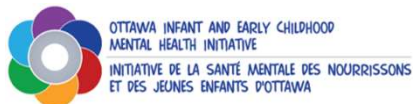




## Exploring the Circle of Security - A Relationship Based Parenting Program

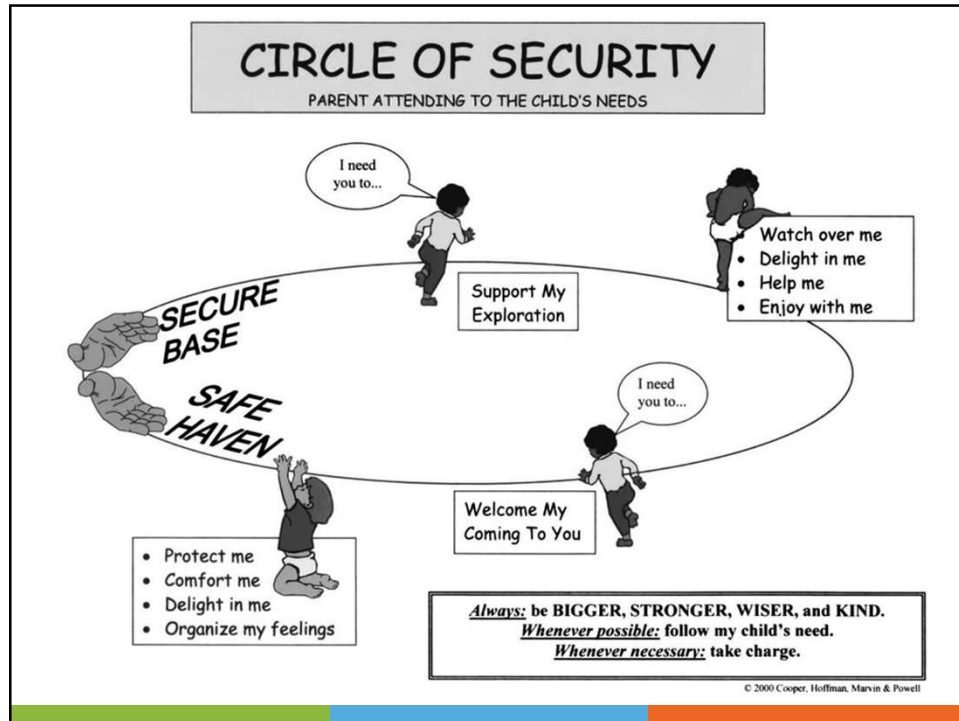
Parent Resource Centre  
Facilitator and Co-learner:  
Joanne Boyd



### Practice Change Champions

Through Practice Change Champions, we are aiming to influence practice and organizational change to include attachment and early childhood mental health in community programs and services. This is a virtual discussion series with a facilitator, intended for staff working with children 0-6 years and/or with their families."



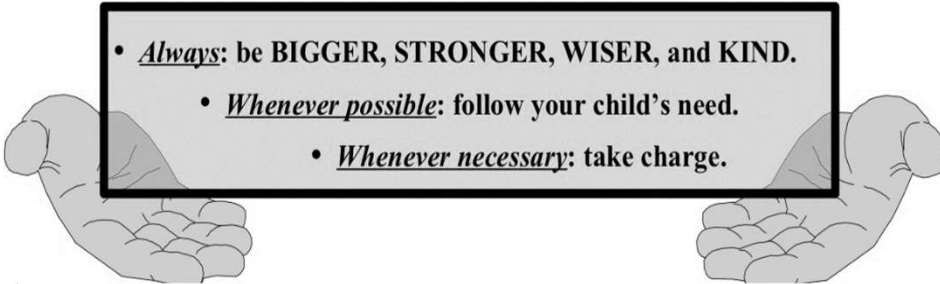


## Key Messages of Circle of Security


- We don't know what we don't know.
- It is never too late!
- Rated PG = NO Parental Guilt or Blame.
- GOOD ENOUGH parenting.
- Reframe from seeking attention to needing CONNECTION!
- BEHAVIOUR = COMMUNICATION



(Almost)  
Everything I Need to Know  
About Being a Parent  
in  
25 Words or less




• Always: be BIGGER, STRONGER, WISER, and KIND.  
• Whenever possible: follow your child's need.  
• Whenever necessary: take charge.




