



Calm, Cool, Connected

SESSION SIX FACILITATOR GUIDE FOR ARC REFLECTIONS

SUMMER 2017



THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

ARC REFLECTIONS

ARC, or Attachment, Regulation and Competency, is a framework for working with children and teens who have experienced trauma. Developed by Margaret Blaustein and Kristine Kinniburgh of the Justice Resource Institute, ARC builds on the resilience of children, teens and families.

ARC Reflections — an ARC-informed caregiver training curriculum for foster parents, kin and other caregivers — was written by Blaustein and Kinniburgh with support and consultation from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The model was piloted in six child welfare agencies in 2015 and evaluated by Child Trends, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center with a focus on child welfare.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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PREPARING TO FACILITATE

A CHECKLIST

Materials needed

- Whiteboard or flip chart and markers
- Name tags
- Slide packet
- PowerPoint slides
- Pens and paper
- Multicolored markers on each table
- Small basket of manipulatives (if available) and descriptions of the regulation activities from your *Facilitator Welcome and Handouts* booklet (either on whole sheets or cut the activities into squares) on each table

Handouts



- Check-in handout (two per participant)
- Modulation activities
- Daily routine examples handout
- Engagement activities handout
- Sample bedtime routines handout
- Make a toolbox handout
- Self-reflection worksheet: Managing your feelings
- Homework sheet: Self-regulation inventory
- Summary Sheet (with teaching points, homework assignment)

A NOTE ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Words written in italics are generally suggesting that you, the facilitator, take an action. For example, that you *Focus on themes of caring and responsiveness* or *Suggest that participants pair up*.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE TO SESSION SIX


WELCOME

 <p>THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION</p>  <p>TRAUMA CENTER At Justice Resource Institute</p>	<h3>ARC Reflections</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ARC, or Attachment, Regulation and Competency, is a framework for working with children and teens who have experienced trauma. Developed by Margaret Blaustein and Kristine Kinniburgh of the Justice Resource Institute, ARC builds on the resilience of children, teens and families• ARC Reflections — an ARC-informed caregiver training curriculum for foster parents, kin and other caregivers — was written by Blaustein and Kinniburgh with support and consultation from the Annie E. Casey Foundation
<h3>Welcome</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This group will meet nine times for two hours each time• Please attend all sessions• Each session will include the following segments:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warm-up• Opening check-in• Review and report back• Theme of the day• Self-reflection• Take home• Practice• Closing check-in	

SLIDES 1, 2 AND 3: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Welcome

Hello! *Reintroduce yourself and remind participants about basic information necessary to ensure their comfort (parking, location of restrooms, breaks) and the structure of the meeting.*



WARM-UP

Warm-Up

- Break into small groups and take a moment to reflect on the group's energy level. Is it primarily high, low or in the middle? Select a simple activity to do together that matches that energy. You may need to compromise to meet everyone's needs
- Teach your activity to the other groups

SLIDES 4 AND 5: WARM-UP

Goal


To provide an opportunity for experiential learning and application of the energy concept that has been highlighted throughout this training.

Do

- Let's break up into small groups. With your group members, come up with a regulation activity that matches your group's level of energy. For example, sing a song or breathe together or do the Hokey Pokey! Once each group has come up with an activity, we will ask you to teach it to the whole group.

Ask



- For each activity we just did together, did you notice your energy go up, go down or stay the same?
List the activities and ask for a show of hands.
- Were there activities that were more or less comfortable?



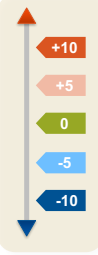
OPENING CHECK-IN

What Is Your Energy Right Now?



Totally Comfortable

Really Uncomfortable



Great Match

Terrible Match

Get Comfortable

- If your energy is comfortable and a good match, great!
- If not, **what can you do to get it there?**

SLIDES 6 – 8: OPENING CHECK-IN

Goals

To increase awareness of internal experience and the effect of this experience on our ability to be present and engaged; to increase awareness of coping strategies; and to engage caregivers in a parallel process, as this is a skill set they will be supporting in their child or teen.

Do

Ask participants to complete the opening check-in. A reminder of possible prompts is provided below.


Ask

- Please notice the level of energy or arousal in your body and rate it on the provided scale.
- Notice the degree to which this energy or arousal is comfortable or uncomfortable and rate that.
- Notice the degree to which your energy or arousal is a good match for the situation (participating in this session) and rate that.

