



# *It's all about Relationships*

## Parent Workshop

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# Overview



Understand how early relationships can affect people and how they behave and learn.



Recognise what a person's behaviour could be saying about how they feel.



Think about how we can respond with compassion.

**Emotion Coaching style.**

# Attachment - How we build relationships

‘Attachment’ means the bond a baby/child has with their main carer.

Babies are very clever at forming relationships. They send signals to adults.

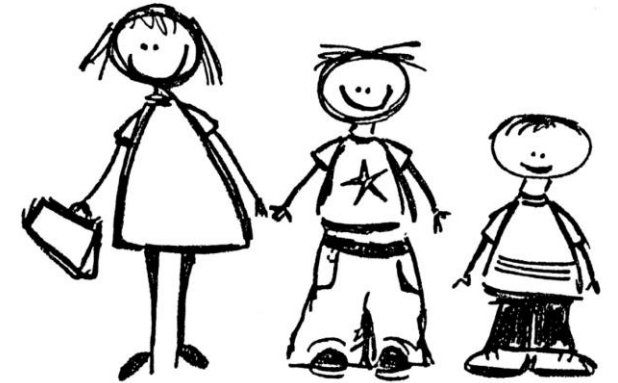
Parents/carers ‘tune in’ to their baby’s signals and give the baby what they need (sometimes called serve and return like a game of tennis).

Attachment has a really important job – it helps us feel safe, and be able to form relationships with other people – such as our children, siblings, friends, colleagues etc.



# Why are relationships so important?

A secure attachment to parents/carers helps children to do well and develop the potential to cope with and respond when difficulties arise.



People who are more socially connected to family, friends, or their community are happier, physically healthier and live longer, with fewer mental health problems than people who are less well connected."

Mental Health Foundation

"Those who have the strong sense of love and belonging have the courage to be imperfect"

Brene Brown

"The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely he will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change, and the most powerful therapy is human love"

Bruce Perry

# Dr Karen Treisman





# How do disrupted attachments affect our relationships, learning and behaviour?

- ▶ *To do this we need to understand how our brain works*

*“We can’t do what makes us human from within the womb – it has to be done in the context of **attunement and attachment** with significant adults”*



# Stress Response



When we think and feel we are in danger, our body automatically goes into survival mode.

Survival mode is our **fight, flight, freeze** responses.

# Fight, Flight or Freeze

- ▶ We all have a Stress Response System (SRS) that is activated when we perceive threat or danger.
- ▶ It can 'take over' our body needed to respond to threat, and it can literally shut down thinking parts of the brain,
- ▶ Some people spend more time in their stress responses because of early experiences.
- ▶ Fear changes their thinking, feeling & behaviour.



## Understanding the 3 stress responses



Fight



Flight



Freeze

Dolphin POD is based on the research & concepts developed by Dr Shimi Kang

[www.dolphinpod.com](http://www.dolphinpod.com)





**DANGER**

**STRESS**

# The Hand Model of the Brain

## What happens when we "flip our lid"

When our brain is working efficiently both the upper and mid brain are communicating effectively. Information comes in and is processed logically. Sometimes too much information is coming in for the Upper brain to process and it disconnects. We "flip our lid" and can no longer access the functions provided by the upper brain.

