Treating Complex Childhood Trauma: Targeting the Building Blocks of Resilience

The Attachment, Regulation and Competency (ARC) Framework

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Energy Check!

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Agenda: Day 1

Day 1:
- Developmental – an overview
- Removed
- ARC House Graphic
- Integrative elements
- Routines, Rhythms and Attachment
- Lunch
- Regulation
- Competency
- Removed, Part 2
Agenda: Day 2

- Review / Q & A
- Day 2:
  - Clinician and Family Engagement
  - Small Group Activities
  - Clinical Supervision
An Overview

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Overarching Principle and Progression

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Trauma informed care is “universal precaution” to stop the spread of trauma and toxic stress (Sandra Bloom)

TRAUMA-ORGANIZED
- Reactive
- Reliving/Retelling
- Avoiding/Numbing
- Fragmented
- Us Vs. Them
- Inequity
- Authoritarian Leadership

TRAUMA-INFORMED
- Understanding of the Nature and Impact of Trauma and Recovery
- Shared Language
- Recognizing Socio-Cultural Trauma and Structural Oppression

HEALING ORGANIZATION
- Reflective
- Making Meaning Out of the Past
- Growth and Prevention-Oriented
- Collaborative
- Equity and Accountability
- Relational Leadership

TRAUMA INDUCING TO TRAUMA REDUCING
Shift Your Perspective

Transition from a blame model to a repair model

Asking “how can we help” and “what can we learn from you?” (from Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services  www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tic)
The Human Brain: Form and Function

1. Three interrelated, interconnected, interdependent “operating systems”...with unique functions and abilities
2. ...that work most effectively under conditions of low to moderate stress.
3. High levels of stress and adversity separate and impair the three “operating systems”
4. Trauma is like a virus in the operating systems of the brain (Bloom)
5. Healing a brain exposed to chronic adversity often requires unique interventions
When it happens matters

THE TRAUMA TREE

- adult
- teenager
- childhood
- infancy/toddler
- birth
- prenatal

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Cortex
Limbic
Diencephalon
Brainstem

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Developmental Trauma:

- Multiple events before age 5
- Perpetrated from the caregiving system
- Leads to developmental injuries in 7 areas
#1 Physiology: Body & Brain

Developmental Injuries

1. Stabilize the nervous system
2. Structure, Routine, Rituals: Especially during transitions, discipline, saying “no”
3. Movement
4. Rhythmic activities
5. Regulate—Relate—Reason
6. Co-Regulation: Mimic early attachment needs
7. Addressing basic needs
#2 Attachment & Relationships

Developmental Injuries

1. Attachment is the search for protection.
2. “We do to others what was done to us….unless we remember our pain” (Lieberman)
3. Highly insecure and mistrustful of others (particularly authority figures)
4. Lack of congruence between internal experience and external world response (invalidation)
5. Broad symptoms pattern including: bossy, controlling and commanding, clingy and dependent, avoidant and detached; separation anxiety
6. Highly sensitized/reactive to transitions, limits, hearing “no”, working cooperatively
7. Difficulty attuning to others and taking perspective
8. Unusual self-soothing habits and patterns
9. Reenactments
10. Atypical Seeking Behaviors

RELATIONAL DEPOSITS/RELATIONAL ENDURANCE

1. Relational deposits/Relational endurance
2. Create congruence between internal experience and external world response
   ► Validation not reassurance (enter the darkness)
3. It’s not the rupture, it’s the repair—expect the rupture, work the repair
4. Avoid ensnarement in reenactment
   Refine your language:
   a) Connection seeking not attention seeking
   b) Repair seeking
   c) Validation seeking not manipulation
5. PACE
6. Build architecture of healthy interactions
7. Maintain awareness about the impact on relationships within workforce (contagion)
#3 Emotion Regulation:
Developmental Injuries

