to say about ReConnect:

My psychologist had to see me three or four times before I felt like I could do this work. But she gained my trust which for me is a very difficult thing to do. I've always had a big problem with trusting people.

I just feel incredibly lucky to have got on the service ... It has literally changed how I parent and changed my life.

I thought the service was invaluable. Not because I have mental health issues, but also it helped me understand my daughter. It helped me understand when she's frustrated and how to stay patient with her.

I didn't have a very good connection with my son and the ReConnect programme was just to kind of help me to get that bond back and get that bond with my son again... It's made me realise that actually I did need the help.

In partnership with:



If you would like to have information translated into a different language, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team at: [EqualityandInclusion@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:EqualityandInclusion@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk)

**Arabic** يُرجى الاتصال بنا إذا كنتم ترغبون في الحصول على المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بتسويق مختلف.

**Bengali** আপনি এই তথ্য অন্য ভাষায় বা আলাদা আকারে পেতে চাইলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।  
**Urdu** اگر آپ یہ معلومات دیگر زبان یا مختلف فارمیٹ میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

**Chinese** 若要以其他語言或格式提供這些資訊，請與我們聯繫

**Polish** Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, skontaktuj się z nami.

**Portuguese** Queira contactar-nos se pretender as informações noutra idioma ou num formato diferente.

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