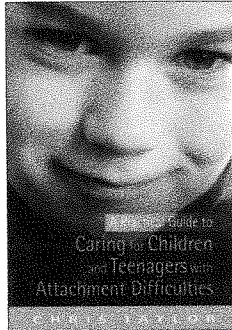




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## Make residential care work for children



### **A Practical Guide to Caring for Children and Teenagers with Attachment Difficulties**

Chris Taylor

Jessica Kingsley Publishers

ISBN 9781849050814

£18.99

224 pages


This book is divided into eight easy to read, well-structured chapters, each prefaced by a list of learning outcomes. The first four cover attachment theory and describe the developmental insights staff will need to provide therapeutic support. The rest of the book focuses on working with conflict, anger, and challenging behaviour.

Author Chris Taylor uses his own experience to provide an attachment-based model for making residential care a supportive environment for children recovering from the emotional damage done by dysfunctional families and the care system. He argues the case for parenting groups, where adults can offer children tailored time, space and empathy, resulting in a secure long-term base with clear daily routines. The goal is to absorb the "powerful transactional pull exerted by the child", creating a therapeutic counterbalance to the child's misconceptions and fears.

This is a balanced and quietly persuasive text, with an admirable determination to ensure troubled children receive the highly skilled care they need. But it raises a wider question about whether this is achievable through the current residential care system.

Taylor himself says his approach requires residential staff who have emotional literacy and who can demonstrate unconditional positive regard for children, no matter how stressful the situation. I doubt whether we are even close to having the systems, models and career structures to make a residential care revival viable, but this book may prompt us to think again.

● *Jeffrey Coleman, southern England director, British Association for Adoption and Fostering*

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