

SUPPORTING SECURITY

A PREVENTIVE ATTACHMENT-FOCUSED INTERVENTION FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES

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Centre



Eabametoong
Dalles
Grassy Narrows
Kenora
Rat Portage
Shoal Lake 39
Shoal Lake 40

Wash Bay
White Dog
White Fish Bay
Attawapiskat
Fort Albany
Kashechewan
Moose Factory

OUTLINE

- Background
- Integrating interventions and theories
- Teaching community leaders
- Research design



GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SUPPORTING SECURITY

- Focus on attachment
 - Preventive intervention
 - Young babies
 - High risk and not-at-risk populations
- Applicable (adaptable) across cultures
- Empirically supported interventions
- Easily exported
 - Nurses or other community based professionals
 - Brief training
 - Low tech/low cost
- Groups of parents



INTEGRATING INTERVENTIONS AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS



ATTACHMENT OUTCOMES

NICHHD 2006

- Extreme Early Effects Model
 - *Infant classifications predict outcomes*
- The Mediating Experiences Model
 - *Environmental continuity or changes predict child outcomes*
- The Dynamic Interactive Model
 - *Infant classification interacts with environment to predict outcomes*

ATTACHMENT OUTCOMES

NICHD 2006

- Extreme Early Effects Model
 - *Infant attachment classification is associated with later psychopathology (esp. “D” in some studies) however associations are not always strong and not always documented*
 - *“A” classification is more strongly associated with later externalizing behaviour and low social competence in this study (“D” is not different than other insecure)*
 - **Thus there are some associations between infant classifications and later psychopathology**

ATTACHMENT OUTCOMES

NICHD 2006

- The Mediating Experiences Model

- *Infant classifications are insignificant predictors if Parenting Quality (PQ) is factored in*

- $PQ \uparrow + \text{Insecure infant} \rightarrow \downarrow \text{externalizing behaviour}$

- $PQ \downarrow + \text{Insecure infant} \rightarrow \uparrow \text{externalizing behaviour}$

- *“D” classification outcomes are very responsive to changes in PQ*

- ***Thus continuity of environment is central to the development of psychopathology***

ATTACHMENT OUTCOMES

NICHD 2006

- The Dynamic Interactive Model
 - $PQ \downarrow + \text{Secure "B" infant} \rightarrow \text{no } \uparrow \text{ externalizing behaviour}$
 - $PQ \uparrow + \text{Insecure "C" infant} \rightarrow \text{no improvement in behaviour}$
- **Thus the internal working model can**
 - **can regulate the child in face of adversity if IWM positive**
 - **not recognize change if IWM predicts inconsistency**

IMPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORTING SECURITY

- Focus on parenting quality from early age
- Integrate with later supports and interventions



AGE OF INTERVENTION

- Need baby for learning
- Greater efficacy in preventive interventions with babies older than 6 months (*Bakermans-Kranenburg et al, 2003*)
- Maternal sensitivity at 6 months vs. sensitivity at 15 months (*McElwain and Booth-LaForce, 2006*)
- **We recommend babies under one year old**



PARENTAL BEHAVIOURS AND ATTACHMENT

- Sensitivity
 - Recognizing and responding contingently to infant signals of distress (*Ainsworth et al 1978*)
- FR Behaviours
 - Parental behaviours that evoke fear, anxiety, confusion, etc. in baby (*Lyons-Ruth et al, 2007*)
- Supporting Security addresses both types of parental responses with babies
 - *Infant observation, reflective functioning, etc*
 - *Focus on anxiety, depression, anger etc.*

CULTURE AND ATTACHMENT

- Overall cross cultural support for normativeness and preference for security as well as for associations of sensitivity to security (e.g. van Ijzendoorn & Sagi, 1999; Posada, 2004)
- Need to understand more than just one relationship to understand attachment in different cultures (Hinde, 1991)
- **Adapt Supporting Security with local leaders during training**



INTERVENTION OUTCOME DATA

- Efficacious interventions
(*Bakermans-Kranenburg et al, 2003*)
 - focused on parental behaviours
 - parental sensitivity
 - brief
- Supporting Security
 - 12 sessions,
 - Teach and practice sensitivity
 - Caregiver FR behaviours
 - Focus on caregiver anxiety, depression, anger, violence



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

- Caregiver knowledge of attachment (*Hoffman et al, 2006*)

Supporting Security psychoeducational approaches –

- Attachment theory
- Infant cognitive development
- Infant emotional development, etc.



