

Touchpoints of Infant, Toddler, Preschool Development: Foundations for Strong Communities: PART II

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Children Learn through Relationships

Processes that require relationships:

- **Attachment**
- **Self Regulation**
- **Mutual Regulation**
- **Social Referencing/Communication**
- **Shared Subjectivity**

**Processes that require emotional availability
of child, parent, teacher**

Touchpoints: Relational Model of Development Learning and Growing in Relationships

- Attachment
- State regulation
- Mutual regulation
- Social referencing/Communication
- Shared subjectivity (understanding each other)
- Self-esteem

Key elements

- *Developmental*
- Preventive
- Relational
- Strengths-based
(empowerment/self-advocacy)
- Systems-theory
- Culturally informed
- Reflective practice
- Evidence-based

Attachment

Apego

**Gatekeeping:
Pasión y Lucha
Competitiva**

How do Touchpoints Principles and Assumptions Help with Gatekeeping?

- An attitudinal framework to support the paradigm shift
- A set of mantras to turn to in times of uncertainty, conflict, and challenge

Not just information: Touchpoints

Strategies for Learning in relationships

- Use the child's behavior as your language to make your relationship with the family: shared observation and discovery
- Meaning making: meaning of attachment behaviors to parents
- Recognize what you bring to the interaction:

**Touchpoints Principle:
Strengths-based Clinical Strategy**

**Look for Opportunities
to Support
Parental Mastery**

Selected Parent Assumptions

- The parent (extended family, community) is the expert on his/her/their child.
- All parents (extended family, community) want to do well by their child.
- Parenting is a process built on trial and error.

**Attachment:
capacity to
endear**

Threats to Attachment

- Physical separation
- Threats to survival (baby, parent, other family members) – including inadequate resources
- Parental challenges

e.g., postpartum depression, PTSD

- Child challenges

e.g., small for gestational dates

autism spectrum disorders

poor health/malnutrition impairing attachment behaviors

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Death Without Weeping

The Perils for Attachment

When Survival is

Threatened

Attachment

- **Who have you been attached to?**
- **What are your attachment behaviors with these people?**

- **Who is attached to you?**
- **What are their attachment behaviors with you?**

Attachment and Temperament: Goodness of Fit

- Think about your temperament. Think about the other person's temperament.
- What aspects of your temperament support your attachment? What aspects of your temperament challenge it?

Attachment

- **Think of all the children in your care, one at a time.**
- **Who did you think of first? Second? Third?**
- **Next to last? Last?**

- **Describe what the first three children you thought of do to endear themselves to you.**

- **Describe what the last three children do that makes them less endearing?**
- **Which of these attributes are ones you can help with? How?**

**Capacidad de
encantar:
los niños que
se ven y
los niños ocultos**

TOUCHPOINTS: A RELATIONAL MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT – Growing and learning in relationships

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States – estados de consciencia

- Deep sleep – sueño profundo
- Light sleep - sueño ligero
- Drowsiness – somnoliento
- Alert – alerta
- Fussy - incomodo
- Crying - llanto

(de la escala Brazelton, y Prechtl)

State Regulation: regulacion de los estados de consciencia

- Cada estado de consciencia tiene sus costos y sus beneficios que deben ser equilibrados
- Diferentes estados de consciencia permiten un equilibrio entre las necesidades del niño y las demandas del medio ambiente
- Estado de alerta le permite al niño comunicarse con las personas que lo cuidan mientras que los estados de sueño lo protegen contra la sobre estimulacion

State Regulation

- Each state of consciousness has costs and benefits to be balanced
- States of consciousness allow for different balances between the infant's needs and the environment's demands
- Alert states allow the infant to communicate with caretakers, while sleep states protect against over-stimulation

Newborns learn

**to show parents that they can
get comfortable**

STATE REGULATION

**Alert State: From State Regulation
to Self Regulation**

State Regulation: Capacity to Register Protest

**Regulacion de los estados:
capacidad para protestar –
emotional availability to all emotions**

All Behavior is State Dependent: Sensory Competencies

Infant's Senses

- are affected by her state
- especially receptive to human input
- even more receptive to mother's input
- lead to experiences, even before birth, which can be remembered and referred to later

**Newborns need state regulation
to engage in relationships:
their most important behavior**

State Regulation and Sensory Functioning

- Sensory sensitivity
- Sensory processing
- Sensory thresholds
- Multimodal sensory processing
- Supramodal sensorimotor functions
- Habituation – neural ‘filtering’
- Soothing, self-soothing

**Parents and other
caregivers need state
regulation to engage in
relationships:**

Who helps us soothe?

Meaning of child's behavior to parents and other caregivers

- Observation
- Shared Discovery
- Co-construction of meaning

Pre-requisites

- Emotional availability – in order to observe
- Relationship – in order to share observations, construct meaning

Supports for Parents and Other Caregivers' State Regulation

- Social connectedness
- Sense of competence, efficacy, confidence
- Experiences of empowerment
- Caregiving that brings moments of pleasure and joy
- Enduring hope

State Regulation

- Think of the last time you were in a 'fussy' state. What triggered the fussing?
- Made it worse? Better?
- What were you thinking while 'fussy'?
- New thoughts as you started feeling less 'fussy'?
- In what ways did the quality of your thinking change as you started feeling less fussy?

State Regulation

- Think of a child and what he or she did while in a 'fussy' state.
- How could you tell – what did you observe- that the child was in a 'fussy' state?
- What triggered the fussing?
- Did anything make it worse? Better?
- Does the child know what made it worse? Better?
- What do you think the child was thinking while feeling 'fussy'?
- How did the child's thoughts change as he or she started feeling less 'fussy'?
- How did the quality of thinking change as he or she felt less fussy?

