

Tuning in to Kids and Toddlers

- NFSU i Göteborg 28. Oktober 2022
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Overview of the presentation

Theoretical background;

- Emotion Socialisation
- Meta- emotion philosophy
- Tuning in to Kids and Toddlers
- Emotion coaching and other parent styles
- Practical skills

My take home message:

Emotions is not «something to be fixed!»
 ..they need to be organised and met,
 how did our parents meet our emotions in our
 own childhood?.....



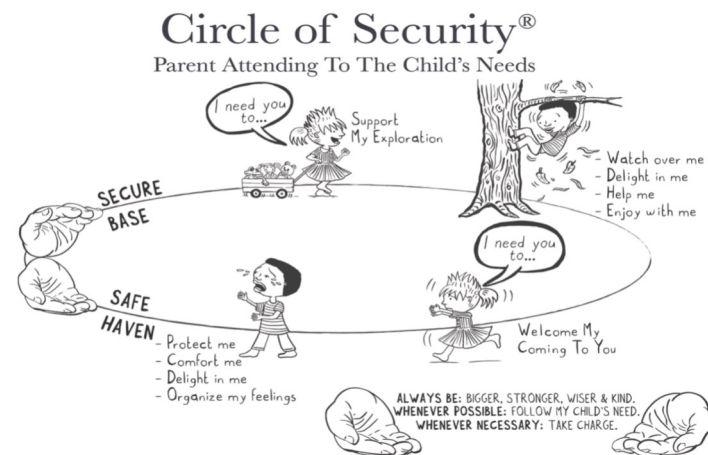
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A road map

A model of secure attachment based on Attachment Theory

Tuning in To Kids is

- Being with
- Organise my feelings



POWELL, B., COOPER, G., HOFFMAN, K., & MARVIN, R. (2014) THE CIRCLE OF SECURITY INTERVENTION. ENHANCING ATTACHMENT IN EARLY PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS. NEW YORK: THE GUILFORD PRESS P. 17

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Emotion socialization

Parents' emotion socialisation



- Eisenberg, Cumberland, and Spinrad (1998) proposed there are at least three key processes through which parents socialize their children to the world of emotions:
 - a) **reactions** to their child's emotional displays;
 - b) **discussion of emotion**; and
 - c) **emotional expressiveness** within the family
- These parental **emotion-related socialization behaviors (ERSBs)** have generally been identified as either **supportive**
 - e.g., discussion of the causes and meaning of emotions, reactions that are emotion-focused, problem-focused, or encouraging of emotional expression, or...
- **nonsupportive**
 - e.g., minimising or punitive reactions or avoidance of emotional discussion
- Parental ERSBs can be distinguished from more global parenting variables such as warmth, detachment and hostility, which describe the general interaction style and emotional tone within the parent-child relationship

(Johnson et al., 2017)

Thanks to Evalill Bølstad, Associate Professor at PSI UiO

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Emotional socialisation



- About the same time, Gottman, Katz, and Hooven (1996, 1997) argued that emotion socialization practices are guided by parents' own emotion-related beliefs, awareness, and socialization goals, termed **parental meta-emotion philosophy (PMEP)**
 - Beliefs that are shaped by the parents' experiences from their family of origin and that continue to be renewed throughout life
 - What we think and feel about having emotions
- Parents with an **emotion coaching** PMEP are aware of low-intensity emotions, are supportive of emotional expression, and use emotions as an opportunity for intimacy and teaching.
- Conversely, parents with a **dismissing** PMEP are more likely to invalidate or punish emotional expression, seek to reduce the emotion quickly, and teach their child that emotions are undesirable or unimportant
- Emotion coaching (and the converse behavior, emotion dismissing) was therefore considered by Gottman to be an additional parental process of emotion socialization that encompasses not only discussion of, and reactions to, emotions, but also more explicit teaching and instruction about emotions. (Johnson et al., 2017)