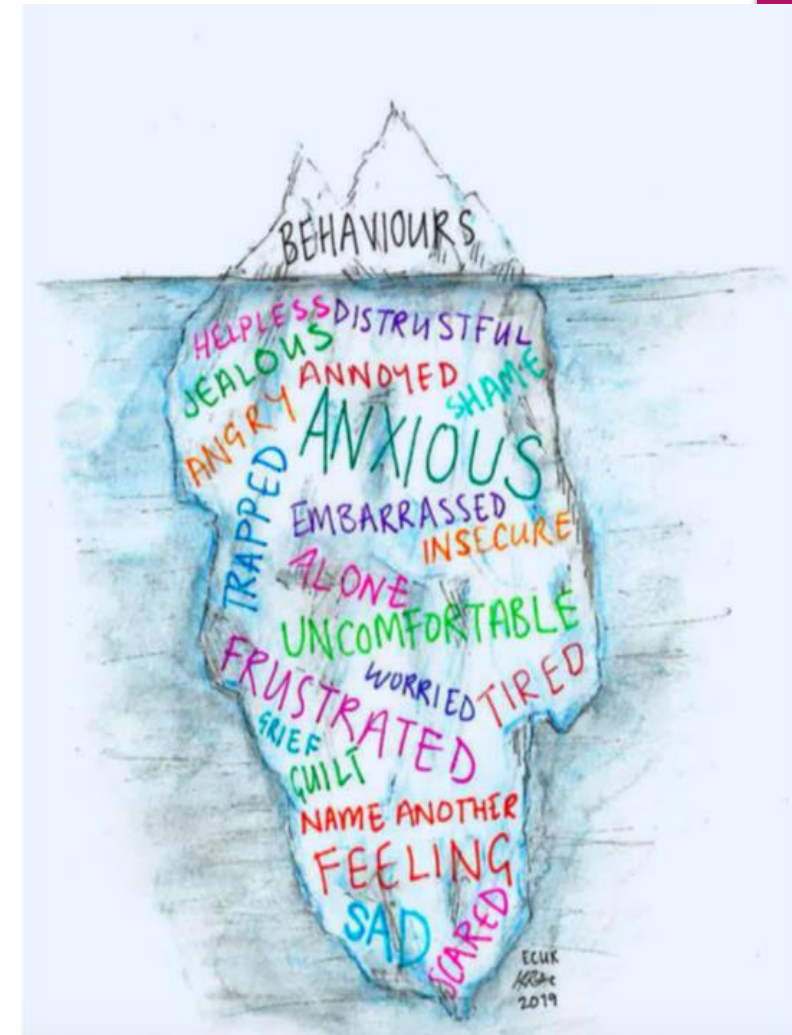




What we see

versus

What's really  
going on





# Emotion Coaching

LEARN HOW TO HELP  
YOUR CHILD NAVIGATE  
THEIR FEELINGS BY  
BEING AN EMOTION  
COACHING PARENT

# Aims of Emotion Coaching

To understand the development of emotional regulation

How to respond to those feelings in a child-centred way to enable regulation

How to create an atmosphere that promotes regulation rather than dysregulation

How to use the steps of emotion coaching to support your child and help them navigate their feelings



# Why do Emotion Coaching?

Emotion Coaching is a successful, evidence-based strategy based on John Gottman's parenting and relational research



## Emotion Coached children are better able to...

- ▶ delay gratification
- ▶ control their impulses
- ▶ self soothe when upset
- ▶ pay attention



## Emotion coached children...

- ▶ achieve more academically in school
- ▶ are more popular
- ▶ have fewer behavioural problems
- ▶ have fewer infectious illnesses
- ▶ are more emotionally stable
- ▶ are more resilient

▶ Gottman et al., 1996

Emotion Coaching works with the anatomy and physiology of the brain to support the development of emotional regulation