Educator as attachment figure to  
the child

(Almost)  
Everything the teacher needs to know about being  
the Classroom Hands  
in 25 words or less



ALWAYS BE: STRONG, KIND AND COMMITTED  
WHENEVER POSSIBLE: FOLLOW THE CHILD'S NEED  
WHENEVER NECESSARY: TAKE CHARGE

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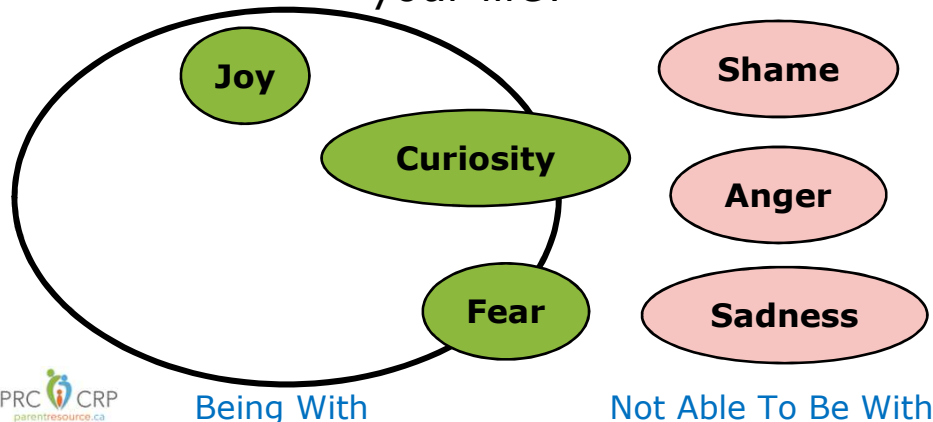
## Breakout Room #1 - Q's (7 minutes)

Think about a child whose behaviours you may be struggling with...

- Can you reflect on where this child is on the circle. Is the child on the top (exploring) or on the bottom (coming in to have their emotional cup filled)?
- Can you reframe from the child is *looking for attention* to the child is *seeking connection*? How does that change how you feel about the child or situation?

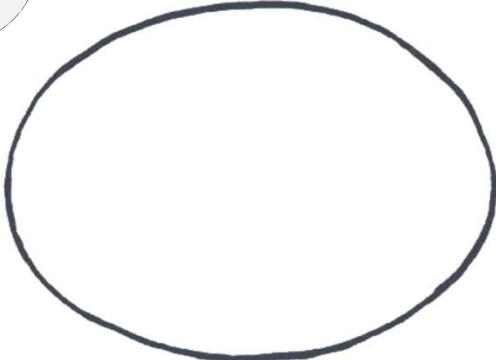
## Being With

How were your emotions supported in your family of origin? How comfortable are you supporting emotions of children in your life?



Personal reflection activity  
– handle with compassion and care.

## Being With



How comfortable was your parent / caregiver with supporting your emotions when you were a child? For each of the core emotions - Curiosity, Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger, and Shame, draw a circle. Place each circle either inside, outside, or partially in/outside the larger blank Circle of Security to show whether your feelings were supported, partially supported or not supported.  
Think about your experiences today, how comfortable are you supporting emotions of children in your work or personal life?

## Shark Music limits our ability to support children's needs



Don't cry. You're okay! Come on there are lots of fun things to do.

Oh here we go again! This child never listens.

I'm a terrible parent or educator!

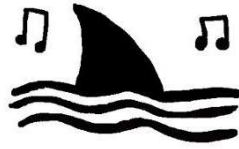
This kid is out of control!