1. Be an interpreter
2. Use movement, yoga, martial arts, music, create connections between internal physiological states and behavior
3. Teach affect identification and expression
4. Co-regulation strategies: RRR
#4 Cognition & Learning: Developmental Injuries

1. Movement
2. Multi-sensory/modal experiences
3. Differentiated Instruction
4. Targeted training in Executive Functioning
5. Structure and routine
#5 Behavioral Control:

**Developmental Injuries**

1. Understanding that symptoms are a means (attempt at) to self-regulate
2. Stress behavior versus misbehavior (psychoeducation goal)
3. Accountability Formula = Validation + Empathy + Co-regulation + (validate child as victim before approaching as a perpetrator of harm)
4. Re-framing
5. Restorative Practices
6. Reduce stress as a priority

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#6 Dissociation

Developmental Injuries

1. Disconnect between physiology, feelings, thoughts and actions
2. Memory deficits
3. Symptoms usually not within child’s conscious control
4. “Disguised” Symptoms:
   a) ADHD/ADD
   b) Freezing: stilling, collapsed, escape, numb, detached
   c) Avoidance: refusals, indifference, retreat, self-medicate
   d) Academic: work refusal, work avoidance, indifference, apathetic
   e) Helpless: Passive, possum, submissive, obedient, collapse, victimized, defeated

Movement, music, rhythmic activities
2. Orient externally with 5 senses
3. Music, rhythmic activities
4. Nurturing physical contact
5. Identify triggers
#7 Self-esteem & Future Orientation

**Developmental Injuries**

1. Validation *not* reassurance
2. Patience, persistence, empathy
3. Curiosity
4. Tolerating the affect of the child
The Stress Continuum

- Stress is community property and therefore...
- Everyone has some responsibility for the success of others because...
- Connections moderate stress

Low/No Stress: Rest and restore

Mild/Moderate Stress: Optimum

Overload

Breakdown

Stress: Calm.
The Stress Continuum: Typically Developing Person

- Low/No Stress: Rest and restore
- Mild/Moderate Stress: Optimum
- Moderate/High Stress: Overload
- Toxic Stress: Breakdown

Vulnerability
The Stress Continuum: Person Exposed to Chronic Trauma (sensitized)

- **Mild/Moderate Stress:** Optimum
- **Moderate/High Stress:** Overload
- **Low/No Stress:** Rest and restore
- **Toxic Stress:** Breakdown

Resiliency

Vulnerability

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## Misbehavior vs. Stress Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Misbehavior (submit and admit)</th>
<th>Stress Behavior (survival based)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intention</strong></td>
<td>Avoid/Seek</td>
<td>Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child’s Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Willful, Choice, Intention</td>
<td>Survival Skill Defect: Child must learn the skill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child has the skill, not using it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult’s Approach</strong></td>
<td>Authoritarian: incentives, bribes, threats, punish, contingencies</td>
<td>Collaborative: Co-regulate, collaborate, reframe, core themes, see the meaning of the behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Skill Deficit</strong></td>
<td>Lack of self-control</td>
<td>Lack of self-Reg, self-awareness, skill deficit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Connect, Curiosity, Co-regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Re-frame</strong></td>
<td>What is wrong with you?</td>
<td>What happened to you? How can I help? What is the source?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why can’t you control this?</td>
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</table>
**Re-Framing**

**What is re-framing?**

1. Shifting the meaning of a behavior from something seen as negative to...
2. Something that is understood as having survival value
3. Finding the **positive adaptive value** in chronic acting out
4. A shift from seeing a problem to an opportunity
5. Understanding that the observable behavior is interpreted too literally... ...and the central message of what the child is trying to communicate is lost

**What re-framing accomplishes:**

1. Reduces stress
2. Improves our capacity to validate and hold student accountability
3. Changes our proximity (and emotion) to the problem
4. Increases the ability to “be with” the student and promotes attachment
5. Deepens our understanding of intention, motivation, need, survival
6. Enhances creativity
Social Discipline Window

But what about the consequences?