- ▶ We all have emotions, and they are hardwired for our survival

Distress

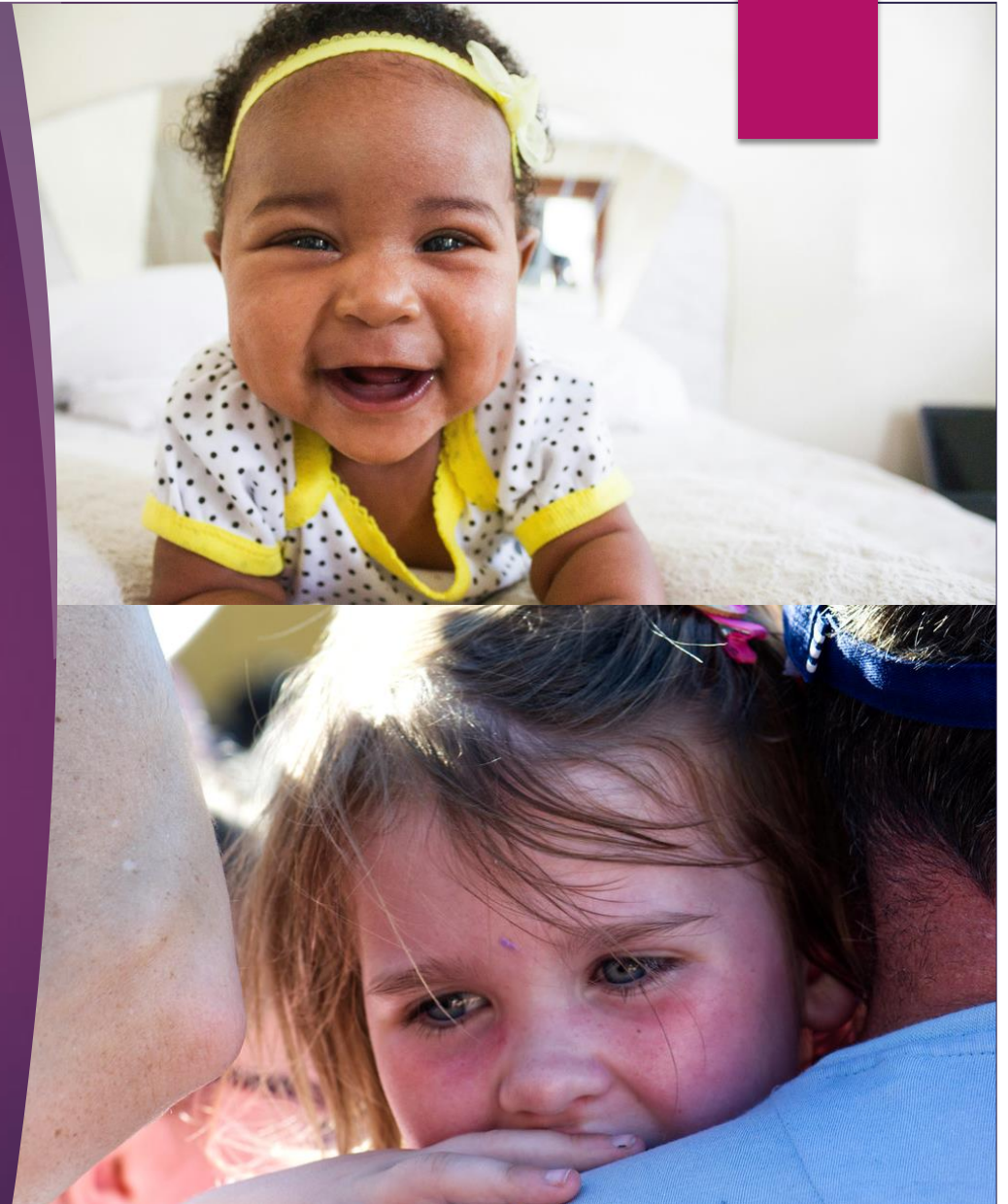
Fear

Anger

Surprise

Disgust

Joy



# Understanding the development of emotional regulation

**Dependent**



```
graph TD; A[Dependent] --> B[Co-dependent]; B --> C[Independent];
```

Co-dependent

Independent

# What is Self-Regulation?







## Emotional dysregulation

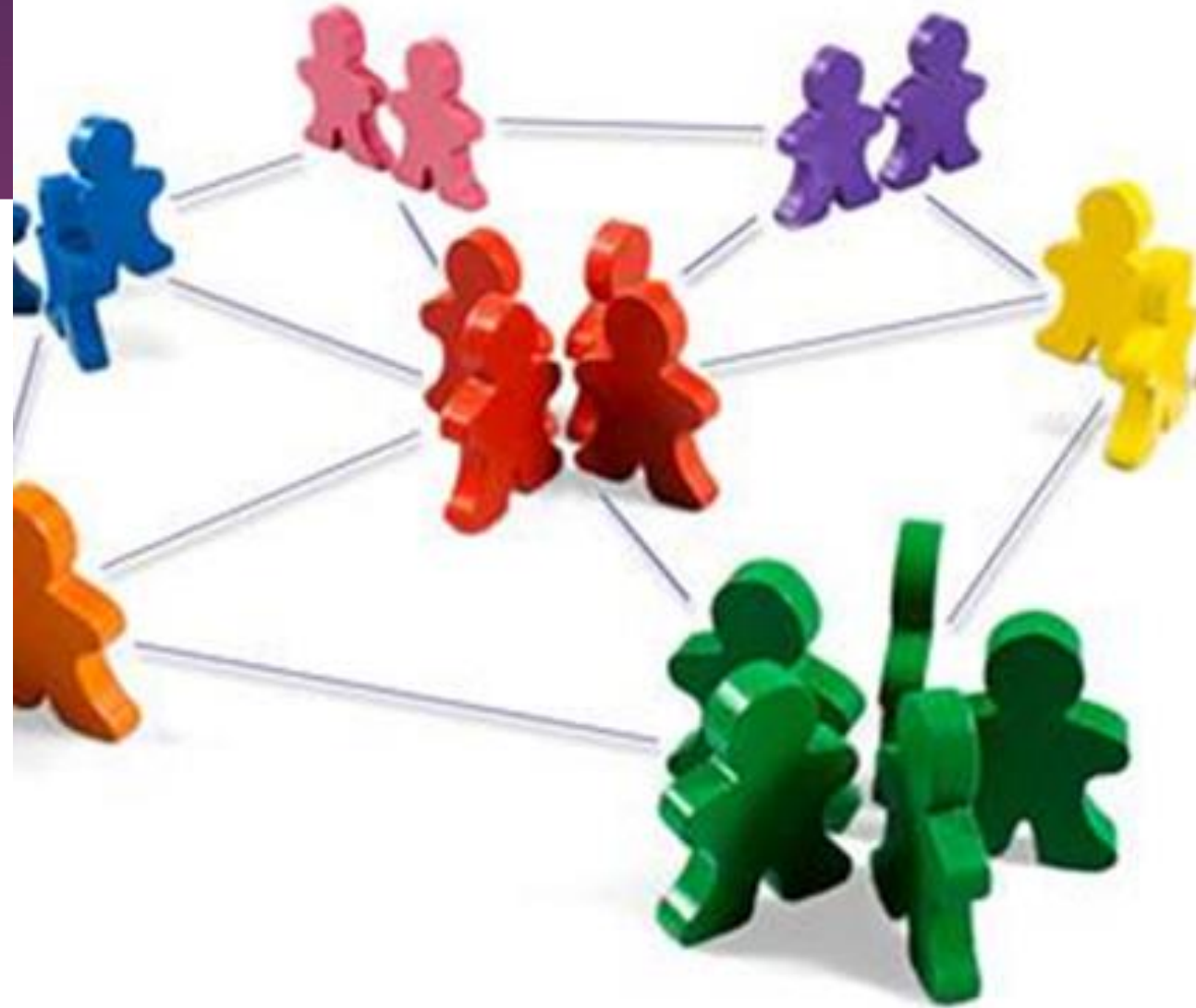
- ▶ Difficulty registering emotions and responding appropriately
- ▶ However, **self-regulation** can be **strengthened and taught**, through the process of co-regulation with a trusted adult.





# Group Discussion

- ▶ What mistakes is Joy making?
- ▶ What does sadness do well?
- ▶ Have you ever entered into 'Joy' territory. Think about the reasons why.