Do

Please feel free to explore the strategies and tools provided on your tables (such as the small manipulatives and index cards that describe simple activities) and identify anything that might help you feel comfortable and effective in your body.

HANDOUT: CHECK-IN



Review

- We communicate our experience in ways that go beyond language
- Learning someone's language takes time and starts with curiosity
- Sometimes we get it wrong
- Slow down and be a detective
- **Mirror what you see**

SLIDES 9 AND 10: PREVIOUS MEETING REVIEW

Goal

To review content from the previous session.

Teach

- Relationships take time to develop. Generally, they develop in stages — and may change as children and teens grow and develop.
- Individuals use different strategies to communicate their wants and needs. Many of our strategies are nonverbal rather than verbal. This makes the process of learning another person's communication style complicated and, at times, challenging.
- Curiosity or a strong desire to know or learn something is the starting place for this process.
- Give yourself permission to slow down and use your detective skills to figure out clues people are sending you about their wants and needs. Clues may be obvious or subtle. Pay attention to the range of nonverbal and verbal cues.
- Mirroring is an important strategy for letting others know you see them and that you understand them and their needs. Even in the most secure relationships, connecting with one another can be hard; mistakes will be made along the way.

Ask

Does anyone have questions remaining from the content in our last session? Is there anything you want to share that really stood out for you from our last session?

Report Back

- In small groups, discuss your practice from last week:
 - **What went well?**
 - What was challenging?
 - What was something you noticed?

SLIDE II: REPORT BACK

Goal

To provide group members with an opportunity to review last week's practice. Assignment: Choose one person in your life to observe (a child, teen, partner, co-worker or friend) and identify all the clues that suggest he or she is frustrated. Reminder: You do not need to share the name of this person.

Do

Please get into small groups (at your table or with people near you) and discuss your experience with this week's practice. *After small group discussion, provide a brief opportunity for larger group to report back.*

Ask

- Does anyone want to share something about your experience with the practice?
- Did any of you have a hard time with the practice? *Make sure to normalize any challenges by asking if other group members experienced similar difficulties.*
- Did any of you find the practice particularly helpful? Why?

THEME: CALM, COOL, CONNECTED



Goal


To introduce today's theme.

Teach

- Today's session will focus on the process of learning to regulate — the way we learn how to manage or control our thoughts, emotions and energy.
- For most children, the process of regulation starts with co-regulation — the supports they receive from caregivers — so we will also talk about caregivers' roles in helping children and teens learn to regulate.

Soothing infants, toddlers and teens

Let's Talk About Soothing

A photograph of a man with a beard and tattoos, wearing a light blue shirt, hugging a young child with blonde hair. The child is wearing a colorful patterned shirt. They are sitting on a bed with a patterned blanket. The photo is framed within a white border, which is itself within a larger grey frame. Above the photo is a purple header with the text "Let's Talk About Soothing".

SLIDE 13: SOOTHING

Goal

To engage foster parents and caregivers in a discussion about soothing.

Ask/Discuss

- We are going to talk about how children and teens learn to regulate at different developmental stages. Let's start with babies. How do babies learn to regulate? What soothes a baby — what helps him or her, especially in moments of distress or comfort? *Use the flip chart or whiteboard to write down responses.*
- How do you know which strategy is best? *Highlight that babies respond individually — that they have different preferences, even when they are so young. Some infants respond to swaddling (deep pressure) while others respond to singing, rocking, etc.*
- As you think about what is soothing and what helps teach self-regulation, remember that context matters. For instance, the effectiveness of a given soothing strategy may vary depending on a child's or teen's emotional state, environment and the caregiver with whom he or she is interacting.

Ways We Regulate Infants	Additional Ways We Regulate Infants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping ourselves calm • Learning to read the infant's signs — playtime, sleepiness, hunger, discomfort — to get in front of the distress • Learning the infant's preferences — rocking, touching, movement, swaddling, sound (voices, music) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being open to learning and experimenting with new skills and learning from what is not working • Having daily routines that build a sense of rhythm (sleeping, feeding, playing) • Connecting and engaging throughout the day, even when the infant isn't distressed

SLIDES 14 AND 15: REGULATING INFANTS

Goal

To highlight the strategies that caregivers use to support regulation in infants.

