

Introduction



The CALM Connection Group Session 1 Introduction



Greet participants as they enter the room and use the Melvin count down strip to let them know that you will start.

Facilitators Acknowledge:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this group. We know that your time is valuable, and we appreciate you being here.

We truly want to create an environment where you feel safe to share and ask questions.

We know that sometimes due to the sensitive nature of some of the topics it may be hard to share your thoughts or concerns, so please do not hesitate to talk to one of the facilitators after the group.

ONLY DISCUSS BELOW IF CHILD GROUP IS PROVIDED -

Your children will be learning new skills with the educators in the other room.

Today and every time we meet, they will be supported through transitions using the countdown strip, which we will talk about at the end of this session. At the end of each session, we will send you home with the tools that your child was introduced to in their session. If your children are not participating in the group, we invite you to use these strategies at home.

Let's get to know each other!



Let's start with some introductions. If we could go around and share your name, the ages of your child or children, and anything else you wish to share with the group. *After the introductions, the facilitators can introduce themselves and thank the group for sharing.*

We just want to start with some group guidelines or, for lack of a better word, 'rules'.

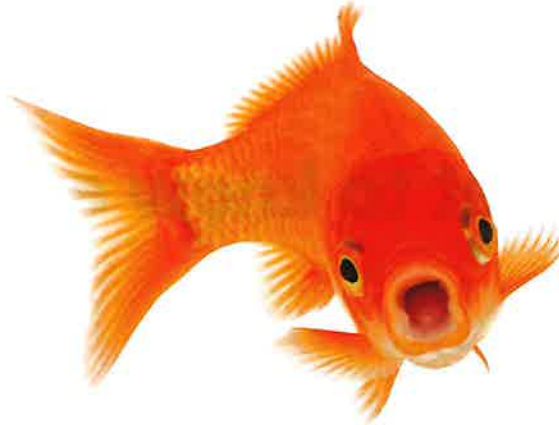
Facilitator Question: What would help you to feel safe in this group? *Facilitators can write this down on flip chart paper to put up for every session.*

Facilitator Question: What are you hoping to learn from attending this group? *Facilitators write it down on flip chart paper.*

We are going to be mindful of your learning priorities for this group and we will be addressing many of these topics in the six sessions.

We will revisit these on our last session and ensure that all your learning priorities were addressed.

May I have your attention... Please!



Before we even start, we would like to draw your attention to this goldfish.

The goldfish is significant to a google Microsoft study in which there was research done to understand the adult attention span...are you worried yet?

According to the Microsoft Study, we have about 8 seconds to capture your initial attention, if in those 8 seconds you are not interested in what we have to say, your mind will begin to travel to other thoughts.

Perhaps you will start making your grocery list...

or figuring out weekend plans...

or maybe you will think about all of the things you would rather be doing right now.

Now the significance of the goldfish is... if we were doing this presentation with a goldfish, we would have its initial attention span for 9 seconds!

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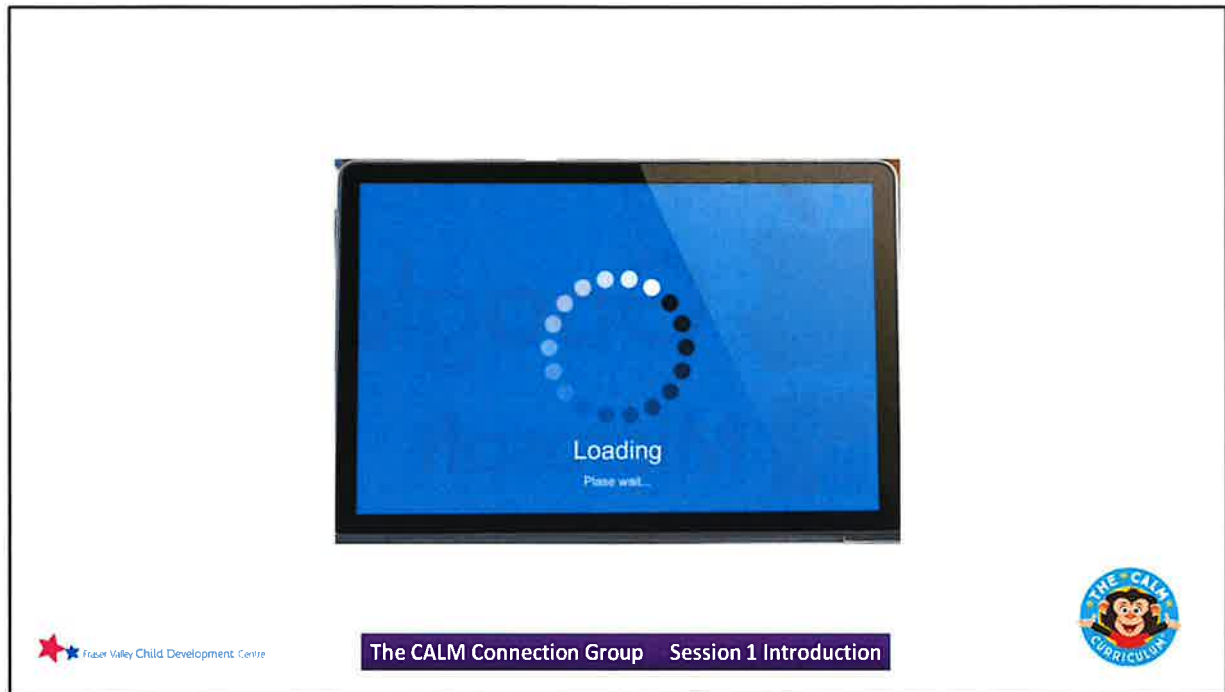