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Rabbit exercise

Choose a situation that recently happen

Turn to your neighbour

Share your stories and try to answers the questions

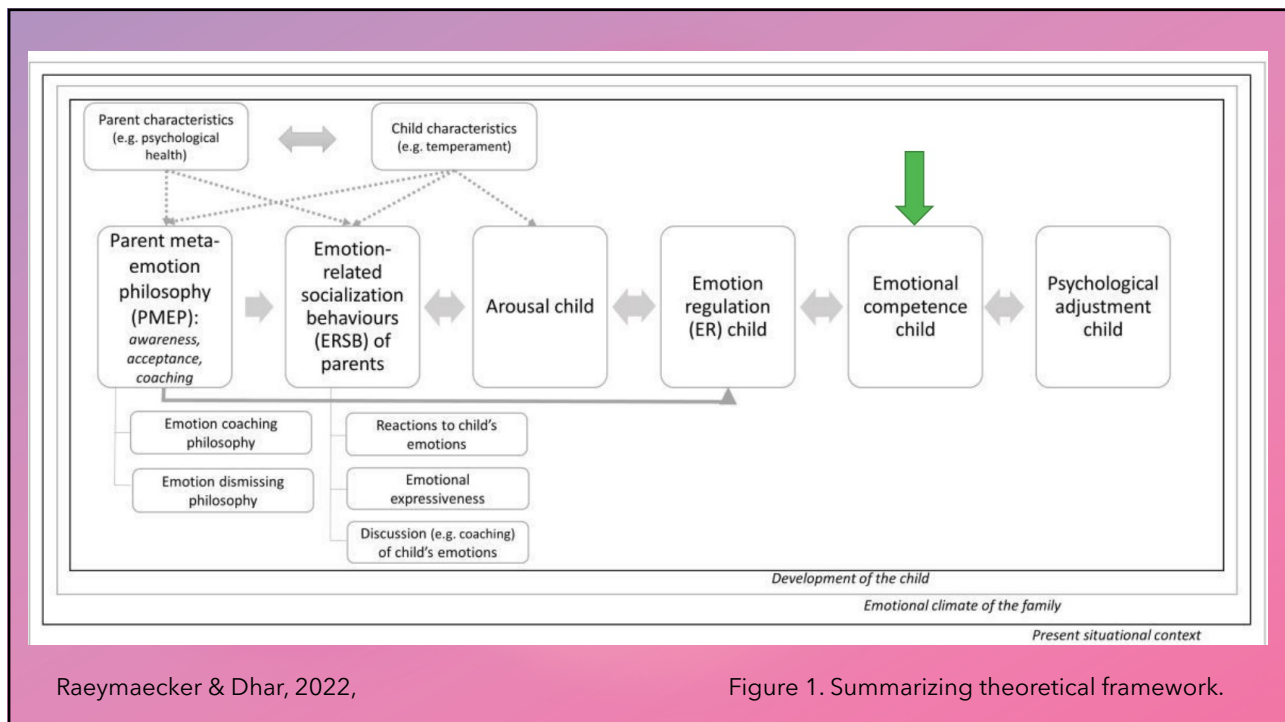
Choose a rabbit that represent the feeling

What was the feeling?
Were there others?

Where in your body did you feel it?

What did you feel about the feeling?

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Emotional competence

Emotional competence is the ability to:

- **Identify and understand** your own and others emotions
- Successfully use emotions during social interactions
- Use your emotional awareness to guide you when solving problems
- Deal with frustration and be able to wait to get what you want
- Keep distress from overwhelming your ability to think
- Handle how and when you **express feelings**.

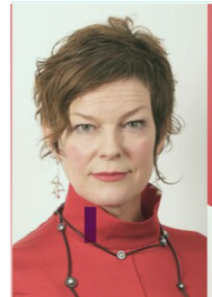


EMOTIONAL REGULATION IN PRACTICE

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Tuning in to Kids and Toddlers 2-5 years (2018)

- 8 sessions- 2 hours – 2 group facilitators
- Emotion Coaching skills
- Emotion awareness/regulation
- Meta-emotion philosophy and family of origin: role in automatic reactions to emotions when parenting
- How to notice emotion, read the messages
 - try and fail- repeatedly = definition of process



Sophie Havighurst (right) Professor University of Melbourne, author of TIK, 2007 with Ann Harley
Christane Kehoe- (left) PhD. Manager of Research, author of TOTs



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Other influences

Attachment

(Bowlby, 1958 Ainsworth et. al 1978)

Mindfulness- (Kabat-Zinn, 2003 MBSR)

Emotion focused psychotherapy -

(Greenberg, L. 2015)

PATH- Promoting Alternative tools

(Kusché & Greenberg, M. 1994)



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Emotion coaching

Five steps:

1. Become aware of the child's emotion, especially at lower intensity
2. View the child's emotion as an opportunity for emotional connection and teaching
3. Communicate understanding and acceptance of the emotion - empathy
4. Name the emotion or help the child to verbally label the feeling
5. If necessary, help problem solve. All wishes and feelings are acceptable, but not all behaviours

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Emotion Coaching

Become aware of the child's emotion, especially at lower intensity

View the child's emotion as an opportunity for emotional connection and teaching

Communicate understanding and acceptance of the emotion - empathy

Name the emotion or help the child to verbally label the feeling

If necessary, help problem solve. All wishes and feelings are acceptable, but not all behaviours

versus

Emotion Dismissing

Cheer up!