Teach

- **Note:** Refer to the strategies identified in the previous discussion, as appropriate.
- Infants are instinctively attuned to their caregivers' physiological, emotional and behavioral responses.
- As a result, it is important for caregivers to feel regulated as they support infant regulation.
- Infant regulation is supported by the adult's ability to tune into and effectively respond to the baby's clues and underlying need for play, soothing, sleep, etc.
- Over time, adults learn the infant's preferences for different regulation strategies (rocking vs. touch vs. movement) through experimentation or trial and error.
- One thing many caregivers do is to develop daily routines and rhythms, such as feeding, bedtime, bath, etc. While we often do this to help us organize and manage daily tasks, this is actually a very important foundation for the infant's early ability to regulate and develop a feeling of safety in the world.
- Regulation is further supported by the many ways we engage and connect throughout the day, rather than only when the infant is experiencing distress or discomfort.

What Does All of This Do?

- **Supports connection and relationship**
- Creates a sense of safety in the world and in the infant's body
- Builds an understanding on a visceral level that feelings come and go, which builds an ability to tolerate distress
- Helps the infant learn that someone is able to meet his or her needs and make uncomfortable sensations go away

SLIDE 16: THE EFFECT OF REGULATION STRATEGIES ON INFANT EXPERIENCE

Goal

To describe key areas of learning and skill development supported by the regulation strategies highlighted in the previous slide.

Teach

- When regulation support is consistently offered and provided to the infant, he or she experiences security and comfort in connection to another person.
- Regulation support provides the infant with a felt understanding that feelings do not last forever and they may come and go or have a beginning and ending point.
- The infant will learn that a primary function of connection is to increase his or her internal sense of comfort and safety.

When This Continues Over Time, Children Learn

- To identify and discriminate among their body states and feelings
- **A language for feelings, body states, wants and needs**
- How to communicate these states and feelings to other people
- Greater tolerance for and ability to move through even very hard emotions
- A growing ability to independently use strategies to manage feelings

SLIDE 17: REGULATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Goal

To teach key skills learned when optimal support is available for regulation.

Teach

- Development of regulation capacity is progressive and builds and becomes more sophisticated over time.
- Infants learn to understand their inner experiences initially because others read and respond to their needs effectively. One of the primary skills that a caregiver uses to attune to a young child's needs is reflection. When a caregiver reflects the infant or child's experience back to him or her by stating, "Oh, you're hungry," or "Oh, you're happy," or "Oh, you're mad," the infant or child begins to learn how to label his or her internal experience and to discriminate between emotions and body states (mad is different from sad, hungry is different from tired).
- Labels you provide over time are adopted and offer a child or teen language for his or her experience.
- Similarly, the earliest foundation for communication begins in infancy. For instance, babies may learn that if they cry, someone will come and soothe them. If they put up their arms, someone will pick them up. If they smile, someone will smile back. Communication skills will build on this early foundation and become more sophisticated and direct as children learn to talk.
- When their caregivers are able to provide consistent support for soothing throughout the day, especially in moments of distress or discomfort, the growing child begins to internalize the felt comfort experienced in these moments of co-regulation. This internal sense of comfort helps them increase their tolerance for distress and bounce back more quickly.
- As the infant moves into toddlerhood and the toddler into childhood, there is an increasing ability to use strategies with less support and more independence, although caregivers are still a primary source of regulation and comfort.



WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN AND
TEENS WHO GET VERY LITTLE OF THIS?

SLIDE 18: WHEN CHILDREN OR TEENS DO NOT EXPERIENCE CONSISTENT REGULATION SUPPORT

Goal

To introduce the challenges faced by infants, children and teens who do not have adequate support with regulation.

Teach

- What happens when a baby, toddler, child or teen does not experience this early support for regulation? These children will struggle much more with even basic regulation skills than might be expected based on their chronological age.
- When you are parenting older children or teens, it can feel unnatural to teach very basic regulation skills. For instance, we often expect that a 10-year-old will have the ability to identify basic emotions or that a 16-year-old will have a repertoire of effective coping strategies. But often that is not the case. If a child or teen has not had consistent support for regulation, their self-regulation skills may not have developed.
- And, to make this more complicated, a child or teen who has not experienced early co-regulation may not learn that relationships are a source of calm and comfort. In fact, often they have learned the opposite — that relationships are chaotic and frightening. This is one reason why it may be hard for children and teens to feel safe in relationships in general — and it may make it more challenging for you to figure out how to provide regulation and co-regulation support.