# Types of parenting

There are four identified “types” of parents that reflect stereotypes often learned as children:



**The Dismissing Parent**

**The Disapproving Parent**

**The Laissez-Faire Parent**

**The Emotion Coach Parent**

# If we don't listen to or notice feelings it could lead to our children.....

- ▶ Thinking what they're feeling is not right (or normal)
- ▶ Not trusting their own feelings
- ▶ Not dealing with emotions effectively so grow up unprepared for life's challenges.
- ▶ Not being able calm themselves or problem-solve
- ▶ Hiding their natural emotions
- ▶ Feeling worse

**\*\*\* Remember that all feelings are natural**

# **A 4-step framework supports the use of Emotion Coaching**

**Recognise the child's emotion and  
emphasise with them**

**Label and validate the child's feelings**

**Set expectations. Not all behaviours are ok.  
Teach children the expectations of a context**

**Problem solve with the child**

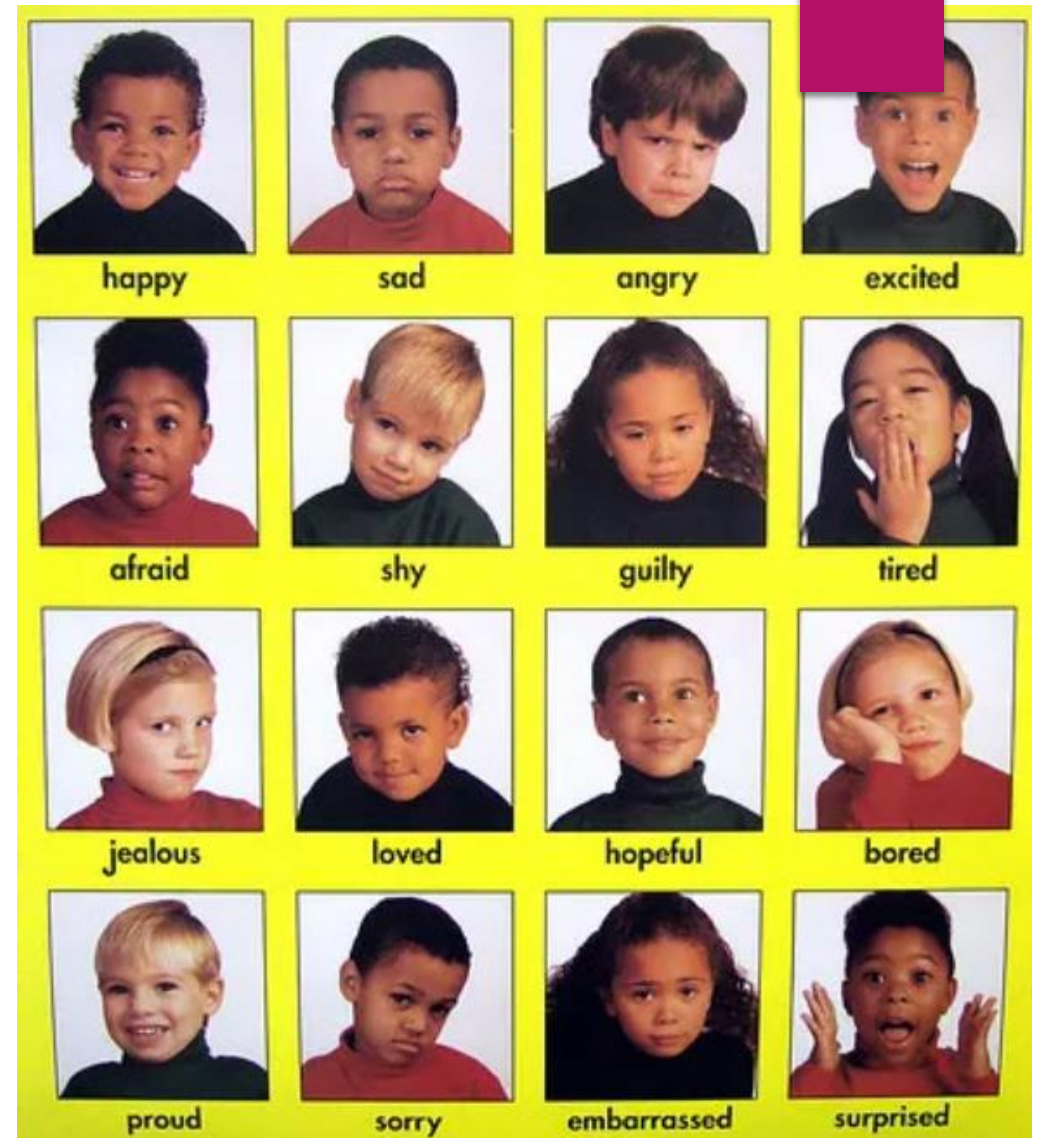


## The Emotion Coaching parent

- Values the child's negative emotions as an opportunity for intimacy
- Is aware of and values her or her own emotions