REFLECTIVE FUNCTIONING

- Reflective functioning
(Fonagy & Target, 1997; Koren-Karie et al, 2002; Hoffman et al, 2006)

Supporting Security

- Infant observation
- Observing infants in groups
- Observation of parental states
- Mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 1992)
 - Mindfulness exercise



ATTACHMENT, STRESS AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

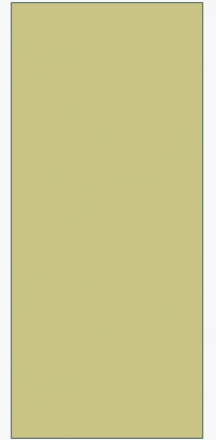


- Lower daily stress
(Easterbrooks and Graham, 1999)
 - Problem Solving Therapy *(Sahler et al, 2005; Nezu and Nezu, 2001; Kazdin, 2000)*
- Social support for mother *(Huth-Bocks et al, 2004)*
 - Groups
 - Support social networking

OTHER EVIDENCE BASED INTERVENTIONS

- Parent training (e.g. Webster-Stratton, 2001)
 - Large empirical base
 - Teaching, rehearsal, homework
- Group therapy (Yalom, 1995)
 - Building networks of mothers who understand attachment
 - Building networks in the community

TRAINING LEADERS TO RUN SUPPORTING SECURITY GROUPS



TRAINING AND ADAPTATION OF SUPPORTING SECURITY

- Leaders –from the community and already engaged with mothers and young babies
 - Public Health Nurses; Prenatal group leaders; Social Workers; Psychologists; Psychiatrists; Family home visitors; Parents ...
- Time:
 - Naïve to attachment and to working with groups – one week
 - Experienced with attachment and groups – three days
 - Adaptation of the intervention
- Supervision:
 - Once per week over the course of the group sessions live or by videoconference – preferably over the course of two sets of groups
 - Adaptation of the intervention

THE CULTURE OF THE NORTH

- Suspicion of colonial attitudes
- Community variability
 - Resources
 - Organization
 - Individuals
- Unpredictability
 - Attitudes to time
 - Death and catastrophic events



•The work begins where you find the community and the leaders and demands a Family/Community Centred Approach

ADAPTING THE TRAINING - IN THE NORTH

- Find leaders with more professional expertise
- Teach basic steps for interventions
- Repeated visits to northern communities
- Develop experienced group leaders who can sit in with trainees
- Simplify the intervention
 - Posters, videotapes, etc.

THE CULTURE IN THE SOUTH

- Massey Centre for Women
 - Residential centre for young single mothers
- Ontario Early Years Centres
 - Drop-in centres for children and parents to age 3
- Breaking the Cycle
 - Treatment centre for mothers with addiction problems

ADAPTING THE TRAINING - IN THE SOUTH: OEYC AND BTC

- Two days didactic
- One set of groups with experienced leader plus supervision
- Second set of groups with supervision

ADAPTING THE TRAINING - IN THE SOUTH: MASSEY CENTRE

- One week didactic
- Two sets of groups with experienced leader plus supervision
- Next groups with supervision alone (?)

INTAKE INTERVIEW

Goals:

- Collect information. Determine suitability for group
- Provide information about the group and begin education about attachment
- Establish an alliance with parent
 - Leaders' RF in practice

INTAKE INTERVIEW ADAPTED IN THE NORTH

- **Reach out and**

reach out and

reach out

INTAKE INTERVIEW – ADAPTED FOR THE SOUTH: OEYC

- Meet with groups of mothers and inform about Supporting Security
 - Leaders know the mothers from before
- Respond to questions
- Meet individually as requested
- Meet individually with specific referrals

GOALS FOR THE SESSIONS

- Create a secure experience for the parents
- Engage with each other
- Teach attachment theory and normal development
 - **Babies have minds – they learn and communicate**
- Increase sensitivity (responsiveness) to baby signals
- Increase parental self awareness and reflective function
- Problem solving method

SESSION FORMAT

- Each session includes:
 - Check-in (what's new)
 - Start with mindfulness exercise and discussion
 - Discussion of home activity
 - Teaching
 - Break with snack
 - Group activity: experiential exercise – (infant observation, role playing, floor play)
 - Assignment of next week's home activity
 - End with mindfulness exercise or baby songs

SESSION TOPICS 1 – 6:

RELATING ALL TOPICS TO BABY FEELING SECURE

1. Attachment theory
2. What is baby feeling – emotional development
3. What is baby thinking – cognitive development
4. A problem-solving strategy
5. Communication with babies: what is on baby's radar?
6. Parental self regulation: coping with difficult feelings and thoughts evoked by baby

SESSION TOPICS 7 – 12:

RELATING ALL TOPICS TO BABY FEELING SECURE

7. Parental anxiety
8. Parental sadness and depression
9. Parental anger
10. Anger and violence in the family and the neighbourhood
11. Selecting alternate caregivers
12. Wrap-up and review

SESSION 1 - GOALS

1. Engage the group with leaders and with each other
2. Provide information about group rules and procedures
3. Teach basic theory of attachment
4. Support group cohesion and security

GROUP RULES

- Confidentiality – we respect and keep private what is said in the group
- One at a time. Everybody gets a turn.
- Disagreement is OK. Put downs are not OK.
- You don't have to talk if you don't want to.
- Babies are first. Babies cannot be left alone if they are upset.

SESSION 1 - ATTACHMENT THEORY

- Babies have minds – they think and feel.
- Babies tell us what they think and feel without words - we just have to watch and listen carefully.
- Babies who feel secure have better lives.

INFANT OBSERVATION – QUESTIONS FOR OBSERVERS

- What is on this baby's mind?
- Observe:
 - baby's facial expression
 - where baby is looking
 - what baby is doing
 - how baby is holding his body, head, arms and legs
 - the sound of baby's voice
- What do these tell us about what the baby wants, what she is thinking and feeling?



ADDITIONAL TEACHING MODULES: RELATING ALL TOPICS TO BABY FEELING SECURE

- Alcohol and drug abuse – their effect on the baby
- Premature birth – different signals
- Chronic illness, disability, etc. – different needs and signals
- Teenage mothers – what do you need for your development

GROUP ACTIVITY – MINDFULNESS

- Goal – To increase awareness of
 - self in the moment
 - influences on the self in the moment
 - self-other interactions and influences in the moment
- Suggested activity – five minutes at the start and at the end of each group meeting holding babies,
 - Focus on self and baby breathing,
 - Aware of self feelings,
 - Aware of distractions, etc.
 - Notice changes in baby as mother changes and v.v.

THE GROUP ACTIVITY: SESSIONS 1-3

Parent holds baby; baby's image is projected onto monitor

- Group members comment on “What is going for the baby? What is she doing, feeling, thinking, communicating? What does she want?”
- Parent comments on their own and others' observations
- Leaders support positive attitude to mothers and babies and relate observations back to baby feeling secure (or not)

THE GROUP ACTIVITY: SESSIONS 4 -11

Babies in babysitting:

- Role Play – members and/or leaders, pairing off; practice different challenging scenarios
 - e.g. crying baby, sick baby, depressed mother, drunken partner

Babies in the room:

- Leaders may do role play instructed by caregivers
- Floor play – leaders support and focus infant observation and “casual” conversations focused on teaching topics

(Teaching, Supporting, Reflective functioning, Problem solving, etc.)