You 8 seconds and a goldfish 9 seconds.
Ok, take a breath...the study was debunked as scientists have not really been able to agree on goldfish attention span.
However, there is something critical we need to take out of this initial study, and that is when it was originally done in the early 2000's, your initial attention span was 12 seconds, and the new research indicates it is now 8 seconds....

We have lost 4 seconds in initial attention span! Let me count 4 seconds to you so we can feel how long this really is. 1....2....3....4
Now that may be something we want to be concerned about...

Facilitator Question: So, why do you think our attention span has decreased?
Possible Answers: *Technology; Instant Gratification; Increased screen time...*

Yes, you are correct. The early 2000's was when the Smart phone first developed. So, as we begin to understand perhaps why our children are seeking instant gratification, let's look at this next slide and understand how it impacts you.



How many of you see this on your computer and say....

“It’s okay, just take your time”.

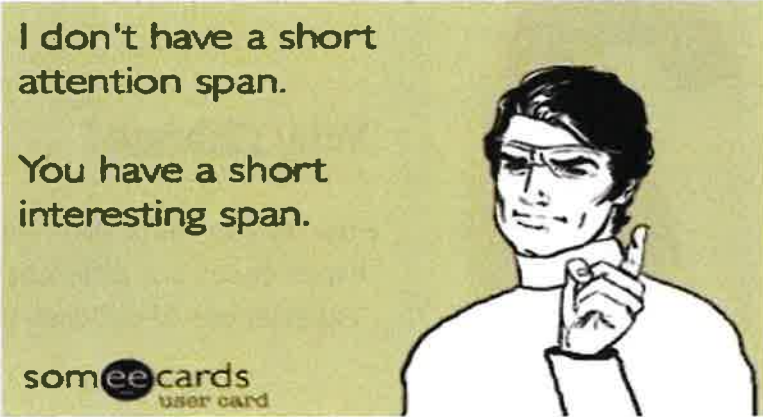
“I don’t mind waiting”.

“I will just continue watching you go around and around.”

Or how many of you are like me and start clicking all the other keys and think....

“I don’t have time for this!”

Hard isn’t it.



I don't have a short attention span.

You have a short interesting span.

someecards
user card

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The image shows a green e-card with a black and white line drawing of a man with his hand to his chin, appearing to be in deep thought. The text on the card is in a simple, sans-serif font. The e-card is set against a white background. In the bottom left corner of the overall slide, there is a small red star logo and the text 'River Valley Child Development Centre'. In the bottom center, there is a purple rectangular box with white text that reads 'The CALM Connection Group Session 1 Introduction'. In the bottom right corner, there is a circular logo for 'THE CALM CURRICULUM' featuring a cartoon monkey.

Understanding attention span is important for the marketing world. How often do you get distracted by the advertisements that pop up on your computer...usually something related to what you had previously searched.

Prezi, a software presentation company, conducted a survey (2018 State of Attention Report) to understand adult attention span, and what they concluded from the results was that you have a great attention span.... Especially when the content is interesting, or you're motivated to learn about it. Sound accurate?

How many of you have great attention span when you are watching Netflix?

So, as we try to understand our children's short attention span or need for instant gratification, we may have to agree that they are not the only ones that struggle with these skills, and they too, are far more motivated when the activity is interesting to them.

We will continue to do these types of reflections to help increase our own self-awareness and become more reflective of our own thoughts so that we can better understand our children when they are stressed.



Why Change?