Difficulty Understanding Feelings

- Children and teens exposed to danger, chaos, violence and inconsistent early care may have problems **understanding feelings**. They may:
 - Struggle to know what they are feeling
 - Be able to understand or name only one or two feelings (such as mad or sad)
 - Have a hard time reading other people's feelings

SLIDE 19: EFFECT ON CHILDREN AND TEENS WHO DO NOT GET ADEQUATE REGULATION SUPPORT: UNDERSTANDING FEELINGS

Goal

To describe the challenges that children and teens may face in understanding their own feelings.

Teach

- If an individual does not have consistent exposure to reflection and labeling of emotions early on, then he or she may not have the language needed to help organize, define and label his or her experiences. In response to questions about feelings, a common and valid response is “I don’t know.”
- Many children have experienced early mis-attunements — not being “seen” accurately by the adults taking care of them, or having adults not pay attention to their feelings at all. Children may also defend against very hard emotional states like sadness or fear due to a sense of shame and vulnerability. As a result, children may only be able to identify, name and access a limited number of emotions — for instance, always saying, “I am mad,” but never being able to say, “I am sad.”
- The “lens for others” described earlier in this training, coupled with a lack of consistent ability to label emotions and emotional cues, also affects a child’s or teen’s ability to read emotions in others. He or she may have developed an expectation that others may be potentially threatening or dangerous and may misperceive others’ emotions or intentions. For instance, they may perceive anger or danger in others’ facial expressions, tone of voice, posture, etc., even when it may not actually be there.

Difficulty Communicating Feelings

- Children and teens exposed to danger, chaos, violence and inconsistent early care may have problems **communicating** feelings. They may:
 - Have little language for their feelings
 - Use feelings to communicate needs
 - Be hard to read, because the way they express their feelings is so confusing

SLIDE 20: EFFECT ON KIDS WHO DO NOT GET ADEQUATE REGULATION SUPPORT: COMMUNICATING FEELINGS

Goal

To describe challenges that children and teens may face in communicating their feelings.

Teach

- We've discussed that children and teens who have experienced trauma may have very little language for their experiences, making it hard to communicate their emotions to others.
- But trauma also may interfere with a child's or teen's ability to access language when he or she feels unsafe or is reminded of past trauma, even by subtle reminders. Remember the Express Road to action? When children or teens are on the Express Road, the thinking parts of their brains (and the language centers within it) shut down. That makes it even more challenging to use words to describe what they are experiencing.
- Language allows each of us to communicate our experience directly. The absence or lack of access to language means a child or teen has to use other strategies to communicate his or her wants and needs. These indirect ways of communicating may be confusing or difficult for caregivers or others to read and respond to effectively.
- Cultural beliefs and practices may also affect how a child or teen expresses his or her emotions. For example, some cultures believe in keeping problems to themselves and not discussing emotions with others.

Difficulty Managing Feelings

- Children and teens exposed to danger, chaos, violence and inconsistent early care may have problems **managing** feelings. They may:
 - Get overwhelmed easily by small things
 - Have feelings that get very big very quickly
 - Disconnect from or be confused by their emotions
 - Lack age-appropriate (or any) coping strategies
 - Use strategies that seem harmful because they are desperate to feel better

SLIDE 21: EFFECT ON KIDS WHO DO NOT GET ADEQUATE REGULATION SUPPORT: MANAGING FEELINGS

Goal

To describe the challenges children and teens may face in managing their feelings.

Teach

- To manage your feelings effectively, you have to have some understanding of what the feelings are and where they come from. And you have to have a repertoire of strategies for dealing with them, including access to supports. In the absence of these things it is common for children or teens to become very overwhelmed by things that may seem minor to others. For example, a minor schedule change may trigger a fear response in a child or teen whose early caregiving environment was chaotic.
- The human danger response — the Express Road — often creates the experience of going from 0-60 miles per hour in less than a minute. When upsetting feelings occur (particularly when feelings are a trigger or are related to a trigger), they get very big very quickly. This can be quite overwhelming and frightening to the child or teen.
- When overwhelmed, children or teens will do whatever they can to feel better in the moment. For instance, a common strategy is to disconnect from feelings that are uncomfortable or overwhelming.
- The primitive and survival-based strategies used in early childhood (including but not limited to disconnection) often continue to be the go-to strategies later in childhood. This can prevent children or teens from developing more sophisticated or age-appropriate coping skills.
- As challenging emotions get more complicated, the strategies children or teens use to manage them are often more risky, particularly as children move into early and late adolescence. Risky behaviors — such as self-harm, aggression and substance use — can be reframed as coping strategies designed to provide immediate relief from overwhelming or distressing emotions.