- Context of caring relationships
- Focus on repair vs. rule violation
- Accountability and mastery
- Membership vs. exclusion

• Relevant
• Relationship
• Restorative
• Reparative
Removed part 1

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lOeQUwdAjE0

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
ARC Framework

Competency
- Relational Connection
- Executive Functions
- Self-Development & Identity

Regulation
- Identification
- Modulation

Attachment
- Caregiver Affect Management
- Attunement
- Effective Response
- Engagement
- Education
- Routines & Rhythms

Graphic by Jeremy Karpen; Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
1 Overarching Goal

- **Competency**
  - Relational Connection
  - Executive Functions
  - Self-Development & Identity

- **Regulation**
  - Identification
  - Modulation

- **Attachment**
  - Caregiver Affect Management
  - Attunement
  - Effective Response
  - Engagement
  - Psychoeducation
  - Routines & Rituals

Graphic by Jeremy Karpen; Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
What is Trauma Experience Integration

1. **survive and tolerate** moments of overwhelming distress and arousal
2. **reflect upon and make meaning** about those moments
3. **shift and transform** them allowing active engagement in present experience.

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
The right skill at the right time: The Observe – Modulate – Do Cycle

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Every part of the work is TEI

Avoid shame through “HUH!?"
Elements of intervention

- In the moment goal
- Intervention emphasis
- Child core goals
- Caregiver core goals

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
State 1: Survival State

- Child / caregiver is in a state of being shut down, hyperaroused, jittery / anxious, self-injurious, labile, or have inadequate external supports in the face of distressing experiences.

- Rapid shift from constricted to hyperaroused or escalate quickly in response to stressors or difficult clinical content.

- Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005

Regulation of overwhelming experience

Present-focused distress tolerance

Recognize and support coping with current perceived or real experience

Support caregivers’ tolerance of their own experience as well as youth experience, and engage in strengths.
State 2: Access to Curiosity

- Child / caregiver is:
  - in a state of being reasonably grounded / present
  - able to engage in conversation and reflection about moderately distressing experiences
  - in the face of strong emotion is responsive to cues or supports for modulation

- Recognize and build understanding of patterns; understanding triggers and behavioral functions

- Build a caregiving system that accurately sees and understands youth experience

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
State 3: Able to take action in-the-moment

- Caregiver is motivated to engage in a present action and has been
- Caregiver has begun to build an understanding of self / patterns
- Client has ability to recognize (states of) distress and to independently use resources to manage internal and external supports

Agency and present engagement

- Access curiosity and regulation skills to support active engagement in current life

Harnessing capacity for purposeful action

- Support caregiver in making active choices and engaging executive functions

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
What’s the sequence?

How we might think the progression of trauma treatment should look:
The Reality:
The Cross-Cutting Strategies: Threads that bind the work

- Engagement
- Education
- Routines

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Why should I?

All practice rests on engagement

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Reasons Children and Families May be Hesitant to Engage

- Guarded approach to relational connection
- Caregiver as well as child vulnerability / complexity
- Multi-layered exposures to stress and adversity, including ongoing exposure which impact capacity to tolerate relationship as well as therapeutic intervention
- Lack of willingness / capacity to verbalize and share historical or current experiences
- Historical or ongoing experiences of disconnect, disrespect, and disengagement from system and providers
- Lack of shared understanding of “the problem”

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Four key factors for engagement

- Belief that the goal is *worthwhile*
- Belief that the process is *valid*
- Belief that the goal is *attainable*
- Belief that the provider / system is *safe, respectful, and competent*

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
ARC Initial Engagement Principles: Caregivers

- Describe /discuss program (or practitioner) philosophy
- Describe /discuss treatment approach
- Proactively describe / discuss / trouble-shoot caregiver involvement
- Establish frame of transparency, psychoeducation, and collaboration
- Take a curious stance; witness family strengths as well as challenges
- Set the stage for ongoing participation

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
ARC Initial Engagement Principles: Youth