How do you think your childhood experiences are different to the experiences of children today?



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Let's start with some reflection..... and look at this question.

Facilitator Question: How do you think your childhood experiences are different from the ones your child is experiencing today?

(Give participants and opportunity to reflect and answer.)

Possible answers:

- *Increased technology*
- *Both parents are working*
- *More children are in childcare*
- *Communities or villages around our children have decreased.... More isolated parenting....parents feel judged.*
- *More single parents*
- *Children are playing less outside*

Ask parents: Let's talk more about your experiences with outdoor play. When did you come inside when you were young?

Wait for response

How many rules did you have when you were outside? **Wait for response** **Then ask.....** How many rules do your children have today?

Why Change?



Facilitator Comment:

As a result of outdoor time, many of us as children got to run, jump, spin and meet all the energy needs of our body when we were younger. Our children still need to meet these energy needs and what happens when they run in the house, jump of the couch or spin in your living room?

Starting to see some differences?

Why Change?

As a result,
should we be parenting
and caregiving differently?



Research informs us that early experiences shape the architecture of the developing brain.

How your brain developed because of your childhood experiences will be different from how your child's brain architecture is developing due to their experiences.

Facilitators Question: As a result, if our children's brains are developing differently, should we be parenting our children differently?

Hold on to that thought!

What about the Future?



What do you hope for your children, 20 years from now?



Facilitator Question: What do you want for your children 20 years from now?
(Wait for responses and reflections)

No matter how many parents we ask, every parent answers similarly: We want our children to be happy, in good jobs, in healthy relationships and giving back to community.

Facilitator Question: How many of you want your children to have a connected relationship with you? (Wait for responses and reflections)

Developing the foundations of safe and connected relationships with your children when they are young will support children's desire and motivation to stay connected as they get older.

Let's hold on to these thoughts and start to examine if our values and beliefs even match all these great things that we want for our children in the future.

This next video will help us.



Facilitator Question: So, what kind of job are Lucy and Ethel doing in this video?

Yes, assembly or factory work. Not that there is anything wrong with this type of work but.....

Facilitator Question: Will this work still exist for our children in the future?

Possible Answer: No, not really.

Facilitator Question: What has replaced this kind of work?

Possible Answer: Yes, machines or computers.

Let's talk about where schools came from...



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Schools were originally developed during the industrial revolution when parents needed to work, and we needed a place to house children.

School also had another purpose and that was to get children ready for the jobs of the future..... Like factory work.

We needed children to learn skills to be able to follow and conform to strict rules, do rote types of work, make no mistakes, work in isolation, and so on.

Now for many of us..... our values and beliefs are still embedded in this type of old school mentality.

Let's watch another video. We want to **emphasize** schools have changed in B.C. you are going to see and hear and the ongoing research that is informing the Ministry of Education.





So, we can see why our old school values are highly problematic...

Especially when we look at recent studies from established educational institutions:

Harvard University, Stanford Research Institute and Carnegie Foundation found that when they interviewed employers of the future...

These values no longer match with what employers consider as the top 10 skills they were looking for in future employees:

| 2020 | 2025 |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Complex Problem Solving | Analytical thinking and innovation |
| 2. Critical Thinking | Active learning and learning strategies |
| 3. Creativity | Complex problem-solving |
| 4. People Management | Critical thinking and analysis |
| 5. Coordinating with Others | Creativity, originality and initiative |
| 6. Emotional Intelligence | Leadership and social influence |
| 7. Judgement and Decision Making | Technology use, monitoring and control |
| 8. Service Orientation | Technology design and programming |
| 9. Negotiation | Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility |
| 10. Cognitive Flexibility | Reasoning; problem solving and ideation |

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Facilitator Read the 2025 skills

As we can see from the top 10 list, many of these skills are people skills or soft skills which require a high competency in social and emotional skills.

Many of you may also be familiar, or have heard, that the B.C. Ministry of Education has embedded social and emotional learning skills into their curriculum outcomes as well.

Facilitator Question: Why?

Because they have been keeping current with the research and they know that students of the future will need...

- Critical and creative thinking skills,
- Communication skills, and
- Personal-social wellbeing skills

- These are necessary skills to be successful in the workforce and in life relationships in the future.

What does Job Success Look Like?

Technical skills and knowledge account for only 15%
of keeping and advancing in a job.

85% of your job success is connected to your people skills.

Research conducted by Harvard University, Carnegie Foundation, Stanford Research Institute



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We know that social and emotional skills are important foundational skills for our children to develop.

