Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP)

CPP is a therapeutic program for infants and toddlers ages 0-6 who have experienced a traumatic event like living with domestic violence or child abuse.

The effects of these experiences at such young ages can be very harmful, but with effective treatments like CPP, young children can get back on the track to well-being.

Birth parents who have children that are in foster care and foster parents participate in CPP to support the child’s healing.
What is Child-Parent Psychotherapy?
Because your child is young, he can't talk about his feelings like older children or adults do, but he can express himself through his behavior, how he interacts with others and through his play. Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) involves the child, the parent and/or foster caregiver in interventions to promote the child’s development and healing after trauma exposure.

Parents and caregivers who participate in CPP will learn to read the child’s communication, behavior and emotions more effectively to better respond to her needs. As a result, parents often feel more effective and their relationship with the child improves.

Why should I participate?
A very young child's development is open to be shaped and changed by various factors in her life, including relationships with parents and caregivers.

Strong and secure relationships support:
• behavior - (sleeping, feeding, crying or fussiness);
• physical health, including stress management and brain development;
• healthy expression of feelings;
• relationships with others;
• exploration and learning; and
• safety after trauma.

Parents who successfully participate in CPP are shown to achieve the goals of their service plan in less time; and they are less likely to have repeat involvement with child welfare services.

CPP can help you to:
• better understand your child and yourself as a parent or foster parent;
• read the child’s signals and emotions for healthy communication;
• understand the ways the child is coping after difficult experiences;
• learn how to discipline effectively and supportively; and
• learn how to be with the child in ways that feel positive for both of you.

Developing a positive relationship with your child now will not only strengthen the bond that exists between the two of you, it will also provide a strong foundation for his emotional health and well-being.

Who participates in CPP?
Each CPP session is different, and the therapist will work with parents and foster parents to determine the format based on the needs of the child. Parents will learn how to use their strengths and values to support the well-being of their child, and may join the intervention after working on other areas of their service plan. The foster parents will learn how to support the child’s needs while he or she is in their care.

How long will we participate?
Treatment usually lasts 12-18 months. If the child is returned home, the treatment can continue to support early reunification needs.