All of This Is Harder When a Child (and Maybe You) Are on the Express Road

SLIDE 22: EFFECT ON CHILDREN AND TEENS WHO DO NOT GET ADEQUATE REGULATION SUPPORT



Goal

To review the Express Road and highlight the relationship between the Express Road and regulation.

Teach

- We've talked quite a bit about the Express Road, and how it affects our ability to think and to regulate.
- This alarm system is designed to ensure a child's or teen's survival in the moment. When it is activated, the child or teen may lose whatever ability he or she has for in-the-moment regulation, no matter how rudimentary or primitive those skills are.

Olivia struggles

<p>LET'S THINK ABOUT OLIVIA...</p>	<p>Olivia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is 7 years old and has been moving her way through foster homes for the past two years• She has just entered a new home after a series of placements that failed because adults could not cope with her tantrums, stealing and lying• She has been a challenge from the first day. Although she seemed thrilled to be in the home, calling her foster parent "Mom" immediately, she melts down every night at bedtime and cries and clings when "Mom" leaves the room 
<p>Olivia's Story</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small items from around the house are missing, but when her foster mother confronts Olivia about it, she shuts down, denies taking anything and then explodes saying, "You don't care about me. I hate you!"• Olivia can be endearing and charming at times, but often feels exhausting. She demands help with many things that her foster parents expect her to be able to do for herself (get dressed, tie her own shoes) and cries and screams when they suggest she try it herself. When they try to comfort her, she pushes them away 	

SLIDES 23 – 25: CHECKING IN WITH OLIVIA

Goal

To engage foster parents and caregivers in applying the concept of regulation to Olivia.

Ask/Do

- Let's check in with Olivia. *Read through the first two Olivia slides before initiating discussion.*
- *Set up the flip chart page or whiteboard with three columns labeled, in order, "Triggers," "Clues of dysregulation" and "Needs."*
- Can anyone identify ways Olivia is showing her difficulty regulating? *Write down examples of dysregulation in the middle column on the whiteboard or flip chart. If not named, prompt examples such as crying, shouting, demanding help, lying.*
- What about any possible triggers — can you think of what might be driving Olivia's dysregulation? *Write down possible triggers in the first column. If not named, prompt examples such as being confronted, being rejected or being asked to do something on her own.*


- What might Olivia's needs be? *Write possible needs in the third column. If not named, prompt examples such as comfort, connection or reassurance.*

Discuss

- *Discuss the relationship among triggers, needs and dysregulation. Invite participants to notice the ways that the information across the three columns fits together. For instance, if Olivia is triggered by rejection, then being ignored at bedtime may increase her distress and lead her to tantrum more loudly in an attempt to get her need for connection met.*

Olivia's Foster Parents

- **They are worn out.** They believe they've tried to hang in there with her, but they are confused by her emotions, which are intense and unpredictable
- At this point, it feels like they have tried everything, but nothing works
- Now when Olivia begins to throw a tantrum, they feel like it is manipulative and she is just trying to get attention. Their anxiety and anger climb and they find themselves pulling away from her



SLIDE 26: OLIVIA'S FOSTER PARENTS

Goal

To highlight the effect child or teen dysregulation can have on caregivers.

Ask/Discuss

- We have spoken a lot about Olivia. But what about her foster parents? Not only is Olivia struggling — so are her foster parents. Let's think about the experiences and feelings of Olivia's foster parents. *Review content on the slide.*
- Now I want a show of hands. Let's talk about the first bullet. How many of you can relate to feeling worn out?
- What about the second bullet — can I have a show of hands from those of you who can relate to the experience of feeling that you have tried everything but nothing works?
- And the third bullet: Who can identify with feeling manipulated and, as a result, disconnecting?
- In fact, these are common feelings for foster parents. As we said in an earlier session, foster parenting is hard! Especially because of the role you play in supporting a child's or teen's ability to self-regulate — all while trying to regulate your own emotional responses to the child or teen. So while we will be talking about a number of strategies for supporting children and teens in regulating, it is important to acknowledge that this is hard work and can be emotionally draining for foster parents.