In fact, in this same study employers mention when considering promotions, they would promote based on an employee's soft skills rather than technical skills because technical skills are easier to teach.

Emotional Intelligence

FACT:

Analytical intelligence (IQ) accounts for only
10% to 15% of job success and life
success.....85%-90% is dependent on
Emotional Intelligence (EQ).



Daniel Goleman, 2006



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Daniel Goleman, one of the leaders in understanding Emotional Intelligence states that only 10-15% of job and life success is dependent on IQ

and the other 85-90% is heavily weighted on our EQ or Emotional Intelligence.

And yet, we as society continue to put so much more emphasis on IQ, when strong EQ has significant positive outcomes.

As a result, we will be discussing different ways to support our children's EQ in the next couple slides and throughout the next few weeks together.

According to Daniel Goleman there are five elements of Emotional Intelligence:

- Self- Awareness
- Self- Management
- Social Skills
- Empathy
- Motivation



According to Daniel Goleman’s research there are five elements that we need to foster if we want our children to have a strong EQ...Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Skills, Empathy and Motivation.

So, how do our children learn these skills?

According to Dr. Dan Siegel, we learn emotional intelligence from our “Big People.”

YES, that means you!

By the end of these six weeks, we are going to help increase your self-awareness, self-management and empathy skills, as well as ways that you can practice these skills with your child.

You already have many of these skills and we want you to become more aware of them so you can intentionally do more of them and model them for your child.

Children can Learn these Skills:

We also know that we can support our children in developing social and emotional skills just like their other developmental areas.

There are five areas of development.

Let's consider how we respond to each of these learning areas as our children are developing new skills.



Physical Development



Big and small muscle movement



Let's talk about a child's **Physical Development:**

When children are learning to walk, or ride a bike and they fall.....

Do we give them a time-out?

Facilitator Question: What do you do instead?

Possible Answers: Encourage, help, model.....

Communication

"I love
basketti!"



"I love pasgetti
too!"

Speech and language
development



What about **Communication**:

When your child says a word incorrectly...

Like Pasgetti instead of Spaghetti ...

Do you yell at them and tell them they need to say it correctly?

Facilitator Question: What do you do instead?

Possible Answers: Encourage, help, model...

Cognitive Development

Thinking Skills



What about when children are developing their **Cognitive or Thinking Skills**:

When children are thinking hard to figure out how something works, like fitting a puzzle piece into their puzzle...

Do we get angry that they are struggling?

Facilitator Question: What do you do instead?

Possible Answers: Encourage, help, model...

Social Development



Interacting with others



Let's look at **Social Development** and this one gets harder:

When children are playing with others and your child takes a toy from another child...

Do we punish them?

Put them on time-out?

Facilitator Question: What do you do instead?

Possible Answers: Encourage, help, model...

Facilitator: Remember they have not learned the skills to take turns yet, so how are we going to teach them?

Emotional Development



Recognize, express
and manage feelings



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Now let's discuss children's **Emotional Development** another hard one:

When your child screams and tries to hit you or says "I hate you"...

Do we put them on a time-out?

Yell at them?

Facilitator Question: How would you respond? **Allow for discussion time here.**

Do you notice how the **first three skills** of your child's development, you can clearly identify as skills your child is learning.

Your child will have lots of frustrations and disappointments but for the most part, you are able to find supportive ways to foster and build the skill. Usually, you are breaking it down for them into small, doable steps (scaffolding). **CONTINUE NEXT PAGE...**

Won't or CAN'T

They haven't learnt
the skill **YET!**



The last two become harder.....

We might be penalizing our children for skills they just don't have yet, instead of viewing these as skills our children need to learn. Try and remember what it feels like when you were learning to do something new or challenging... would you react well if someone yelled at you because you did not do it right or to their expectations....

This is going to be part of our learning journey. Together we are going to learn the difference between **can't** and **won't** when children are learning new skills.

Many times... most of the time... Our child is not reacting because they don't want to do something, It is because they **can't**... Because they have not learned how to do the skill in any other way.

The approach we will be learning is using supportive guidance to teach our children these skills, and... We will be moving away from penalizing our children for skills they haven't learned **yet**.

The Gift of the No Blame Zone...



Every week we will go over this slide.....giving all of us the gift of the **no blame zone**.

As we learn together there may be times that you experience feelings of guilt. It is important to remember that these feelings are normal.

We need to remember that there is no such thing as perfect parenting. As parents we do the best we can with the information we know, we are human, and we will make mistakes, or we have never learned these skills.

The gift of the no blame zone helps us from feeling shame or blame for the practices we do.

The Gift of the No Blame Zone...



