

Using Attachment Theory to Help Children: Review from Course 4

Evette Horton, PhD, NCC, LPCS, RPTS

UNC Horizons Program

www.unchorizons.org

Attachment Theory Review

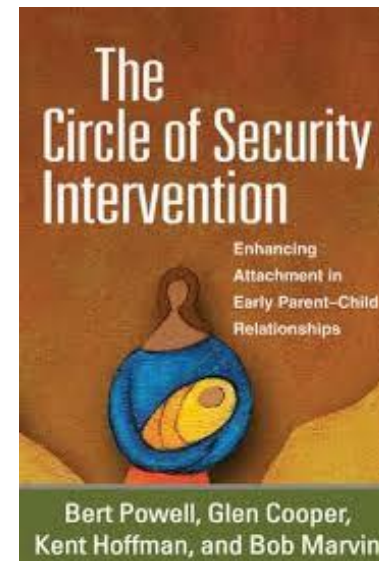
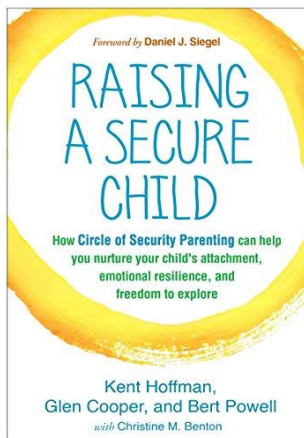
- Describes relationship patterns between children and caregivers.
- Bowlby, Ainsworth
- Healthy (“Secure”) relationships with caregivers have a positive impact on child development.
- Unhealthy (“Insecure or Disorganized”) relationships are associated with poor developmental outcomes including substance abuse and other mental health issues.
- The relationship patterns learned in childhood are often carried into our adult relationships.
- We now have **interventions** designed to improve child and caregiver relationships.

Three interventions grounded in attachment theory

- Circle of Security
- <https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/>
- Child Parent Psychotherapy
- <http://childparentpsychotherapy.com/>
- Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-Up
- <http://www.abcintervention.org/>

Circle of Security Parenting

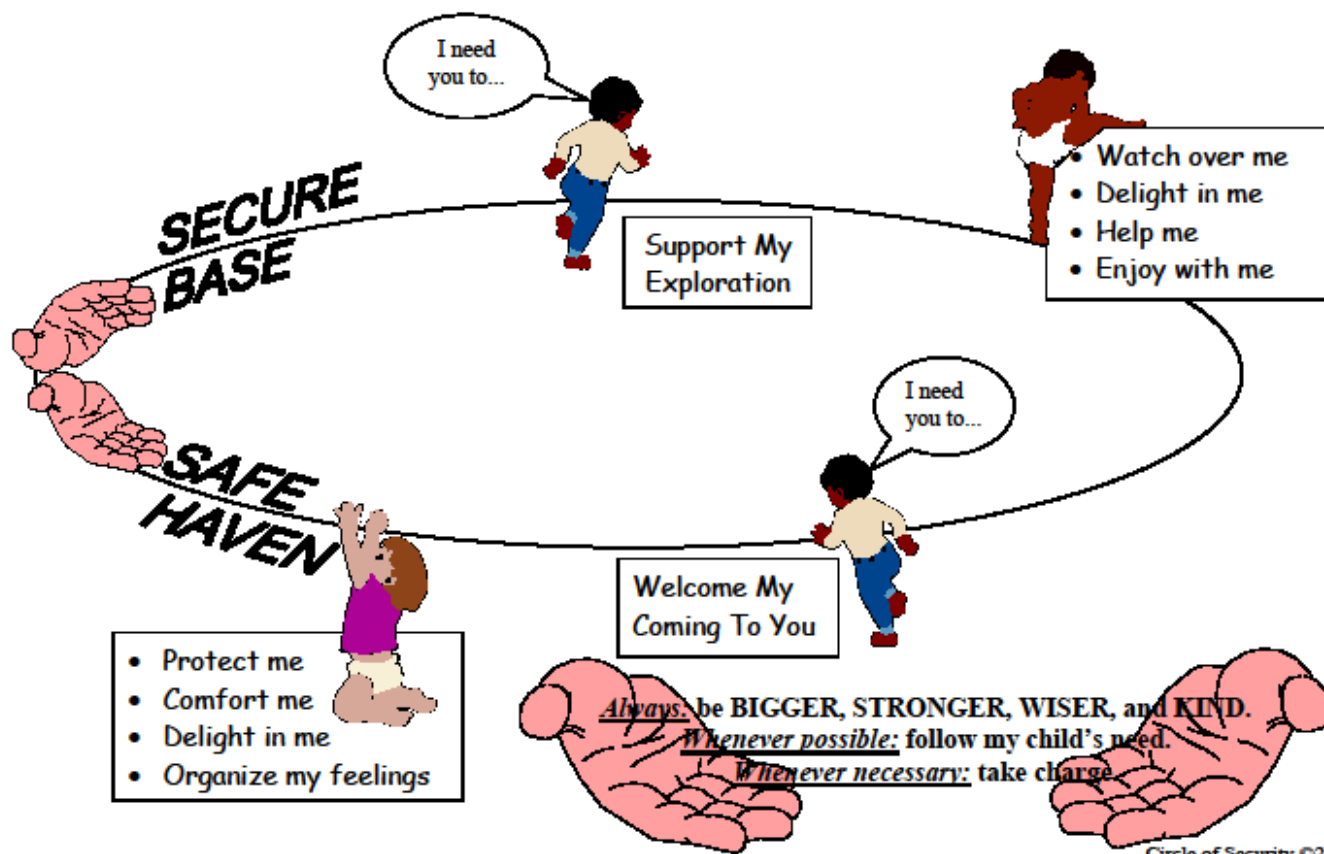
- Parent education model
- 8-10 sessions caregiver group
- Uses a DVD, facilitator manual, and handouts.
- Requires a 4 day training.
- Available in multiple languages!