This kid is looking for attention!

I've got to stop this behaviour or I'll lose control of the whole group!

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## Breakout Room #2 - Q's (10 minutes)



- When and where do you hear shark music?
  - Where do you struggle with children on the circle?  
On the top with exploration? Or on the bottom with supporting children's emotions?
- How can you support yourself when you are triggered so you can choose to meet the child's need? What calms you in the moment?

All parents and educators have and strengths and struggles. Sometimes, ruptures happen in our relationships. Observing children and reflecting upon our own needs compassionately in the moment, helps us build safety and security.

### Repairing Relationships with a Time-In

This is a guideline. It is, of course, harder than this page makes it sound.

#### I am Upset and My Child is Upset

When necessary, I stick to the Time-Out. \* For me, for my child, or for both of us, until I get back on the Circle by:  
Realizing that I am Riggins, Stronger, Wiser, and Kind  
Reminding myself that no matter how I feel, my child needs me  
\*A Time-Out can be helpful as a first step, but not as a punishment

#### I am Calm (enough) and My Child is Upset

We can build a safe "repair routine" together (remember: the first 1,000 times are the hardest!).  
I take Charge so my child is not too out of control  
Go to a neutral place that is our Time-In spot, where we sit together and let feelings begin to change.  
I maintain a calm tone of voice. Firm, reassuring, and kind.  
We can do something different, for several minutes: read, or look out the window, or attend to a chore together.  
I help my child bring words to her/his feelings.  
"It looks like this is hard for you" or "See you mad/had/afraid?"  
I talk about my feelings about what just happened.  
"When you did that, I felt..."  
I stay with my child until s/he is calm enough. It may take a while for a child to calm down from overwhelming and unorganized feelings. Rule of thumb: Stay in charge, and stay sympathetic.

#### I am Calm (enough) and My Child is Calm (enough)

I use the following to support our repair and to make repair easier in the future.  
I help my child use words for the needs and feelings that s/he is struggling with my listening and talking together. Remember RIGGS: Keep it Short and Sweet.  
I help my child take responsibility for her/his part and I can take responsibility for my part.  
Rule of thumb: No blaming allowed.  
We talk about new ways of dealing with the problem in the future even for very young children, talking out loud about new options will establish a pattern and a feeling that can be repeated through the years.

Bottom line: it's the relationship (and only the relationship) that will build the child's capacity to organize her/his feelings. My child's problem may look like something that is being done on purpose. But at its core, it's an issue of needing to reconnect and learning to handle difficult feelings in a safe and secure way. By taking an "I can/we can" perspective "Together we are going to figure out what you need" my child will realize that I'm in charge as someone who is Riggins, Stronger, Wiser and Kind. This will reassure her/him that feelings will settle and organize and the relationship will be repaired.

## Repairing Relationships with a Time-In

I am upset and the child is upset –  
regulate yourself

I am calm (enough) but the child is  
upset – co-regulate

I am calm and the child is calm -  
listen & express feelings, repair,  
problem solve or give an new option