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It is only when we know different that we can do different and forgiving ourselves for the many mistakes we have made, and we will continue to make, as parents. Our children's brains fully develop when they are 28+ years of age; therefore, it is not too late to practice these new skills.

Also understanding that research states, if you can use the strategies that you will be learning (some of you are already doing) 30% of the time, it is enough to make connections with the neural pathways of your child's brain to foster healthy brain architecture.

Connect and Reflect



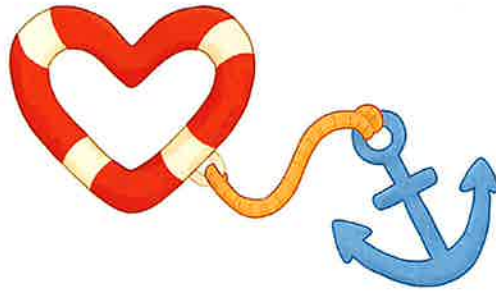
The CALM Connection Group Session One Connect and Reflect



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Let's Begin...The Six Love Savers



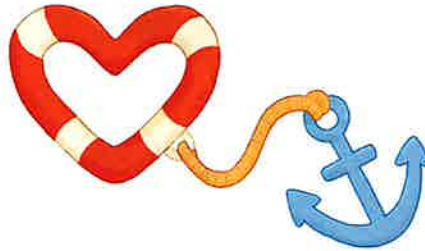
Facilitator Question: Are there any questions before we get started?

What do you think of when I say SOS...for many it means a signal for help.

In the CALM Connection, we are going to learn about six different SOS needs that our children are requesting from us. I know that every caregiver in this room loves their child; however, for your child to know and understand this concept of love, they need us to continue telling them that we love them and pairing this with some actions. Children, before the age of five are very symbolic in their learning. In their earlier years they are still trying to learn about language and communication through your tone, and body language and soon they start to symbolizes words with objects. For example, they learn what a ball is from you saying ball each time you pick up a ball or point to a ball from a picture. Our children also learn about what love is through representations of our actions, more specifically our 'inter-actions'

The Six Love Saver Needs
are met by embracing our children with a:

Space **O**f **S**ee Me
Space **O**f **S**afety
Space **O**f **S**oothing
Space **O**f **S**ecurity
Space **O**f **S**timulation
Space **O**f **S**elf-Worth



The six SOS Needs that our children come to us for include a:

Space **O**f **S**ee Me – or the need to be noticed
Space **O**f **S**afety – more specifically emotional safety
Space **O**f **S**oothing - soothing the brain and a hurting heart
Space **O**f **S**ecurity - requires a nurturing and predictable environment
Space **O**f **S**timulation - is the brains need for play to learn and grow, and finally,
Space **O**f **S**elf-Wort - h is our children’s need for ongoing need to feel valued.

In the next six weeks we will be exploring an SOS need each week. We will learn more about how and when to meet these needs and why it can be challenging for us to throw out the life saver and bring our children into us.

Space Of See Me...

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The CALM Connection Group Session One Connect and Reflect

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We are going to discuss the first SOS need - the Space of See Me - as we learn about Connect and Reflect Interactions, and helping you become more intentional about doing Connect and Reflect (as you are already doing them) throughout your day.

These types of interactions can happen regularly in your everyday routines and activities with your child. Let's reflect on an example. Think of when your child was an infant.

Facilitator Question: What did you do when your baby was crying... or pointing at something?

Pause....Wait for response or give so examples.

In all these examples, your baby connected with you because they may have needed to be changed, or needed you to be interested in something that they were pointing at, and you reflected on their interaction... The repetition of these Connect and Reflect interactions starts to build a healthy architecture for your child's brain to feel safe and secure because these SOS needs are being met.

A Space Of See Me



Connect and Reflect



The CALM Connection Group Session One Connect and Reflect



Space of See Me seems simple. It is basically the desire for our children to be seen, noticed and doted on, and yet it can be hard to do.

Harvard calls these interactions 'Serve and Return' as they are described and compared to the similarities of a tennis match. Basically, your child serves you an interaction and you would return your child's serve with some sort of interaction. A simple concept, yet foundational in building the architecture of your child's developing brain. In the CALM Connection program, we call these interactions, Connect and Reflect.

The good news is..... You are already doing this!

We are going to help increase your awareness of Connect and Reflect Interactions, and help you become more intentional about doing it more often to meet this SOS need of Space of See Me.

Connect and Reflect



Very simply.....

Connect and Reflect is like a rhythmic dance between you and your child.

