

**B.A.S.E.®Babywatching UK**  
**NEWSLETTER May 2018**



**Welcome to our spring**

**B.A.S.E.®Babywatching UK**

**Newsletter**

**Dear All**

Writing to greet you as spring really gets underway - we hope you enjoyed the Bank Holiday's stunning sunshine (and a certain wedding) the promise of the longer evenings. A key landmark coming up this month for us all is **GDPR** on May 25<sup>th</sup>, and we imagine that like us at BWUK you've been looking at the implications for you and your practice. We've got a new training coming up next month, and we've heard some great stories from people running groups and from a mother who brought her second baby to a group, which we thought you'd find interesting.

And we thought you might like to know that around **525** children have been reached by **B.A.S.E.®Babywatching** this academic year alone – that's pretty special! With your help, we are determined that more children will be able to have this wonderful opportunity.



**GDPR**

As with so many individuals, companies and charities up and down the UK, we've been preparing for and taking advice on and reviewing our policies with respect to **GDPR**. We've written to everyone to check that it's OK for us to hold details, and we've looked into how to keep those details even more super-secure. Our policies will no doubt evolve over time, as we all learn and share further understanding of what we need to and can do, but for now we are asking all Mentors and Group Leaders to make sure that your own practice is also GDPR compliant, and also in line with GDPR from the places where you're running

**B.A.S.E.®Babywatching** groups - usually but not exclusively schools. Don't forget that having a parent's name and contact details would be covered by the new rules! We've decided that when we share stories from groups in our Newsletter henceforward, we'll simply name babies and parents with an initial. It's a small thing, and no great effort, but we'd like to extend our attentiveness and care where and when we can. If you have any queries or dilemmas, please ask your Mentor or contact Michele our CEO or Kulsum our Administrator at the **B.A.S.E.®Babywatching UK office**.

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**What's it like being a  
B.A.S.E.®Babywatching parent and  
baby? For the second time?**

*We're always delighted when parents give us feedback on the process, and even more delighted that some parents want to come*

*back. Here are some comments from a Hinckley Parks Primary mum*

*1. Baby watching with a second child was very different, because it was one of the few times when I was able to sit back and really focus on T and what she was doing during the time when we were present in the classroom. It also made me much more aware each week of what progress and changes T was making because other people were commenting upon them.*

*I enjoyed the sessions and listening to what the children observed about the interaction between T and I. Some of the comments of the children were about things I had not even noticed, like kissing or stroking T's head, or holding her hands whilst she was feeding. It was also lovely to hear the children talk about being proud of T when she was able to do something new or about being happy when T looked at them or tried to interact with them.*

*Hearing the children talk about their view that T would feel loved during the sessions was also a lovely observation to hear.*

*2. I found that going to Babywatching was a very calm time for us. It was a time when*

*I could really focus on T, in what is otherwise a very busy life/. Our baby watching sessions are one of the main things I will miss now I have returned to work.*

*3. I would definitely recommend Babywatching to any considering it. I work in child protection so for me thinking about and considering the issue of attachment and empathy relating to children is very interesting on a professional basis.*

*But I also think that the children gain a lot from the session. It also makes you as a parent think about how you interact with your child and what others observe.*

**Do you have any comments from a parent you'd like to share? Do let the office know, we'd love to hear from you.**



### **What happens when the parent and baby can't come?**

Here's a really imaginative and moving account of what one Group Leader did when the session was due but the mum and baby can't come. It's fascinating to see how a simple activity, beautifully facilitated along **B.A.S.E.®Babywatching** principles, can have the effect of enabling the children to become regulated, develop their sense of belonging, contribute and in a gently indirect way, process some of their feelings. Thank you to **Alice Plosker**, Group Leader at Perivale, for this very rich account.

### **Baby watching session – group Sandtray**

Mother and baby were unable to come to the session due to illness. I was aware that the group had struggled when this had happened previously and thought a structured group activity might better suit the group than drawing pictures. The group had experienced lots of missed sessions due to a variety of reasons.

