

A Neuro-Developmental Approach to Creating a Strong Foundation for Social-Emotional Learning in Infants and Toddlers

Resource Handout | May 2023

Glossary

Attunement: When parents recognize their child's signals, understand those signals, respond appropriately, and change their responses to meet their child's needs.

Co-Regulation: When a caregiver supports a child to help them manage their emotions and return to a calm, socially engaged state.

Mentalizing: "Having one's mind in mind" Peter Fonagy. When a parent is able to think about what their baby is thinking and feeling.

Neuroception: How our neurocircuits determine whether or not a situation is safe.

Prosody: The rhythm, intonation, speech patterns and pausing in speech.

Serve and Return: The back and forth interactions between a dyad.

Practitioner Tips

Take time to support the caregivers and their relationship with the child as much as you support the child! Their relationship with the child is vital to the child's ongoing development!

Encourage caregivers to engage in back-and-forth interactions with their children - even if the children are not talking yet! These "serve and return" interactions will support the child's neurological development and sense of self.

Model creating interactive storybook read aloud to families. Instead of just reading the text on the page, encourage the caregiver to notice what the child notices on each page. Use read alouds to encourage serve and return!

Play peek-a-boo and other anticipation games! These games promote healthy brain development and attunement in both the child and the caregiver!

Help caregivers recognize when children are in a fight/flight/or freeze situation. Support the caregivers in understanding how to co-regulate with their child during these times.

Resources

Harvard Center for the Developing Child

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/>

Dan Siegel's Hand Model of the Brain

<https://drdansiegel.com/hand-model-of-the-brain>

Ann-Bailey's Website:

<http://www.lipsettlearningconnection.com/>

Building Blocks for Social Emotional Learning: Creating safe, secure, and successful schools. Solution Tree Press, 2022.

<https://www.solutiontree.com/building-blocks-for-social-emotional-learning.html>

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