- Engage around child’s goals
- Indicate interest in the whole child, and belief in capacity for success
- Start to establish meeting rules and structure (Routines)
- Establish a frame of collaborative, transparent intervention
- Link trauma and targeted skills

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Throughout the work, consider these questions:

- How are my own attachment skills being applied in the context of this relationship(s), and in support of skill development?
- What is the stake? Why does this concept (goal, treatment target) matter in this child’s life? This family’s life?
- How will this (child, family, system) define success (in general, and around individual targets)? What is needed to support that success?
- What are the potential barriers? How can we get in front of (versus react to) those barriers?

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Why are we doing this?

The powerful role of education:

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Consider the difference...

- "I’m a terrible parent. Some days I just don’t even like my kids any more."
- "I feel like I’m going crazy."
- "He’s just always been the bad kid."
- "I get too mad and get in fights. You’re not supposed to get mad."

- "Things have been really overwhelming lately. When I get stressed out, I start to feel bad about myself. It’s a good clue that I need to take a break."
- "My brain just shut off because my feelings got too big. I need some space so I can feel safe again."
- "When things make him anxious, he goes into self-protect mode and he lashes out."
- "Sometimes people or things at school push my buttons and my lion gets set off. I’m learning how to take care of myself other ways."

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Information is Powerful

- Feelings, body sensations, and actions may feel overwhelming, disconnected, “crazy”, and unpredictable to the child, the caregivers, and to the surrounding system (including providers!)

ARC assumes:

- Behavior makes sense
- *WE* need to be curious
- Supporting children and families in being curious empowers them

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Throughout our work, we incorporate an understanding...

- Not just of **WHAT**, but **WHY**, and **why it makes sense**
  - Normalizes and validates experience
  - Destigmatizes behavior, emotion, and perception
  - Pulls children, families, and systems onto our collaborative team

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Graphic by Jeremy Karpen; Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Routines/Rhythms, Caregiver Affect, Attunement, Effective Response

Beth Goss, LCMHC
ARC Trainer
Howard Center

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Routines and Rhythms: Supports modulation and mastery

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Routines and Rhythms

- Trauma is associated with chaos and loss of control

- PREDICTABILITY helps build feelings of safety

- Repetition is important to the way that all people gain skills

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Routines are used:

1. to support felt safety and modulation, through the establishment of predictability; and

2. to support and reinforce key goals / skills acquisition, through the use of facilitating structures

Routines will naturally shift across time

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Using Routines to Support Treatment

- Utilize routines in your interactions with youth and families
- Build and support appropriate routines in home or other settings
- Examples of using in your work

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Home and Milieu Routines

• What is the natural rhythm of the families/youth’s day

• Where do areas of chaos/unpredictability lead to dysregulation

• Target natural areas of challenge such as mealtimes, transitions, bedtimes

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Attachment: A safe relationship

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Attachment = 3 Domains

• Caregiver Affect Management

• Attunement

• Effective Response

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Caregiver Affect Management

• Focus on the Caregiver

• Who is the caregiver?

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Caregiver Affect Management

Support the child’s caregiving system – whether parents or professionals - in understanding, managing, and coping with their own emotional responses.....so that they are better able to support the children in their care

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Increasing our ability to regulate

**Primary Targets**
- Validate, psychoeducation and depersonalization
- Identify difficult situations
- Self monitoring skills
- Self-care and support

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Normalize and Depersonalize

- Normalize and validate caregiver response to difficult behavior - *We feel what we feel*

- Depersonalize youth trauma response –
  - Build Attunement and psychoeducation re:
    - Adaptive nature of behaviors
    - Understanding function of child behavior
    - Understanding and recognizing triggers (and differentiating this response from opposition, manipulation, etc.)
    - Working models of self and other, including the parallel process

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Understanding Youth Behavior

• The body’s alarm system
• The normative danger response
• The danger response and arousal
• The overactive alarm
• What triggers the alarm?
• How do you know a child has been triggered?