I asked the children to sit in their usual seats, with the space where mother and baby would normally play left open. One by one the children chose a 'sand tray miniature'. I explained the task in full to them before we began to ease their anxieties. There was a sense of excitement about picking a 'toy', so I ask them to silently choose and let their hands and instincts choose – instead of their thoughts. Footballs and cars were chosen quickly by the elder boys who outwardly appear confident and vocal. They all held their objects close. I said that I would have the first turn, to demonstrate the task. I placed my tree in the centre of the room in front of the blanket *'I am a tree; my roots go right under the ground and help me feel strong and upright'*

Eager to place his ball in the middle was R, he rolled his whole body into the scene and said that he was the *'best football'*. Up next was Z, whose mother died 2 years ago. *'I am a frog and you're dead'* as she squashed my tree with the big frog. The children gasped but I let them know that whatever

they put in or say was ok. A, an anxious boy who struggles with his sense of belonging said, *'I am a snake and a predator'*. K, who is currently under social services and has a chaotic home life placed his ball behind the bin and outside of the group *'I get bounced around'*. The two quieter girls placed a duck *'I like friends'* and *'I am a magnet, I like to feel connected'*. E who did not speak at all in the first term, struggled to place hers, however with the groups encouragement she finally placed her owl but decided not to speak.

They were all quiet throughout, thoughtfully listening to each other and having big reactions to where they went within the circle. P who never speaks, looked proud as he placed his ball in an unusual place on a shelf looking down – all the children praised this, and he smiled broadly.

After everyone had placed their objects, many asked if they could move theirs. I said, *'Let's notice things first and then we can move them one by one'*. They noticed

who was looking at who, who was on their own, and wondered why and how each felt being alone or together.

Almost all the children moved their objects. Z, lifted the tree and said it *'wasn't dead anymore and she liked being next to it'*. The ball behind the bin moved to *'higher grounds to see what was happening'*. The magnet which trapped the predator became a pond for the duck who was looking at the owl wanting to be its friend because it looked lonely. The snake moved close to the group and didn't want to attack.

*'Why did we do this?'*

*'Why do you think?'*

*'Because we have learnt to notice things now' 'Yes exactly'*

*'And to think about how the baby feels - hey which toy would he pick? It would be cool if we could do this with him'.*

The following weeks, all the children who had previously been silent began to talk. I wonder if this new way of expressing their thoughts and feelings enabled a sense of

safety and belonging in the group.

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### TRAINING

- We thoroughly enjoyed Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, Ealing **Regional Group Leader Training** - such a brilliant, enthusiastic, lively, focused group, great Group Leaders in the making!
- Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> June, **London Annual MENTOR Training**
- Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June, **London Annual GROUP LEADER Training**

*For more details on any of these events or sign up, please let us know*

### CONFERENCES

Saturday April 28<sup>th</sup>, Holborn Bars, London **UKCP Conference: Minding the Gap in Children's Mental Health.** *Babywatching CEO Michele Crooks and Paul Cutler, B.A.S.E.®Babywatching Group Leader presented a workshop about*

*B.A.S.E.®Babywatching, which included a 'live' session with a mum and baby.*

*The workshop went really well, and we were reminded that despite the simplicity of the concept, B.A.S.E.®Babywatching is sometimes difficult to explain to other people: however, watching a 'live' session is when people 'get' it. Being present at a session is when people experience its power and effectiveness. We would be delighted to recreate this one-hour workshop to senior leads in a school to help persuade them of the power of B.A.S.E! Contact Michele or Kulsum for more details.*

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**October 5-7<sup>th</sup> 2018      Ulm, Germany**  
**17th International Attachment Conference on Attachment, Divorce and New Beginnings**

*Hosted and organised by Dr Karl-Heinz Brisch, founder of B.A.S.E.®Babywatching*  
<https://www.bindungskonferenz.de/en/>

**AND FINALLY** – a lovely moment for our CEO Michele Crooks, from one of her sessions: reminding us that the positive

benefits of **B.A.S.E.®Babywatching** isn't only for the children ...

*'Working with a Year 1 class today, and we were exploring baby's joy at being able to stand, with a little support from mum) and what he was enjoying, because he was smiling with delight at Mummy. One of the children commented that baby wanted to stand so he could look in Mummy's face and be close to her.*

*Mummy was so moved by this! She said that comments like this are so positive, and boost your confidence in being a 'mum'. It's one she's taken away to treasure'.*



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