- Sees the world of negative emotions as an important arena for parenting
- Does not poke fun at or make light of the child's negative feelings
- Does not say how the child should feel
- Uses emotional moments as a time to listen to the child, empathize with soothing words and affection, help the child label the emotion he or she is feeling, offer guidance on regulating emotions, set limits and teach acceptable expression of emotions, and teach problem-solving skills

# Effects of the Emotion Coaching style of parenting on children

- ▶ They learn to trust their feelings, regulate their own emotions, and solve problems. They have high self-esteem, learn well, and get along well with others.



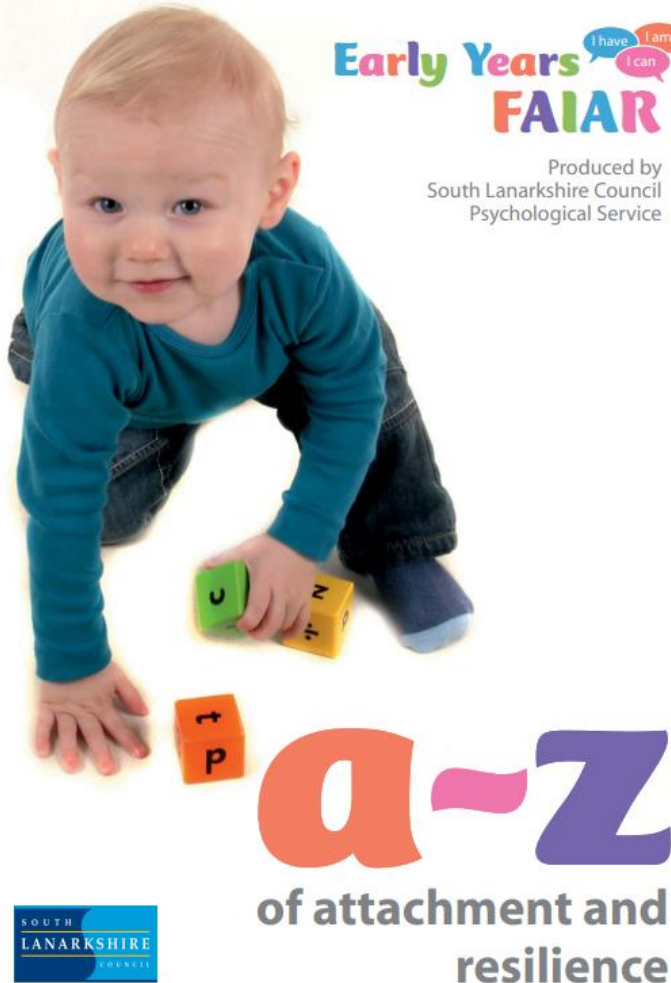


# Roleplay





# A to Z of Attachment and Resilience



## Love and affection

- ▶ **G** is for greetings and farewells

## Respect and appreciation

- ▶ **Q** is for quality conversation time

## Safety and comfort

- ▶ **U** is for understanding difficult emotions

## Fun and stimulation

- ▶ **F** is for friendships

## Support and encouragement

- ▶ **C** is for consistency



a-z

of attachment and  
resilience for parents  
of children aged 9-14