An example might be, your child may point at something, and you might label what they are seeing, or they might say something, and you might reflect a response, so they know you are paying attention.

This back-and-forth rhythm is where you are connecting with their interest and reflecting with curiosity.

It is a time when you are more than just physically present. You are now emotionally and mentally engaged with your child.

Let's talk more about what this can look like.

When I am Busy...

A **Connect** might be noticing your child by sharing what they are seeing, doing and feeling.

For example, they may be engaged in their favourite activity, such as creating a picture, and we would take time to notice.



Connect and Reflect can happen at any time, even when our children are deeply engaged in their own activities. During this time, it may be tempting as parents to do other things..... Laundry, make a meal etc.

It is important to take a moment to Connect and Reflect in what your child is seeing, doing and feeling, whenever you can. If your child is busy, you might lean over them and notice their activity and acknowledge their work. For example, saying, “you are using so many different colours in your picture.”

At times, our children even when they are super engaged in an activity, they may initiate connection with you, such as saying “**Look it!**” They are excited for you to Connect with them and for you to Reflect on the work that they are creating.

This is when you might Reflect, “**I see that you are using green and yellow for your picture.**”

Taking these moments to be present, may reduce your child’s need to connect by using LOUDER ways to get your attention later.

Reflect Statements...



“**Connect**” is a *need* from your child that requires that you pause and notice. “**Reflect**” is the interaction of responding with words, a smile, or a nod (or all of them at once!)



Read Slide

Remember a Connect interaction might be something your child says to you.....
Points at.....Or they might just look up at you.....

Consider all of these as an invitation for a **Reflect** statement. Here are some **Reflect** statements that you can use with your child, so that they feel that you have Connected, and they have been heard.

- “You have been working on that picture for a long time.”
- “I see that you are using lots of colours.”
- “You have been working really hard on building your tower.”
- “I think I am hearing you tell me that you want more books.”
- “I am wonder if you feel hurt that Johnny took your red truck.”
- “You are showing me how you put on your socks.”

Reflect Statements...



“**Reflection**” statements help your child feel like they have been seen and heard.



When using these types of reflections, your child feels like they are truly being heard and seen and often want to contribute more to the interaction.

It is no different than us adults. We want to be heard when we communicate.

Can you imagine sharing exciting news with someone you care about, and they respond nodding their head or a simple, “Great work!” without looking up from their phone.

We know reflections such as “good work”, or “good job” do not have a lot of meaning for children or adults and they will often end the interaction quickly. (We will talk more about this in another session)

WHY... is this Important

Connecting and Reflecting what our children are seeing, doing and feeling helps us to learn more about their interests and strengths.

These interactions can also help us see where our children may need some help.



Read Slide

Many of you may already be thinking about the Connect and Reflect interactions you do with your child every day, or perhaps you may be wondering how you may be able to do more of them in your day-to-day activities, now that you are learning how important these are for your child's development.

Using this approach improves our relationship with our children and teaches them valuable social skills that they will carry with them into adolescence and beyond.

When I Need Help...

Using Reflection when
your child needs help.



We can use Reflect interactions when our children are demonstrating they need help' Connecting with your child when they need help, and you often are already doing these without perhaps knowing the SOS need that you are meeting.

For example, your child might try to Connect with you by making a grunt or frustrated sound. You might Reflect by saying, **“You sound like you are working hard”**....or you might say, **“You sound like you are getting frustrated.”**

Your child might continue trying what they are doing, and they might get more frustrated, and then they might ask for your help, or you might say, **“This is getting harder; I am seeing that you may need a little help.”**

It is important not to complete or do the activity for your child, as you want to build their competence.

Helping your child, just a little, so that they can complete the skill successfully on their own is called “scaffolding”. This is a very important way to help your child learn a new skill.

When I Need Help...



Using Connect and Reflect to build new skills.



Facilitator Question: Let's Reflect on how using 'Connect and Reflect' can be used to build new skills. Can you think of a time your parent taught you a skill? There was a lot of back and forth happening as you were learning this skill from a caregiver who was probably breaking it down in small steps for you.

We are starting to lose these types of scaffolding learning opportunities as children are now able to google the answers on their own as they get older.

We really want to hold on to these as long as we can, and have our children come to us when they need help. For example, if your child is trying to put the zipper up on their coat, and they look like they are getting frustrated.

Scaffolding would mean, you might help them put the zipper in the shank and you hold it, while your child pulls the zipper up.

Doing it this way allows your child to still feel mastery and competence in the skill and increases their confidence to do it again the next time they are putting on their coat.

Turn Taking...



