

**Audience** Groups 3-6 (Working Together 2010)

**Methods** Individual; small group activity

**Preparation**

No additional preparation required.

**Links to Common Core**

**Common Core 2** Child and young person development (knowledge: understand context). Know and recognise the child or young person's position in a family or caring network, as well as a wider social context, and appreciate the diversity of these networks.

**Common Core 3** Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child (skills: relate, recognize and take considered action). Understand the key role of parents and carers in safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare and involve them accordingly, while recognising factors that can affect parenting and increase the risk of abuse.

**Learning Outcomes**

To identify concerns about parenting capacity that may contribute to neglect.

**Process**

The key aim of the exercise is for participants to consider the balance of strengths and weaknesses that all humans have when learning or developing their skills. Particularly how it is "normal" to react emotionally to a "fear of failing" and how this in turn may negatively impact on motivation and engagement.

Ask participants to work individually on the following:

Participants are to imagine that they have won the most amazing six month trip of a lifetime to a remote island in the Caribbean, all expenses paid plus all the spending money they desire.

Unfortunately (as with everything) there is a catch!

Over a three week period, they have to learn a sufficient amount of the local language and develop some IT skills to help the islanders set up a website to help them attract more tourists to their island. They will receive training by a team of five different professionals to help them develop the skills and language they need, but if the person does not get up to speed, then another contestant will be chosen. Each week their performance is evaluated and they are given feedback during a meeting with the professional team on how well they are doing in achieving set goals.

Continued ↘

**Time**

Total : 45 minutes

Individual work 10 mins

Small group work/feedback 35 mins

Impact of learning  
disabilities  
on parenting  
capacity

further

G10<sub>1</sub>

## Process Continued ▾

The small group exercise is to get people to identify with a highly valued situation or outcome – becoming a parent is often a long-held dream for parents with learning disabilities and the fear of the loss of a child due to their learning disabilities is very real for many clients. Being assessed can be very intimidating and parents with learning disabilities may feel they may not succeed as they may have experienced a high level of failure throughout their life to date.

During feedback, it is worth exploring how participants experience frustration and anger from parents they work with in relation to task demands and apparent criticism. Disengagement or alternatively over-compensation are often common responses to such pressures. However, when such emotions are demonstrated by parents, this can often feed into negative evaluations of their skills, when it is simply a common response to threat situations. People with learning disabilities may have more difficulty regulating their emotions than others and this too can be an area that they need support with.