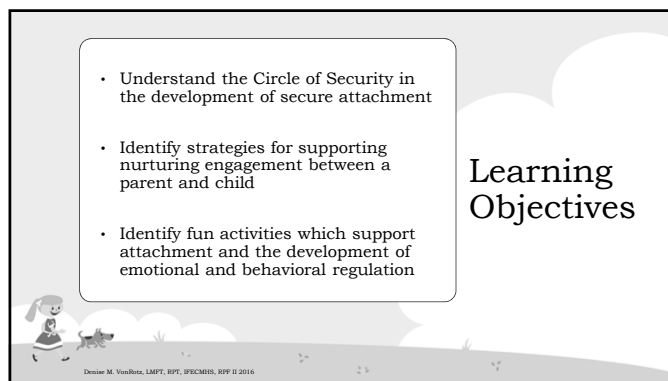


The Clinician's Toolbox: Supporting Nurturing Engagement

We Can't Wait Conference 2016

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Learning Objectives

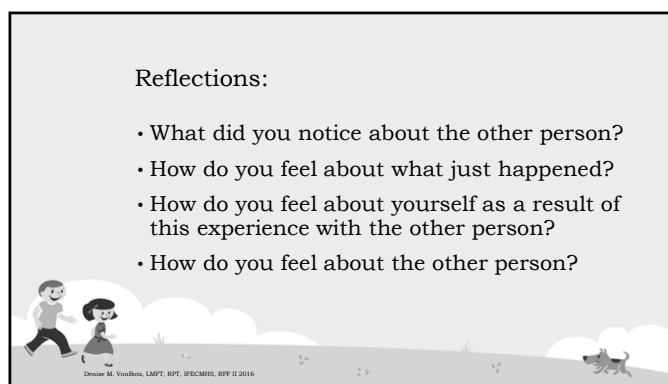
- Understand the Circle of Security in the development of secure attachment
- Identify strategies for supporting nurturing engagement between a parent and child
- Identify fun activities which support attachment and the development of emotional and behavioral regulation

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Experiential Activity

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Reflections:

- What did you notice about the other person?
- How do you feel about what just happened?
- How do you feel about yourself as a result of this experience with the other person?
- How do you feel about the other person?

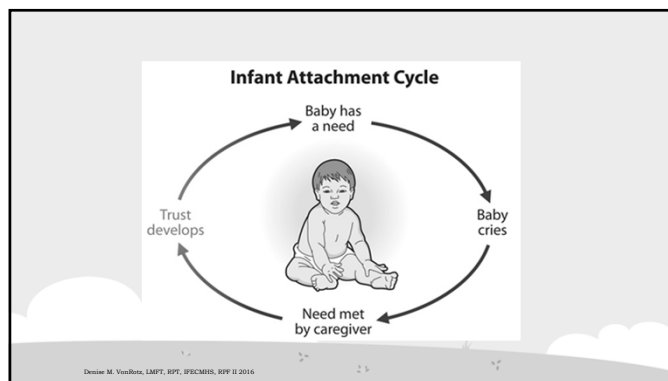
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Positive and Nurturing Relationships

Hmmm

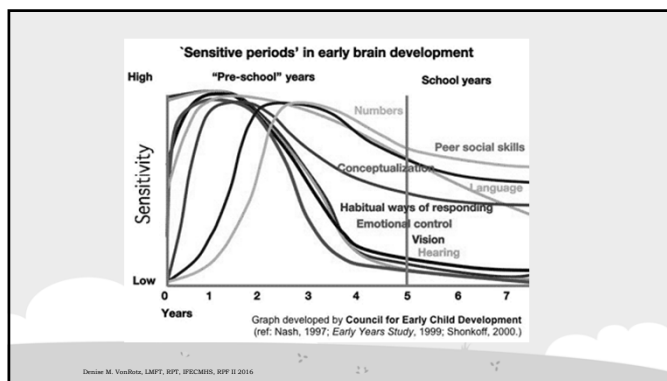
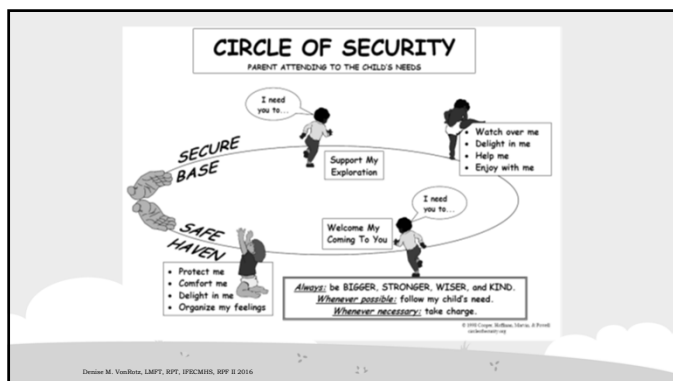
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Infant Attachment Cycle

```
graph TD; A[Baby has a need] --> B[Baby cries]; B --> C[Need met by caregiver]; C --> D[Trust develops]; D --> A;
```

