Circle of Security Intervention:
Evidence Base, Publications, and Awards

Designations as an Evidence-Based Intervention

2013  Listed as **Evidence-Based/Evidence Informed** Programs

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Children’s Bureau Child Welfare Information Gateway lists Circle of Security as an **Evidence-Based/Evidence Informed Program**.
https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/parented.pdf

2013  Designated as **Promising Practice** in child welfare

The Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) and the University of Washington Evidence Based Practice Institute designates Circle of Security a **Promising Practice**.

2013  Circle of Security (Home Visiting-4) has been rated as “Promising Research Evidence” in home visiting, infant and toddler mental health and parent training.

Circle of Security (Home Visiting-4) has been rated as “Promising Research Evidence” by the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare in the topic areas of: Infant and Toddler Mental Health Programs (Birth to 3), Parent Training Programs and Home Visiting Programs and Home Visiting Programs for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.
http://www.cebc4cw.org

2002  Designated as a **Reported Effective Program**


1999  Recognized as an **Exemplary Practice, Early Head Start Federal Review**

“. . . The Regional Office recognizes Spokane's Early Head Start Program for its leadership in the area of Attachment and Bonding and its partnership with [Circle of Security]. The Regional Office has designated this work as an **Exemplary Practice** and recognizes it as a model for other programs. This designation will be shared with the Central Office in order to build upon and expand the base of **Best Practices** for Early Head Start.”

*Early Head Start Federal Review* (June, 1999)
Circle of Security Research: Empirical Publication


The study goal was to examine whether the COS intervention would prove effective in reducing attachment disorganization and insecurity. We hypothesized that after intervention there would be (a) a significant decrease in disorganized attachment classifications in particular, and (b) a significant decrease in insecure attachment classifications overall. Both hypotheses were supported. First, there was a significant decrease in disorganized attachment status from pre- to post-intervention; at baseline, 60% of children were categorized as disorganized, while at follow-up only 25% were so categorized. Second, there was a significant decrease in insecure attachment status from pre- to post-intervention. At baseline, 80% of children were categorized as insecure, while at follow-up only 46% were so categorized.


The study involved a jail-diversion program titled “Tamar’s Children.” Women who were identified as pregnant in jail or who were pregnant during their sentencing period were offered the opportunity to enroll in this jail diversion program. Twenty mothers completed treatment and were seen with their 12-month-olds in the Ainsworth Strange Situation attachment assessment. Fourteen of the 20 infants (70%) were classified as securely attached to mother. This rate of security is significantly higher than rates typically observed in samples of high-risk mothers, and was identical to the rates typical of low-risk, middle-class samples. In addition, only four infants (20%) were classified as insecure/disorganized, the insecure subgroup with highest risk for psychopathology. This rate of disorganization is significantly lower than that found in at-risk samples, and it is identical to the rate that is typical of low-risk, middle-class samples.


Irritable newborns and their economically-stressed mothers were recruited from hospitals in the greater Washington, D.C. area to participate in a randomized control trial of the Circle of Security-Home Visiting Intervention (COS-HV4). The study goal was to examine the moderating effects of infant irritability and maternal attachment on the effectiveness of the COS-HV4 at reducing the rates of insecure infant-mother attachment. The four session
COS-HV4 intervention took place during three home visits lasting an hour and a half each and one brief fourth follow-up visit between infant ages 6.5 and 9 months. Results indicated that for dyads that were particularly at-risk for insecure infant attachment (e.g., a dismissing mother with a high-irritable infant) the intervention significantly reduced the risk of insecure attachment.

Additional Publications


Awards

2013 Bowlby-Ainsworth Award for clinical applications of attachment theory and research: New York Attachment Consortium

2013 Advocate of the Year Award for Education: Sacred Heart Children’s Hospital Spokane, Washington

2005 Regional Award of Honor "Delivering the Dream": Head Start Region 10 Department of Health and Human Services

2005 Community Service Award: SPO-CAN Counsel for the Prevention of Child Abuse

2000 Governor’s Award for the Circle of Security Project: Washington Counsel for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect