Workshop 2: Infant and Early Childhood Development

Overview of Topic

This session offers participants ways to consider the importance of taking a developmental perspective when working with infants, young children and their families. We start by considering the importance of affect and emotion as foundational capacities in early development. Although “ages and stages” information is a necessary part of professional development, this session will focus instead on key indicators of social emotional readiness. It is anticipated that using a “developmental lens” will enhance a provider’s foundational knowledge of infant and child development. We will present three models to consider as guides for a developmental perspective: ZERO TO THREE: Emotional Foundations for Readiness, The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Principles of Child Development & Learning, and The Brazelton TOUCHPOINTS model. This session continues the work of developing a reflective and empathic stance towards families, respectful of their strengths, difficulties and cultural background.

Recommended Duration: 3.0 hours.

New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards
Domain I: Social & Emotional Development
Components: Trust & Emotional Security
Self-Regulation
Relationships with Peers and Adults

Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health Competency Guidelines
Theoretical Foundations
Knowledge Areas: Infant/very young child development & behavior
Infant/very young child & family centered practice
Relationship-focused practice
Family relationships & dynamics
Cultural competence

Learning Objectives

1. Participants will understand the nature of human attachment and the forces that influence this important process.
2. Participants will learn about the importance of relationships in early development, for emotional, social and brain development.
3. Participants will gain a working knowledge of three well recognized models of early development: ZERO TO THREE: Emotional Foundations for Readiness, The National Association for the Education of Young Children Principles of Child Development & Learning, and The Brazelton TOUCHPOINTS model.
4. Participants will be able to integrate a developmental perspective into their relationship-based work with infants, young children and families.
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

12 Principles of Child Development and Learning

- All areas of development and learning are important.
- Learning and development follow sequences.
- Development and learning proceed at varying rates.
- Development and learning result from an interaction of maturation and experience.
- Early experiences have profound effects on development and learning.
- Development proceeds toward greater complexity, self-regulation, and symbolic or representational capacities.
- Children develop best when they have secure relationships.
- Development and learning occur in and are influenced by multiple social and cultural contexts.
- Children learn in a variety of ways.
  - Play is an important vehicle for developing self-regulation and promoting language, cognition, and social competence.
- Development and learning advance when children are challenged.
- Children’s experiences shape their motivation and approaches to learning.

Retrieved from: http://www.naeyc.org/dap/12-principles-of-child-development
Emotional Foundations for Readiness

Video Observation Form

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<th>Confidence</th>
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Principles of Child Mental Health

- If a child is preoccupied with his internal life, he/she is less available to invest the external world with interest and attention.
- Communication and language emerge from emotional relationships – especially the parent-child relationship. Early disruptions in relatedness often are manifested in delays in language, play and other symbolic expressions.
- When the child is able to express his thoughts, emotions, problems or conflicts in symbolic ways such as in play, gestures and language, less “acting out” occurs.
- As children progress through infancy, the preschool years, middle and later childhood, they require “different kinds” of adults to interact with.
- Early disruptions in attachments, early instability, trauma and deprivation- often continue to manifest themselves as problems throughout life.
- When early relationships are unhealthy, all areas of development can be affected and show delays in ability and progress.

All adults who form relationships with children help influence their development……..
Infant and Early Childhood Development: A Developmental Perspective

Part of a series funded by: The New Jersey Department of Children and Families

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The Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health

"Keeping Babies & Young Children in Mind"
- Workshop 1: In the Beginning – What Happens Early Matters
- Workshop 2: Infant & Early Childhood Development
- Workshop 3: The Language of Behavior
- Workshop 4: Encountering Early Stress and the Power of Meaningful Connections
- Workshop 5: Relationship-based Practices
- Workshop 6: Me, My Family, My Community
- Workshop 7: Reflective Practices: Caring for Ourselves
Typical developmental capacities

- Relational/social
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Language (receptive and expressive)
- Motor (fine and gross)
- Sensory
- Self-care or daily living

Taking a developmental perspective

- Knowing about child development and learning
- Knowing what is individually appropriate
- Knowing what is culturally important

NAEYC TOUCHPOINTS
All areas of development and learning are important.

Learning and development follow sequences.

Development and learning proceed at varying rates.

Development and learning result from an interaction of maturation and experience.
• Early experiences have profound effects on development and learning.

• Development proceeds toward greater complexity, self-regulation, and symbolic or representational capacities.

• Children learn best when they have secure relationships.

• Development and learning occur in and are influenced by multiple social and cultural contexts.

• Children learn in a variety of ways.

• Play is an important vehicle for developing self-regulation and promoting language, cognition, and social competence.

• Development and learning advance when children are challenged.

• Children’s experiences shape their motivation and approaches to learning.
Touchpoints

- Development is characterized by **regressions, bursts, and pauses.**
Developmental Framework

- Development is **multidimensional**.
- **Bursts** in one domain of development cause **regressions** in other domains.

**DISORGANIZATION IN ONE SYSTEM CAN DISORGANIZE OTHERS**

**WHAT ARE TOUCHPOINTS?**

“**Touchpoints**” are predictable periods of disorganization in a child’s development that can disrupt family relations, but can also provide an opportunity for providers to connect with parents.
Some stress occurs as a natural part of developmental changes and that’s OK!

Applying a developmental perspective

Developmental guidance:

- Relational/social
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Language (receptive and expressive)
- Motor (fine and gross)
- Sensory
- Self-care or daily living
Infant and Child Mental Health

The emotional capacities

The capacity that infants and children develop to:

- Self regulate
- Experience the full range of human emotions
- Engage in loving, reciprocal relationships
- Represent the world in thought and language
- Engage in shared emotional thinking and relatedness
- Become intimate and care for others interdependently
- Engage in productive activities

Development occurs within the context of a relationship
Attachment

- Attachment is an affectionate bond between two individuals that endures through space and time and serves to join them emotionally.

(John Kennell, neonatologist, 1922-2013)

Attachment Memory

- Talk with a partner about your earliest memory of an attachment to a person or an object
- Describe the emotions related to the attachment (safety, calmness, security, etc.)
- Early memories are often related to sensory experiences

Attachment (Bowlby)

Infants possess a built-in repertoire of attachment behaviors that attract attention and elicit care from caregivers ("APBs" - attachment promoting behaviors)
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Internal Working Models

Though experiencing relationships, infants form “internal working models” – representations of their relationships with caregivers, based on their experiences with them.

Attachment

- These “internal working models” become the blueprint for how the child understands their caregivers, others, and themselves.
Results of secure attachment

- Motivates baby to seek proximity when frightened, distressed, lonely, etc.
- Motivates baby to explore when feeling secure and emotionally stable

Why is “secure attachment” important?

Attachment helps the child......
- Trust
- Learn
- Think
- Cope
- Develop Conscience
- Modulate emotions
- Develop Future Relationships
- Become self-reliant

Imagine 2 Babies Waking Up.......
Wondering

• How do you feel when you are secure?
• How do you behave when you are secure?
A secure attachment relationship provides the setting for wiring the brain in an organized, efficient way, and sets the stage for self-regulation, moral development and learning.

Disrupted Attachment and Brain Development

- Children who undergo repeated disruptions in attachments, or who are chronically neglected or abused, or traumatized, are at-risk for a host of developmental, health and mental health disorders.
  - Developmental Delays
  - Emotional Problems
  - Learning Problems
  - Behavior Problems

Secure Attachment vs Disrupted Attachment

- I am safe
- I am worthy
- I am capable
- I am in danger
- I am worthless
- I am incompetent

ZERO TO THREE: Emotional Foundations for Development
Confidence

- Importance of routines = safety, security, confidence and control.
- When children know what to expect: They can concentrate on the “work” of childhood - playing/exploring.
Curiosity

- Model interest in the environment/people.
- Allow/encourage exploration.
- Redirecting vs. Discouraging: find safe, acceptable way to explore a skill.

Self-Control

- “The ability to make decisions about how and when we express our feelings, and which of our impulses to act on.”
- Develop child’s ability to self-calm and self-regulate.
Relating To Others

- Emotional connections children develop with others, based on trust/intimacy.
- Children learn "who they are" and "what the world" is like through relationships.
Goal Directed Behavior

- Intentionality/Persistence
- Helps child develop self-confidence and independence.

Capacity to Communicate-Learning to Talk

- Communication requires both the ability and the desire to exchange ideas and feelings with others.
- Importance of developing a "Feelings" vocabulary.
- Pay attention to non-verbal communication (gestures, baby signs).
**Cooperation**

- Ability to balance one's own needs with someone else's.
- Compliance = Children doing what adults want.
- Cooperation = Joint Effort/Give and Take

**ZERO TO THREE:**
**Emotional Foundations for Development**

- Confidence
- Curiosity
- Self-Control
- Ability to have an Impact and be Persistence
- Capacity to Communicate
- Cooperation
- Ability to Relate to others
Use What You Know Activity

- Use the ZERO to THREE Emotional Foundations for Readiness to observe a video of an infant/child.
- Make notes of what you see from a “developmental perspective”

Keeping in Mind…

- Attachment is NOT a sudden and magical bond, but rather a slow, social unfolding that requires the full participation of both parties.
- Infant attachment is not always a reliable predictor of later behavior and relationships.
- Attachment relationships may change on their own or improve through intervention.
- Individual difference impact attachment and development.