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Brain process under typical conditions

Joshua Arvidson, 2011

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
With repeated stress, the Alarm System “Express Route” becomes the main road.
With repeated stress, the Alarm System “Express Route” becomes the main road

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010

Joshua Arvidson, 2011
Build Self Monitoring Skills

Build self-monitoring skills: Work with adults to notice their own typical responses to difficult situations

- **Body:** What cues does the body give? Notice more routine body cues, as well as warning signs for “losing control” or hitting a danger point

- **Thoughts:** What are caregiver’s automatic thoughts in the face of difficult situations? Do they….blame themselves? Worry about their choices? Focus on what the child is *not* doing? Compare the child to other kids?

- **Emotions:** What does caregiver *feel* in the face of these thoughts? How strongly?


Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Attunement

Support the child’s caregiving system – whether parents or professionals – in learning to accurately and empathically understand and respond to children’s actions, communications, needs, and feelings.

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Attunement: Key Concepts

Primary Goal – Build Rhythm in Relationship

- Foundation for rhythm is a Curious Stance
  - Assume behaviors make sense
  - Difficult behaviors are often fronts for unmet needs or unregulated affect
  - Key challenge is to identify the function of the behavior

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Parallel Attunement

• Accurate attunement in the caregiving system provides the foundation for youth self-regulation

• The more the system is ACTIVE in its attunement efforts, the more reflective this process will be and the less reactive!

• Respond empathically to the caregiving system

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Effective Response

Support the caregiving system, whether familial or programmatic, in building predictable, safe, and appropriate responses to children’s behaviors, in a manner that acknowledges and is sensitive to the role of past experiences in current behaviors.

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Effective Response

Challenges on how we respond to the behavior

• Caregivers own difficulty managing affect
• Caregivers difficulty understanding the bx
• Caregivers difficulty appropriately responding
• Lack of awareness or skills
• Youths responses to limits

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Effective Response – Be Proactive

• Trauma-impacted youth are complex:
  – Many different challenging behaviors
  – Changing response in relationships

• The most effective strategies are those that are proactive, or get in front of the behaviors

• Pay attention to behaviors you want to see more of, not just ones you want to reduce!!

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Effective Response: Identify the Need

• Use your detective skills: remember to read the clues that tell you what your child’s needs, feelings, and experience might be.

• Remember – what are the primary functions of youth trauma-based behaviors?
  – Survival (fight, flight, freeze, submit)
  – Need fulfillment (emotional, relational, physiological)

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Effective Response: Support Regulation

- Sometimes, the first clue that a need is not being met is dysregulation — a signal that the child’s brain has begun to shift into “survival mode”

- At this point, the primary goal is to support regulation, and shift the child (and the caregiver, if necessary!) out of survival mode and into a more regulated state (off of the express road and back to the main road)

- A “regulation break” may be enough to shift negative behaviors before they have a chance to start

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
Consider what strategies are in your behavioral toolbox....

- Make a plan – mentally walk through a “typical” scenario, and consider which strategies might work.

- Consider strategies to be “experiments”; no one strategy will work for all children all the time. Multiple strategies can be used to address the same behavioral goal, at different times.

- Engage Youth in the Process.

Adapted from Blaustein and Kinniburgh 2005, 2010
ARC Framework

Competency
- Relational Connection
- Executive Functions
- Self-Development & Identity

Regulation
- Identification
- Modulation

Attachment
- Caregiver Affect Management
- Attunement
- Effective Response
- Engagement
- Education
- Routines & Rhythms

Graphic by Jeremy Karpen; Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
How do we understand regulation?

- “Regulation” is a complicated skill set that is not just about maintaining status quo

- Individual differences:
  Comfort zone (*I like to be here*) vs. safety zone (*I NEED to be here*) and danger zone (*I can’t TOLERATE being here*)

ARC - Blaustein & Kinniburgh 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
How do we understand regulation?