Taking turns and waiting help your child learn self-control and how to develop skills to get along with others.



Connect and Reflect also helps our children learn important skills such as turn taking and waiting. Taking turns requires that the interaction goes back and forth, such as communicating, I talk, then you talk, or when we are playing a game... My turn, now it is your turn.

Waiting helps your child learn self-control and how to 'get along' with others. Waiting can be hard, even for us big people and for the most part, we are able to wait because we have had lots of practice.

Back and forth communication is a powerful way for children to learn the skills to wait and take turns. Especially with the increase in technology use, where this back-and-forth communication is limited.

During these interactions, it sometimes might take what seems like a long time for your child to respond; however, giving them this gift of time will help your child learn self-control and attention. These are critical skills to help your child in relationships with others.

Allow Time...



It may take your child 10-30 seconds to develop their idea.



The time that children may need can be approximately up to 10-30 seconds for them to develop their idea and respond.

Let's see what 30 seconds feels like so we can understand how long it may take for your child to respond.

Activity: Use a timer and have everyone sit silently for 30 seconds

Facilitator Question: What did that feel like? Especially as we are living in an instantaneous world...it can be hard to wait.

It may take time for your child to develop their idea and respond, and thanks to your patience, they will develop confidence and independence, and reduce feelings of anxiety, when you give them this time.

Limit Questions

Limiting the number of questions,
we ask our children.



This next one might be hard for all of us but a very good one for us to practice....
And that is limiting the number of questions we ask our children.

When we ask too many questions it can contribute to our children feeling anxious
and needing to come up with a specific response.

For example, you might ask your child, **“What are you drawing?”**

Your child may not know yet what they are making, and they may feel like they
need to provide you with some sort of final product answer.

Or asking a child, **“How was school?”** may be overwhelming to answer, just as
someone might ask us how our day at work or at home was.

It might be easier to Reflect on something with your child instead, for example,

If they have a piece of artwork in their hand, you can Reflect by saying... **“It looks
like you did some art at school.”**

Building a Better Brain Bank



 Fraser Valley Child Development Centre

The CALM Connection Group Session One Connect and Reflect



Although this may sound simple, the impacts of using Connect and Reflect are HUGE.

You are Building a Better Brain Bank Account for your child by engaging in these interactions.

Not only does Connect and Reflect help build skills such as communicating, waiting, self-control, BUT just as important, it is also building your child's resilience to recover when you make a parenting mistake. Because it will happen, and you will make many.

By filling your child's Better Brain Bank Account and making Connect and Reflect interaction deposits, it is an easier recovery when a withdrawal needs to be made when we miss opportunities to fill this SOS Need of See Me...



Warn parent that this is a hard video to watch.

Let's watch this video. It is important to notice the signs of stress that our children may experience when their attempts to connect are unnoticed.

Ask parents their thoughts on the video.

Facilitator: We can all find ourselves in these moments. It is important to become more aware of them.

My example: My 20-year-old son, 18-year-old daughter and I were going for a walk. Halfway through the walk, I noticed my son engaged on his phone. I asked him if he was looking something up, and he replied, "I said Mom three times and you didn't respond so I decided to go on my phone." I was so caught up in my thoughts I didn't even notice the 'connect'. I apologised and explained that my thoughts were elsewhere.

Provide your example.

Let's Practice



Activity: Have the group break out into partners. If there is an odd number of participants, have one of the facilitators join the extra person. Assign numbers to each pair, by numbering them one and two.

Alright, let's have all the "one's" share their most passionate dream, such as their dream vacation, dream day, dream car, dream yard, dream house etc.

All the "two's" will become extremely busy looking at their phone or distracted looking at other things.

We are going to do this for 45 seconds, and then we will switch roles.

Do Activity.

Let's talk about what it felt like being in the role of the talker.

Facilitator Question: So, do you think our children may feel the same way.....

Allow for discussion.

Connect and Reflect



As mentioned before, **Connect and Reflect Interactions** may already be happening between you and your child in different ways and for some, you may be thinking about how to implement more of these in your daily activities.

Facilitator Question: How many of these Connect and Reflect activities sound familiar?

- Cooing back to your baby
- Responding to your baby/child's cries
- Singing with your child
- Storytelling/Reading to your child
- Playing Games such as Paddy Cake, Peek-A-Boo, Hide and Seek, Board Games, Card Games, I Spy
- **Child-Directed Play**

You may be wondering what child-directed play is. Has anyone heard of this before?

Let's quickly understand what this means together!

What is Child Directed Play?



Child-Directed play involves about 10-15 minutes of uninterrupted play with our child allowing them to take the lead and choosing the play activities.