## Rupture and Repair Behaviour = Communication

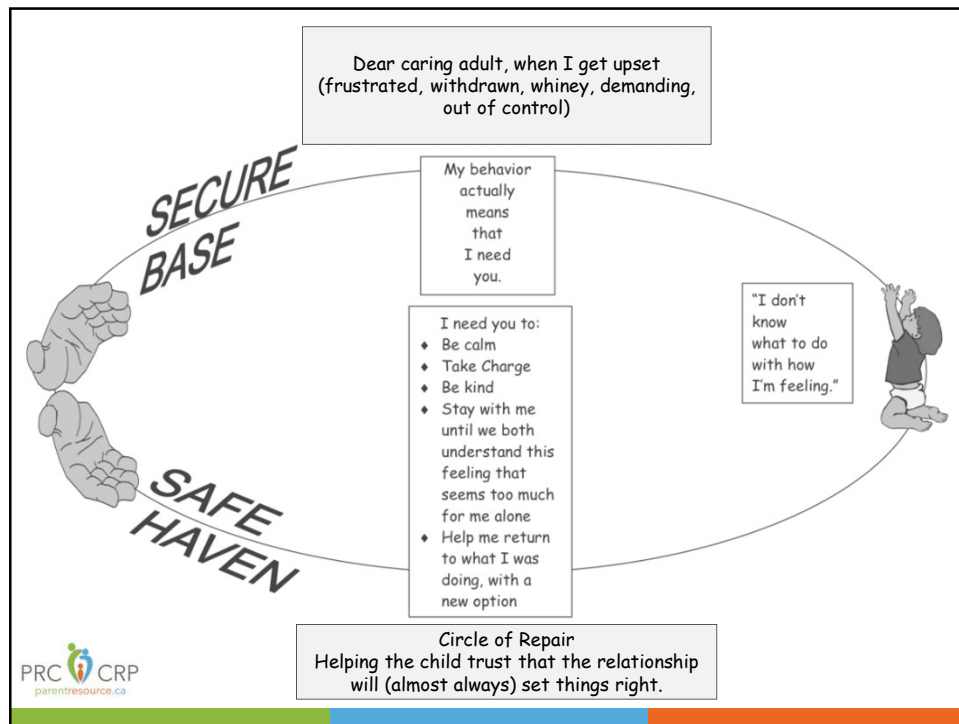
Recognize the  
rupture. Reflect  
and name your  
shark music

Time-out for the  
adult. Try to  
pause and work  
on calming  
yourself

Time-in for the  
child. Being with  
the child and  
trying to meet  
the child's need

The goal is to help children feel safe and connected in our  
care with support and healthy limits.

Bigger, Stronger, Wiser and Kinder



## Summary of our shared learning ...

- Infants and young children are wired for relationships & early brain development is dependent on this. Connection is essential throughout the lifespan.
- The roadmap to secure attachment is about meeting children's needs on the circle.
- Healthy attachment supports optimal development including emotional regulation and social emotional learning.
- All parents / educators want what is best for children.
- We can provide opportunities for children to experience safe, secure relationships. It is never too late.





## Summary of our shared learning ...



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- We all have our own working model of relationships based on our experiences. Our past experiences, future worries and stressors impact how we respond to children's needs.
- Being aware of where we struggle as parents or educators can help us respond differently. This means we are better able to meet our needs & the needs of others.
- We can make repair with others when we get off track and refocus on attachment needs to support strong relationships.
- We all have strengths and struggles. Observation, reflection and compassion are key!

## Support parents / each other as educators to:



Notice  
shark  
music &  
get calm

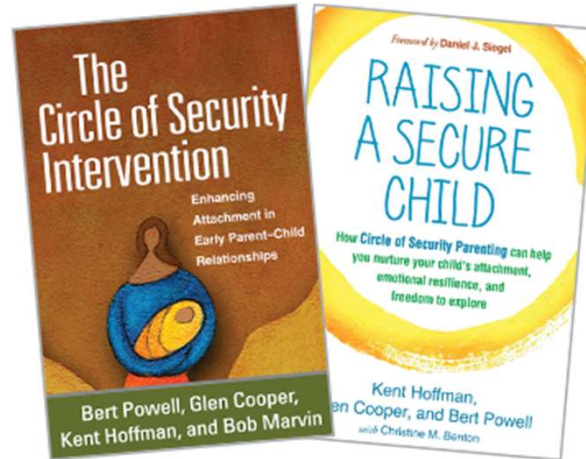
See  
the  
child's  
needs

*BE WITH*  
emotions

Create a  
secure  
base &  
safe  
haven

Breakout room #3 - Q (5 minutes)  
What is one thing you have learned? What will you try?