All Behavior is State Dependent for Humans of All Ages

- Behavior dependent on cognition is altered by
- states of consciousness (e.g., drowsy, alert) and by
- emotional states (e.g., anxious, angry, serene, suspicious, open, etc.)
- Neurobiological correlates: activity of areas of brain responsible for arousal, emotion, and cognition, are wired together and can support or overwhelm each other

BUILDING BLOCKS of EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: LEARNING IN RELATIONSHIPS

- Attachment
- State regulation
- Mutual regulation
- Social referencing
- Shared subjectivity (understanding each other)
- Self-esteem

Emotional availability – to learn from mistakes

Cross-cultural variations in mutual regulation

Variaciones transculturales en regulacion mutua

Demandas del medio ambiente y regulacion mutua

Environmental Demands and Mutual Regulation

Mutual Régulation throughout the lifespan

- In all of our actions, everyday, with family, friends, colleagues and clients
- Shaped by our states – of consciousness and emotion
- Shaped by our cultures and cultural differences

Mutual regulation is how way get and feel connected

Connections: staying in touch

- **Resnick et al « Protecting Adolescents From Harm – findings from the National Adolescent Longitudinal Health Study » JAMA Sept 10, '97-Vol 278, No 10) - 93,000 adolescents in N.C., Minn.**
- **Parent-child closeness assessed:**
 - « **Most of the time your parent is warm and loving to you »**
 - « **You are satisfied with the way your parent and you communicate with each other »**
 - « **Overall, you are satisfied with your relationship with your parent »**

Connections

Crucial measure of child's closeness to parent

- **5 out of 7 meals as a family in past week**

Connections

Importance of Parental Involvement

Smoking: 42% of 15 – 16 y.o. who don't feel close to parents smoke, 26% smoke who do; 34% who don't eat dinner regularly with parents smoke, 25 % smoke who do

Drinking: 2 x higher prevalence in 15 – 16 y.o. who don't feel close or do not have meals together as compared with those who do

Connections

- **Drug use**: 50% of 15- 16 y.o. who aren't close to parents used MJ, as opposed to 24% of those who are
- **Violence**: 40 % involved in serious fights who aren't close to parents, 30% who are
- **Suicide**: thoughts 3x more likely in teens who aren't close, attempts 2x more likely

CONNECTIONS

- **Sex: 50% of those who don't have frequent meals have sex by age 15 or 16, 32% who do**

Reconocimiento de la expresion
facial y referencia social

Facial Expression Recognition and
Social Referencing:
“What you trying to tell me?”

Imitation and Identification

Symbolic play

or

playing

for real?

Self-esteem: “I did it myself!”

Shared subjectivity

- Putting together attachment, state regulation, self regulation, mutual regulation, and social referencing creates the possibility for the process in which two people meet, experience connection, work to make meaning together, toward mutual understanding
- This also requires what is sometimes called « theory of mind »
- This is the foundation for empathy, compassion, nonviolent cooperation on a peaceful planet

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Para enarmorarse de un niño los padres necesitan

- Un sentido de competencia(somos expertos pero los padres tambien)
- Hacerlos sentir que tienen el poder para obtener lo mejor para sus niños
- Comunidad y conexiones - una red de relaciones
- Conexión con el pasado e identidad cultural
- Esperanza para el futuro— la capacidad para proyectarse a si mismo, al niño y la familia con esperanza para un futuro mejor

To fall in love with a child parents need emotional availability

- A sense of competence (we are experts but parents are too)
- Empowerment
- Connections - a web of relationships: to community, to cultural identity
- Hope – the capacity to envision one’s self, child, family with hope

WE CAN USE OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH
PARENTS TO SUPPORT
THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR CHILDREN

Enhancing Parent Potential

- **Parental sense of competence, efficacy, self-agency, internalized locus of control**
- **Parental connectedness to family, friends, social supports, community**
- **Parental opportunities for self-determination and empowerment**
- **Hope**

What parents need to be the kind of parents *they* want to be for their children

- To perceive themselves as competent
- To feel empowered to make a difference in their children's lives
- To feel connected to a web of supportive relationships – the village
- To feel connected to their pasts to be emotionally available in the present and to dare to hope for their children's future

Nuestro papel en el desarrollo
integral del niño :
apoyar a toda la familia

- Mas alla de ser expertos,
debemos estar emocionalmente
presentes con los padres para
apoyar la disponibilidad
emocional de los padres en el
desarrollo emocional de sus niños

Reflective Practice

Not enough time or

Using the time we have differently

...taking care of ourselves

to take care of others

Reflective Practice for Caregivers 'at Risk'

- Rescue fantasies
- Unreasonable expectations (both ways)
- Vicarious traumatization
- Fear, frustration, disappointment
- Feelings of failure and futility
- Self doubt
- Burn out, demoralization, loss of task orientation
- Self blame – turned against others
- Hopelessness – the negative model

Parents Need Emotionally Available Professional Caregivers

- To share the care
 - To honor, elicit and support parents' expertise and perspectives
 - To support and strengthen parent-child ties
- (There is no such thing as quality education without family involvement)

Professional Caregivers Need – in order to be emotionally available

- Adequate pay, benefits, job security, respect
- Recognition of their value and expertise
- Understanding of their challenges
- Emotional support –including connections to their colleagues- as they share the care with parents, entering into intimate emotional relationships with children necessary for learning
- Opportunities for continuous adult learning

**A Country's Future
Greatness is
Determined by
its Care for its
Children Today**