Don't be silly!

Don't worry

It doesn't matter

It's not important

How dare you get angry with me!

You'll be right!

Don't be so excited!

ROLE PLAY- experiencing various styles

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Mum and Lucy walk into a new playgroup.

Mum: (to the 3 other mothers and their toddlers) Hi. I'm Miriam. This is Lucy.

Lucy: (hides behind mum's legs).

Mum: Come on Lucy – say hello.

Lucy: (still hiding, tries to pull down her mum's skirt)

Mum: Stop (grabs Lucy's hand and pulls her around). Come on, don't be silly. You've been looking forward to coming all week! (To the other mothers) Really, she has – she isn't normally so shy.

Lucy: (hits her mother on the leg with her doll)

Mum: Ouch! Stop! Uh. So sorry about this – how embarrassing! (to Lucy) What's wrong with you? This is a fun place to come.

Lucy: (hits again and tries to pull her mum away)

Mum: (getting angry) Oh dear, I guess we will have to go home then. (to the others) Sorry, but she can't hit me like this and get away with it.

Mum and Lucy retreat, with Lucy skipping out the door.

Role play –script
Dismissive
parenting style
Mum and Lucy

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SAMPLE FOOTER TEXT

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Mum and Lucy walk into a new playgroup.

Mum: (to the 3 other mothers and their toddlers) Hi. I'm Miriam. This is Lucy.

Lucy: (hides behind mum's legs).

Mum: (stroking Lucy's head, mum sits down – Lucy drops into her lap with her face pressed fast to her mother's chest). Hi. (waits for a bit)

Lucy: (looks up at her mum)

Mum: (cuddles her) we just need a bit of time to check everyone out. (starts to chat to other mothers).

Lucy: mmm (looks up at her mum again)

Mum: (to Lucy) Its new people huh?

Lucy: (squeezes her mum and holds tight again).

Mum: (whispers to her daughter) It can be a bit scary meeting new people. You sit with me till you feel more comfy. (big hug) Check out what those kids are playing with over there. (pointing to a cubby and some toys). Wow, that looks like a great cubby.

Lucy: (turns around and sits looking outward)

Mum: Its tough meeting new people huh? These kids look pretty friendly.

Lucy: (after a few minutes, sits down and starts jumping her doll around).

Lucy gradually settles and after 10 minutes starts to explore.

Role play –script
Emotion
coaching
parenting style
Mum and Lucy

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Four parenting styles

Dismissive style- can be warm and understanding, but will avoid the emotion

Emotion coaching - emotions are opportunities to be intimate, learn about feelings and context, validate and accept the emotion, problem solve or set boundaries for unwanted behaviour

Permissive - validate the emotion, no organising or setting of boundaries

Disapproving

Mother: Molly. You are driving me crazy. Do you want me to get really angry with you? I'm going to have to pick you up and just put you in the car. This is silly.

Molly: (keeps kicking and screaming as she is put in the car)

Mother: (now quite frustrated and angry) Stop it Molly. If you don't stop crying you won't be able to have any friends over this weekend and I will have to tell your father about this. You are impossible!