- **Comfort zone**: I like to live here

- **Regulatory capacity**: The capacity to tolerate entering a range of arousal states; have strategies or resources to manage those states; and tools that help you return to “baseline”

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ARC - Blaustein & Kinniburgh 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
How do we understand dysregulation*?

- **Safety zone**: I NEED to live here to remain regulated.
- Regulation in a safety zone: Exerting extreme efforts to remain in a narrow band of arousal to maintain felt safety, and becoming disorganized and distressed when out of that band. *Option 1

ARC - Blaustein & Kinniburgh 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
How do we understand dysregulation*?

- **Safety zone**: I NEED to live here to remain regulated
- **Regulation in a safety zone**: Exerting extreme efforts to remain in a narrow band of arousal to maintain felt safety, and becoming disorganized and distressed when out of that band

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**Safety zone**: where I need to live

**Tolerable but uncomfortable arousal state**

**Danger zone**: highly distressing arousal states leading to disorganization

ARC - Blaustein & Kinniburgh 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
How do we understand dysregulation*?

- **Almost NO Safety zone**: Very slim band that allows functional engagement
- **Very few organized regulation strategies**, leading to easy cycling among hypo- and hyper-aroused states

*Option 2

ARC - Blaustein & Kinniburgh 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Self Regulation

- Work with children to build ability to safely and effectively manage experience on many levels: emotional, physiological, cognitive and behavioral: this includes the capacity to identify, access, modulate and share various aspects of experience.
Still Face experiment
Affect Identification

- Build an awareness of internal experience, identify and label emotions and understand where these states come from.

- Label, Connect, Context
- Accurately label others emotions
Affect Identification-Engagement

- Teach-to-kids
  - Everyone has feelings
  - Feelings come from somewhere
  - It’s not easy to know what we feel
  - We can learn cues to know what we feel
  - When we know about feelings we can better understand ourselves and what we need to do to manage the feeling
  - We can learn to read others emotions
Affect Identification-Integration

- Create a language for emotions and arousal
- Connect the emotion to body sensations, thoughts and behaviors (Clues)
- Context: Understand what experiences elicit emotions and arousal.
- Within themselves and others
Affect Identification-Evaluate

- Does the child know when they are experiencing a feeling?
  - “I know I am happy because…”

  Does the child understand the context of the emotion?
  - “The reason I’m feeling happy is…”

Within themselves and others
Affect Modulation-Engagement

Normalize

- We all react with feelings.
- Feelings can be big or small.
- We can feel more than one emotion at a time.
- Emotions have a purpose.
- We can manage our emotions.
Affect Modulation

- Develop safe and effective strategies to manage and regulate physiological and emotional experience in order to maintain a comfortable and regulated state of arousal.
  - Degrees of feelings
  - Comfortable and effective
  - Explore
  - Strategies
Affect Modulation-Integration

- Create a system to track emotional sensitivity. (energy)
- Use scaling questions to gain insight on level of intensity.
- Teach exercises to modulate arousal one degree at a time.
  - Down regulation
  - Up regulation
Affect Modulation-Integration

- Breathing
- Movement
- Grounding
- Muscle relaxation
- Imagery
- Sounds
- Touch
Every child participating in ARC should have a “toolbox” of specific coping skills to use for specific emotional or energy states.

Toolbox should include tips and examples of what to use and when.

This is created by the child with help from their caregiving system.
ARC Framework

Competency
- Relational Connection
- Executive Functions
- Self-Development & Identity

Regulation
- Identification
- Modulation

Attachment
- Caregiver Affect Management
- Attunement
- Effective Response
- Engagement
- Education
- Routines & Rhythms

Graphic by Jeremy Karpen; Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Competency

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Competency: Overarching Goal

- Build the foundational skills needed for healthy ongoing development and resiliency
- Support key reflective and relational capacities -- including ability to connect effectively
- Set goals and make active choices and developmentally-appropriate sense of self

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Core Target: Relational Connection