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Developmental Benefits of "Being With"

- Learning to manage emotions
 - coregulation and self-regulation
- Self-reliance not self-sufficiency
- Great expectations of others and themselves

Therapist's Role

- Relationship – create a safe haven/secure base
- Affect – help parents to accept and hold painful emotional states

Parallel Process

Therapist's Role

- Relationship – create a safe haven/secure base
- Affect – help parents to accept and hold painful emotional states
- Reflection – increase parents' reflective capacity

Objectives for Parent-Child Dyad:

- Support mutually satisfying interactions
- Follow child's lead in play themes and provide safety and reassurance in play
- Provide "corrective emotional experiences"
- Point out moments of parent and child enjoyment of one another
- Encourage frequent physical touch (when speaking with child, when child walks nearby, during play)
- Encourage direct eye contact when speaking with child
- Mirror and reflect emotions to validate and model positive expression

** Caution / Common Mistake:

We often feel the pressure to **DO, DO, DO** to make something happen...

when often what is most helpful is to mellow out and just **BE**...



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- In Child-Parent Psychotherapy, "the basic assumption is that the most immediate and direct threat to the young child's psychological well-being is an explicit or implicit parental message that the child is not good enough"
- "When the parent and the child play together, the spontaneity and joy of the play may be therapeutic in itself"
- "Play is the therapeutic medium of choice because of its centrality in children's lives"

Why Play?

Psychotherapy with Infants and Young Children - Lieberman and Van Horn



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- "Playing is how the child tries out his world and learns about his world, and it is therefore essential to his healthy development"
- "Play also serves as a language for the child - a symbolism that substitutes for words. The child experiences much in life he cannot as yet express in language, and so he uses play to formulate and assimilate what he experiences."
- "Through the safety of play every child can try out his own new ways of being."

Why Play?

Windows to Our Children - Violet Oaklander



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Attachment Interventions: Theraplay Activities

- **Structure** (organize child's world so that child feels safe and secure and knows what to expect)
- **Nurture** (caring for child so that the child feels loved and feels good about self)
- **Engagement** (play and have fun with child)
- **Challenge** (help the child to learn new things)



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www.theraplay.org



- Mirroring
- Cotton Ball Hockey
- Play Dough Squeeze or Prints
- Bean Bag Catch
- Body Drawings
 - hands, feet, whole body
- Measuring

Structure



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- Peek a Boo
- Beep and Honk
- This Little Piggy
- Blow Me Over
- Checkups
- Hide and Seek

Engagement



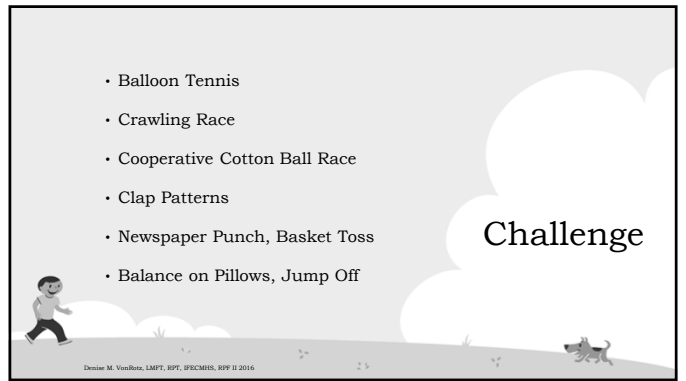
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The slide features a light gray background with large white clouds on the right side. At the bottom, there is a small illustration of a child walking and a dog running on a grassy field. The word "Nurture" is written in a large, bold, black font in the center-right area.

- Guess the Goodies
- Lullaby
- Cotton Ball Touch
- Face Painting
- Lotioning
- Lotion and Powder Prints

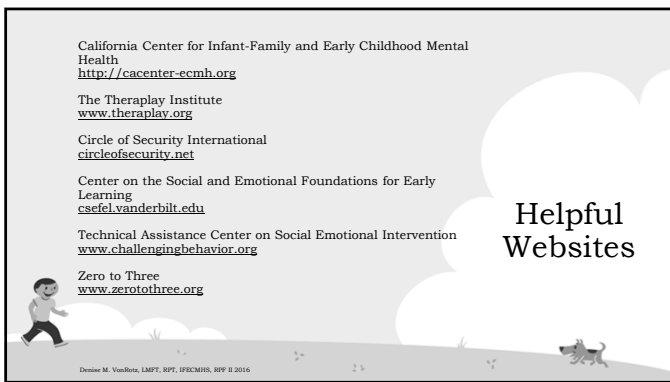
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- Balloon Tennis
- Crawling Race
- Cooperative Cotton Ball Race
- Clap Patterns
- Newspaper Punch, Basket Toss
- Balance on Pillows, Jump Off

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California Center for Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health
<http://cacenter-ecmh.org>

The Theraplay Institute
www.theraplay.org

Circle of Security International
circleofsecurity.net

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
csefel.vanderbilt.edu

Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention
www.challengingbehavior.org

Zero to Three
www.zerotothree.org

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