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The Good-Enough Group: The dynamics of digital space in an online psychoanalytic parent toddler group for adoptive families

Abstract

The online adoption parent-toddler group is a psychoanalytically-informed therapeutic group for parents and toddlers. The intervention is based on Anna Freud's original model of offering preventive support to parents and toddlers to identify and address developmental needs, adapted to support adoptive families and to be delivered online during the pandemic. Three clinical findings from this pilot group will be discussed:

- Toddlers' and their parents' experiences of the process of separation-individuation were brought to light through their negotiation of the digital spaces they inhabited together during the group
- Despite the technical difficulties of including toddlers in the online setting, toddler participation and free play enabled valuable 'live' engagement with toddler play, development and parent-child relationships
- The group facilitators' subjective experiences of providing an online group mirrored anxieties communicated by parents about whether they would do a 'good-enough' job of parenting their children. Observations and reflections on this and other parallel processes played a central role in enabling group members to voice and process complex feelings of guilt and shame.