- Explore goals of connection
- Build Comfort and Safety in relationships
- Identify/Establish resources for safe connections
- Build skills to support effective use of resources

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Primary Targets

- Exploration of the goals of connection; build comfort and safety in relationship
- Identify / establish resources for safe connection
- Create opportunities for connection via structures that support communication
- Support communication by coaching and modeling effective skills:
  - Effective nonverbal communication skills
  - Effective verbal communication skills
Identifying Resources

- Support youth in identifying safe resources for various needs
- Work with each child (and adult) to build a "connection" plan
- Work directly with identified resources to engage and initiate connection with the child
- Family communication boards
- Visuals and prompts
  - Verbal and non-verbal

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Core Target: Executive Functions

- Inhibiting Impulses
- Working Memory
- Cognitive Flexibility

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Core Target: Executive Functioning

- Support active recognition of capacity to make choices (agency)
- Build age-appropriate active evaluation of situations
- Build child capacity to inhibit responses
- Build/support ability to generate and evaluate potential solutions

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
What is “Agency?”

- “A means of exerting power or influence; instrumentality”
- “The ability to exercise free will.”

Simplistically: believing that what you do matters.

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
How do you build executive functions?

- Teach and support these skills when the prefrontal cortex is online
- Catch the moment: scaffold and model problem-solving
- Engage problem-solving through play
- Build problem-solving into clinical and family structures

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Teach Problem-Solving

How?

- Identify goals or outcomes (What do we want to have happen?).
- Identify choices (What kinds of things might we be able to do?).
- Identify consequences (what might happen if we do that?).
- Make a plan and troubleshoot it. Be sure to pay attention to the adult support role.

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Teach Problem-Solving

When?

- In calm states, in anticipation of or following distress, challenges or other problem situations.
- When the child or teen is asking you for help.
- Regularly, through building skill by practicing and addressing the many small challenges that arise daily.

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Engage evaluation of choices through play

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Use Structures that Support Active Decision-Making

- Planning (visits, transitions, anticipated challenges, etc.)
- Processing past incidents
- Conflict resolution
Core Target: Self and Identity

- Support children in exploring and building an understanding of self and personal identity, including identification of unique and positive qualities.
- Build coherence across time and experience.
- Support in the capacity to imagine and work toward a range of future possibilities.

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Facets of Identity

- Unique Self
- Positive Self
- Cohesive Self
- Future Self

Consider: *Self, Self-in-Context, Self-in-relation-to-other*

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Unique Self: Individuality

Example Activities:

- All About Me Books
- Personal collage (general/specific)
- Group collage around single theme, with individual child sections
- Artistic self-expression
  - Drawing, writing, clay/sculpture, paint, rapping, etc.
  - Talent shows
- Bulletin boards with space dedicated to each resident
- Activities celebrating individual diversity (i.e., culture-specific meals, holiday celebrations, etc.)

Explore!

- Work with youth to follow through on individual interests

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005
Positive Self: Esteem & Efficacy

- **Example activities:**
  - Power book
  - Pride wall
  - Superhero self
  - End-of-week awards
  - Display youth accomplishments—think of the refrigerator display

- *Tune into moments of success (both relative and absolute); name them; capture them concretely (both individually and in milieu)*
Cohesive Self: Self Across Time and Context

- **Behind the scenes:**
  - Pay attention to incorporating/normalizing multiple affective states and reactions
  - Observe and help child tune into *patterns*

- **Example activities:**
  - Life books
  - Timelines / life narrative
  - Family tree, including “family” across placements
  - Aspects of self
    - Personal Crest, Masks, Ingredients of Me
Future self: Future orientation

- **Example activities:**
  - Future self drawing
  - 5-10-20 years
  - Life book addendum
  - Goal setting, future-planning: help kids develop goals (i.e., beyond the program, beyond age 18)---help explore possibility

- **Connect it:** In conversation, pay attention to how current actions/ experiences connect to future goals

Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005