Child-Directed play involves about 10-15 minutes of uninterrupted play with your child allowing them to take the lead and choosing the play activities.

This type of play is essential in “filling up” your child’s connection and energy bank and helps build their better brain bank account.

A depleted connection bank makes it difficult for our children to be responsive, whereas when their connection bank is full, they are more likely to listen to you and engage in your activities because you have taken the time to show an interest and engage in their activities.

How To's of Child Directed Play?

Your child will know that during this special playtime they will have your complete attention, where you are not distracted by the phone, other people, chores and you are emotionally available to them.



Read Slide

Having a special name for this activity, such as

“Special Playtime” provides the child predictability of what this playtime means.

It also allows you to let them know that this time is coming later so that you can attend to other things, for example.....

“I know how much you want me to play with you and our special playtime will be happening after dinner.”

How To's of Child Directed Play?



During this special playtime you are using all your Connect and Reflect skills.



During this play time, you are practicing Connect and Reflect skills by observing and noticing what your child is doing and then reflecting on the play (just like a radio broadcaster),

“You are driving the red car into the blocks.”

Reflect on emotions as well,

“You look proud of the block tower you made.”

“You look sad that your block tower just fell down.”

Child Directed Play?



During this play time, you are practicing Connect and Reflect skills by observing and noticing what your child is doing and then reflecting on the play (just like a radio broadcaster),

“You are driving the red car into the blocks.”

Reflect on emotions as well,

“You look proud of the block tower you made.”

“You look sad that your block tower just fell down.”

How To's of Child Directed Play?

As your child will probably not want this special playtime to end, use the Melvin Countdown for a five-minute warning before the play is going to come to an end.



As your child will probably not want this special playtime to end, use the **Melvin Countdown** for a five-minute warning before the play is going to come to an end. Children need time to prepare for closure.

As adults we need the right moment for closure. Can you imagine if someone turned off Netflix 5 minutes before the ending of your show, or took your book away from you when you were hoping to finish up the chapter?

It is hard for your children too, especially when it is an enjoyable activity. As a result, your child may argue for more time, and you would just calmly let them know,

“I know how much you enjoy this time, and we will do it again soon.”

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE.....

How To's of Child Directed Play?



The CALM Connection Group Session One Connect and Reflect



You do want to place some limits on this play to ensure that everyone is safe, and the materials/toys are used safely as well.

If your child is doing something that is not safe or will damage materials, in a calm soft voice, let them know the appropriate limits.

Use a calm patient voice to follow through on a limit...

“The playdough will stick to the carpet, let’s move it to the floor.”

Keep the rules minimal and most importantly...**HAVE FUN**

Questions?

Space Of See Me

Who Likes to be Noticed for...

- A new recipe
- A new haircut/hairstyle
- A cleaned room
- A completed project (work/home)
- An Instagram photo
- A tough day



Do any of these examples feel familiar for that moment in time we just need to be noticed. Our children require lots of these moments too and throwing out this love saver of a Space of See Me provides them the actions that show them that you care...even though you know that you love them to infinity and back!

Homework...



Intentional Practice of Connect and Reflect Interactions through everyday routines.



Sing read books, and/or oral story telling



Talk about what you are doing with them "I am going to pick you up"



Practicing a three-minute Calm Connection or 5-15 minutes of child-directed play.



Yes...you have homework!!

We strongly invite you to practice and complete the homework exercises.

By practicing the skills, you have learned during the group with your child in the upcoming week, you are able to reflect on them when we meet next week.

We want to know what you are finding easy to do and what was harder to practice.

Only when we know what is hard for you can we scaffold the skill for you so that you can learn how to do it successfully on your own...

Just like you would do for your child!!

Homework Reflection Questions



How do you and your child experience joy together?



What might prevent you from experiencing joy and using connect and reflect interactions with your child?



Please take a moment to consider these reflection questions and as you practice the homework, take opportunities (if you can) to write these responses in your parent package.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Where am I in my understanding of the meaning of **Connect** and **Reflect** interactions.



How am I doing in practicing my **Connect** and **Reflect** interactions.



Please fill out the top part of the self-assessment sheet on Connect and Reflect Interactions.

This helps us know how we did with transferring the information to you. IF you are at the third or fourth arrow, you are ready to practice what you have learned, if you are at the first or second arrow, please connect with us so that we can spend some more time understanding this concept together.

At the end of the week, we will want you to fill out the practice piece which is the bottom arrows to help us understand where you rate yourself on doing this skill in your everyday routines and activities.

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