

Connecting When Things are Tough

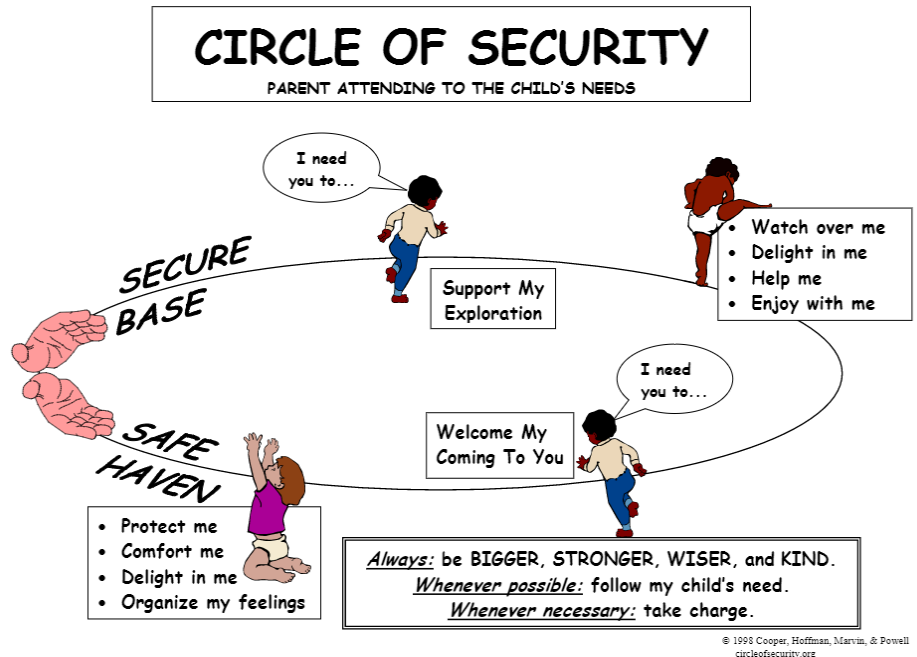
Watching and Listening

Facial expressions, tone of voice, body posture, and words or other communication, are all important and help us know how to connect with the child.

- How relaxed are they?
- Are they excited?

Joining In

We can join by meeting the child where they are in that moment, and growing on what the child is interested and doing. We can sit alongside them and ask ourselves: Am I showing I am calm? How can I show that I'm supportive? How is the child experiencing me? What are their emotional needs right now?



Following the Child's Lead

Helping the child and letting them lead us in play and conversation. This builds confidence and helps them feel in control (which is important!). Allow warmth, and being connected to lead you.

Growing our Base

As we follow, we can slowly expand on the ideas and communication. Positive comments about the child's play will invite the child to be more creative in their actions. We can ask questions, pretend we don't understand things, get instructions on what to do next, always waiting for them to respond. Make things fun! We learn better when we are in a fun frame of mind. Use: bouncing, tickling, peek a boo with items, toys with noise, songs with actions, imitating the noises they make, be animated and silly!

Empowering the Child to Close

Just as we open the circle of attachment, the child can close it, or lead to a new one. By working together, we learn about each other and connect.

Adapted from: <http://www.autism-help.org/intervention-floor-time-dir2.htm>