PROBLEM SOLVING IDEAS

- Identify the problem and causes of the problem
- **D**efine your options
- **E**valuate your options
- **A**ct
- **S**ee if it worked

Sahler et al (2005)

THE HOME ACTIVITY

- Assignments that help parents practice teaching from the previous lesson
- Take-home prompts and lists to support the lesson
- Take-home sheets to describe their activity

(Leaders must be sensitive about members level of literacy)

EVALUATION MEASURES AND OUTCOMES



HYPOTHESES

Participation in Supporting Security will:

- Increase caregivers' behavioural sensitivity and responsiveness to their infants
- Reduce caregivers' level of self-reported parenting stress
- Modify parents' internal representations towards more security
- Increase caregiver knowledge about attachment
- Increase parental reflective function
- Sensitivity will be moderated by attachment risk, parental psychopathology, parental stress, parental reflective function and other demographic variables

MEASURES

- Infant Psychiatry General Information Form – demographics, obstetrical and health histories, developmental screen (T1)
- Attachment Risk Checklist (Wittenberg, 2005) (T1 filled out by leader)
- Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983) (T1)
- Parenting Stress Index (Abidin, 1986) (T1 & 2)
- Attachment Knowledge and Attitudes Questionnaire (Wittenberg, 2005) (T1 & 2)
- Social Support Scale (Cutrona & Russell, 1987) (T1 & 2)
- **Maternal Behaviour Q Sort** (Measure of sensitivity; Pederson and Moran, 1995) (T1 & 2)
- **Parent Development Interview** (Measure of reflective function; Aber et al., 2004) (T1 & 2)
- **Secure Base Script Analysis** (T1 & 2) (Measure of attachment in internal representations; Waters & Waters, 2006)

NORTH ONTARIO SAMPLE

Primary Caregiver	n	Age	Employed	Education*
Mom	76	24.55 yrs(14-38)	27%	10.24 (1.35)
Dad	7	22.86 yrs(21-26)	37%	10.60 (1.67)
Grandparent / Other	5	43.25 yrs(39-47)	25%	7 (1.41)
Baby				
Boys	34	5.38 mos (1-13 mos)		
Girls	54	6.17 mos (1-15 mos)		

NORTH ONTARIO SAMPLE

Measure	First Nations	Published Means
Risks for Attachment Difficulties (21 risk items)	4.62 (3.87)	na
Attachment Knowledge Questionnaire ^b	62.77 (5.84)	na
Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) ^c	50.54 (10.39)	50 (10)
Social Provisions Scale (SPS) ^d	74.99 (9.70)**	82.45 (9.89)
Parenting Stress Index (PSI) ^e	74.95 (18.65)*	71 (15.4)
Parent Development Interview (PDI) ^f	3.15 (1.20)**	5.08 (1.40)
Secure Base Script Assessments (SBSA) ^g	2.77 (.83)**	3.78 (1.12) ^h
Maternal Behavioral Q-Sort (MBQS) ⁱ	.24 (.44)**	.73(.18) ^j
	* p < .1, ** p < .001	

NORTH ONTARIO OUTCOMES

	<u>Baseline</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	First Nations Means	Published Means
Maternal Behavior Q-Sort	0.13 (0.49)	0.43 (.50)*	.24 (.44)**	.73(.18) ^j
Parent Development Interview	3.40 (1.65)	3.80 (1.62) ϕ	3.15 (1.20)**	5.08 (1.40)
Secure Base Script Assessment	3.00 (.91)	2.90 (.78)	2.77 (.83)**	3.78 (1.12) ^h
		*p. < 05	** p < .001	
		ϕ p < .09		

GTA STUDY

- 3 Ontario Early Years Centres
- RTC

	N at start	N at end
Supp Sec	24	22
Parent Discussion	22	17

PLANS

- Develop brief format – 6 group sessions
- Develop 1:1 format for home visits or office visits
- Develop community education project
 - Posters
 - Videotapes
 - Inspirational speakers



Baby Love

Supporting Infant Security