## Learn more about COSP™



<https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/circle-of-security-model/what-is-the-circle-of-security/>

## COSP™ Training Opportunities



- <https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/register-for-a-training/>

Training to support parents individually or in groups

- One week online training
- Two week online training
- In-person training

- COSP training for educators in Ottawa contact [jboyd@parentresource.ca](mailto:jboyd@parentresource.ca) for more information

## COSP™ Resources

- Video Overview of COS  
<https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/resources-for-parents/> 9:16 mins
- Video: COS–Unconditional Love <https://youtu.be/1wpz8m0BFM8> 4.23 mins
- Video: Intro To COS <https://youtu.be/cW2BfxsWguc> 4:02 mins
- Video: Awareness Test <https://youtu.be/oSQJP40PcGI> 1:07 mins
- Video: COS–Connection <https://youtu.be/F6DhnbgrAOo> 2.41 mins
- Video: Being With & Shark Music <https://youtu.be/l6etNIboyuo> 4.35 mins
- COS Handouts (Multilingual) available at bottom of webpage:  
<https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/circle-of-security-model/what-is-the-circle-of-security/> Under tab - *Resources for Parents* see multilingual videos.
- Movie: Inside Out explores many of the *Being With* attachment concepts

## Thank you for participating tonight!

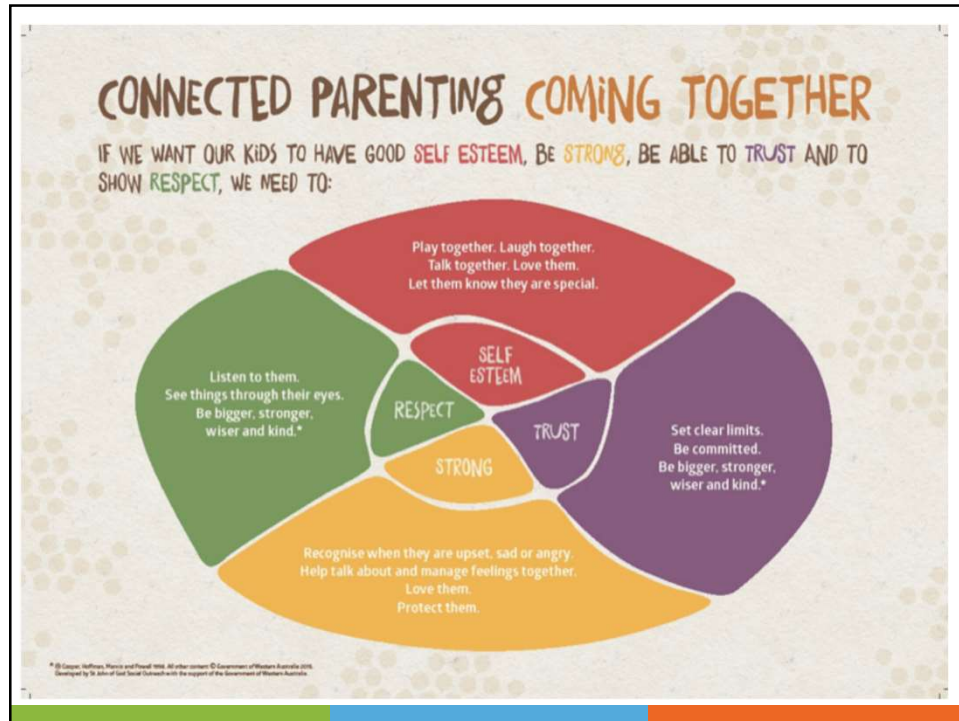


Every day in a 100 small ways, our children ask, "Do you hear me? Do you see me? Do I matter?" Their behaviour often reflects our response. L.R. Knost

## OCYI's IECMH Practice Change Champions Sept 21, 2022 Event

### Exploring the Circle of Security - A Relationship Based Parenting Program

Facilitator: Joanne Boyd



**Thank you for being Practice Change Champions!**



The Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Education and Awareness Task Group invites you to take a **short follow-up survey** to best orient future learning engagements.

Please be reminded of the **'take-home' resources** that will be provided via email.