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GOTTMAN ET AL. 1997

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Session 1 How to raise emotionally competent children? 5 step emotion coaching

session 2 Naming the emotion (tuning in)

session 3 Understanding your child's emotional experience (empathy)

session 4 Self care and emotion coaching SADNESS

session 5 Emotion coaching FEAR

session 6 Emotion coaching ANGER

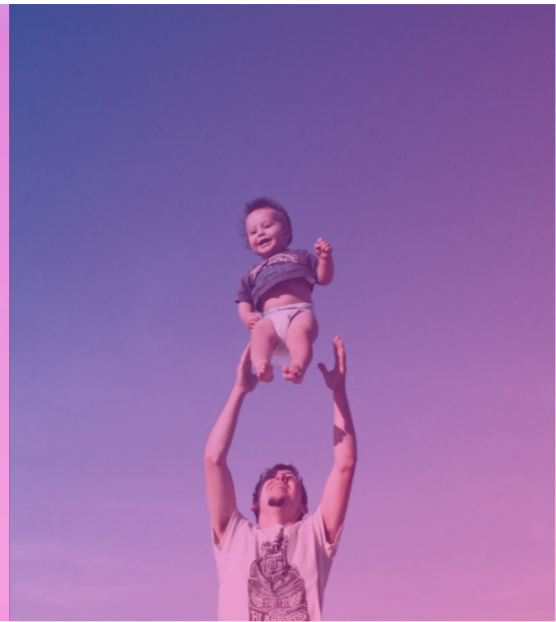
session 7 Emotion coach when in conflict/ sibling rivalry

Session 8 Consolidation



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- Behaviour problems is alleviated- understand and respond to the emotions underlying the behaviour
- Strength based, -Non-pathologising approach
- Parents/carers choose what works for them and their families



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Empathy exercise- to feel the child Emotion detective

Child's emotional situation	A similar situation for an adult	How would you feel in the adult situation?
Starting preschool or school for the first time		
Being told by a parent to share your special new toy		
Being told to eat something you don't like		
Birth of a sibling		
Being left out of a group of children playing		



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Self care- necessary to be able to care of others

Why it is important to be mindful?

- Heart rhythm, stress reduction, able to aware
- Difference of self compassion and self confidence
- Why it is so hard to do?
- What is possible
"Build in a pause!"



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Emotion coaching –more intense emotions

SADNESS – sit with the emotion (avoid minimising)

- Comforting: non-verbal communication, body language, empathic tuning, patience

FEARS- children perceive fear stronger

- Developmental stage, your own anxiety, taking the fear and reason seriously

ANGER –what trigger? Don't leave, give space, tell the child you are there and understand

- may not take all the steps at once

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How do we
respond to
children's
intense
emotions ?

Make a list of what you
can do if you loosing it

Drink water, deep
breath, count
slowly,.....



TUNING IN TO TODDLERS

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Parent feedback

- • Hearing other parents/carers' stories, shared insights, and knowing others "were in the same boat"
- • Supportive group environment (e.g., compassionate, respectful, understanding)
- • Educational learning (e.g., learning about emotions, child development)
- • Skills and strategies (e.g., pause, take a breath to calm, self-care)
- • Better emotional bond to my child
- • Skilled and compassionate facilitators

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SAMPLE FOOTER TEXT

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Research Tuning in to Toddler



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect
Behaviour Research and Therapy
journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/brat



A randomized controlled trial of an emotion socialization parenting program and its impact on parenting, children's behavior and parent and child stress cortisol: *Tuning in to Toddlers*

Sophie S. Havighurst^{a,*}, Christiane E. Kehoe^a, Ann E. Harley^a, Alessandra Radovini^a, Rae Thomas^b

^a Mindful: Centre for Training and Research in Developmental Health, Department of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne, Australia
^b Institute of Evidence-Based Healthcare, Bond University, Australia

300 parents with toddler, age from 18-36 months

Significantly reduction in parents emotion regulation difficulties, dismissive beliefs

Greater increase in empathy - and emotion coaching

Significant greater reductions in systemic cortisol were found for children in the intervention but not for the control children,

Greater improvements in competence in the children

HAVIGHURST & KEHOE

TUNING IN TO TODDLER TRIAL 2021

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Cultural differences to emotions

- There is a global understanding of well-being
- Anger- not one global understanding
- Shame - in the east a wanted social skill
- Activated when working; Calm or excited ?
- Emotions -individualistic vs relational
- Adjust to cultural the normative- is connected to well-being



CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION OF EMOTION, MESQUITA, B. BOIGER, M. & DELEERNYDER, J. 2016

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Tuning in to Toddlers in a Yezidi community

Training mental health staff

- IDPs – complex world, changes, identity
- Enthusiasm helps and playfulness
- Adjust the exercises and topics
- Invite several members of the family
- TIK reduced punitive and harsh parenting
- Increase in the emotional bonding
- Understanding the child's development level
- Self care reduced rumination



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References

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Thank you for your
attention!

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