Circle of Security

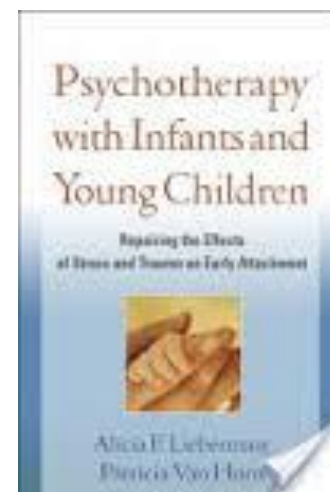
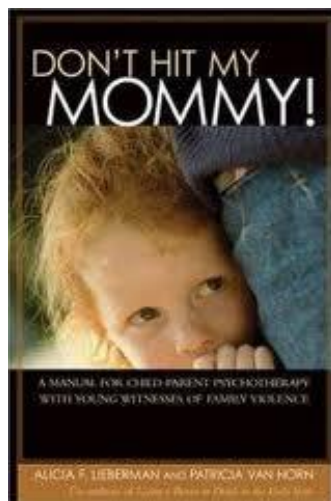
CIRCLE OF SECURITY®

PARENT ATTENDING TO THE CHILD'S NEEDS



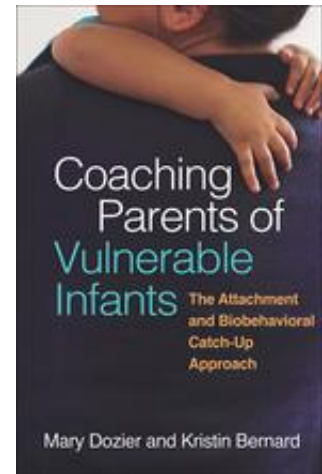
Child Parent Psychotherapy

- Therapeutic intervention model for caregiver and child.
- For caregiver with children ages birth to 6 years old
- Focuses on helping both the caregiver and the child understand traumatic events and repair attachment relationship.



Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up

- Coaching model
- For caregivers and children ages 6 months to 2 years.
- 10 video-taped sessions
- Focuses on helping caregiver practice specific behaviors linked to secure attachment including:
 - Expressing delight
 - Following the child's lead
 - Nurturing behaviors
 - Decreasing scary behaviors during child caregiver interactions



Summary

- All three models:
- 1. aim to improve attachment relationship between children and their caregivers
- 2. help to improve sensitivity to children's needs in the child's caregiver.
- 3. Have research supporting their efficacy

Questions?



References:

- **Horton, E.,** Potter, D., & Sullivan, K. (2017). Directive Filial Therapy Models with Very Young Children. In E. S. Leggett & J. N. Boswell (Eds.) *Directive Play Therapy: Theories and Techniques*, (pp. 185-215). New York, NY: Springer.
- **Horton, E.,** Murray, C. M. (2015). A Quantitative Exploratory Evaluation of the Circle of Security-Parenting© Program with Mothers in Residential Substance Abuse Treatment. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 36, 320-336.