A Recap

- You are trying to soothe a child or teen who:
 - Never learned how to be soothed
 - Is frightened of and may be triggered by relationships, even if he or she really craves them
 - Escalates quickly and unexpectedly due to triggers you are not always aware of
 - **Expects to be rejected** by you and kicked out of your home
 - Exhausts you

SLIDE 27: RECAP ABOUT SOOTHING

Goal

To highlight the complexity of supporting regulation in children and teens who have experienced trauma.

Ask/Do

- Briefly review each point on the slide. Reflect on these points. Can I have a show of hands from those of you who believe it will be easy to support regulation in the children and teens in their care?
- Emphasize that there are so many factors involved in successfully supporting regulation.

LET'S TAKE THIS STEP BY STEP



SLIDE 28: STEP BY STEP

Goal

To illustrate, in the next couple of slides, the complexity of the caregiver's role and help identify manageable steps to caring for a complicated child or teen.

Foundational tools

First Set of Tools: The Foundation for Regulation

- Foundational tools include:
 - Being a detective: Learning child patterns
 - Daily routines and rhythms
 - Ongoing activities
 - Foundational regulation strategies



SLIDE 29: CHILD AND TEEN REGULATION BUILDS ON AN ONGOING FOUNDATION OF SUPPORT

Goal

To describe the tools that will be taught in the next series of slides.

Teach

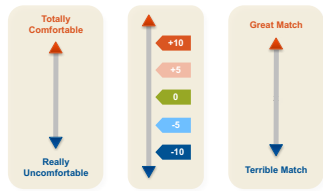
- The first set of tools we are going to talk about are the foundational tools to support self-regulation, including being a detective to learn a child's or teen's patterns, developing daily routines and rhythms, using ongoing activities and using soothing strategies.

HANDOUT: MAKE A TOOLBOX

Using Your Detective Skills

- What sorts of activities or experiences lead to feeling more or less organized/in control?
- How do you know your child or teen is comfortable or uncomfortable in his or her body/feelings? **What are the clues?**
- What patterns of strength and challenge does your child or teen show? When does he or she do best, and when does he or she predictably have a harder time? Target soothing routines to those times
- Actively track clues every time your child or teen has a hard time; these will be useful the next time

Being a Detective to Learn and Read a Child's Patterns



- Does he or she need higher energy activities at one time of day, lower at another?

- Pay attention to your child's or teen's energy. How does it shift during the day? At what energy state is he or she most comfortable? Most organized or in control?

SLIDES 30 AND 31: USING DETECTIVE SKILLS TO READ CHILD PATTERNS

Goal

To link the concept of energy to efforts to support regulation.

Teach/Discuss

- A few minutes ago, as a group we used our detective skills to try to understand Olivia's triggers, communications and regulation needs.
- *Read the first slide.* It is important to pay attention to questions like those listed on the slide to help you learn about a child or teen to be effective in supporting regulation. Think about:
 - What strategy is likely to be effective?
 - When do you use the strategy?
 - Where do you implement the strategy?
 - How do you support the strategy?
 - How do you assess whether the strategy is effective?
- *Go to the next slide.* We've talked quite a bit about energy in this group. Paying attention to your child's energy at different times will give you important clues about what strategies might be effective or needed.
- Using the language of energy is often an effective strategy for supporting children and teens in communicating their internal experience because it is normative (we all have it), neutral (not good or bad but comfortable or uncomfortable) and less vulnerable to talk about than specific emotions.

Daily Routines and Rhythms

- Just as with infants, routines provide the rhythms, structures and predictable moments that build child and teen safety, skill and support
- Routines are not about rigidity — they are about **co-creating a rhythm**
- Routines should *decrease* rather than *increase* distress. **If your routine is making things harder, change it**

SLIDE 32: DAILY ROUTINES AND RHYTHMS

Goal

To teach the importance of building daily routines and rhythms.

Ask/Discuss

- How many of you wake up every day and go through the same morning routine? Maybe you put the coffee on, get in the shower and watch the news while you get ready for your day.
- We all have routines or rhythms that we follow throughout our day and these rhythms serve a very important purpose. They keep us organized. They keep our days predictable and generally help us to feel internally balanced.
- Help me complete this statement: “Routines and rhythms often become so much a part of our daily rhythm that we only notice them when...” *Finish the statement for them if they are not able to complete the statement: “when they are disrupted.”*
- *Ask people to think about how they feel when their routines are disrupted. If time allows, invite one or two people to briefly share.*
- *Review the second and third bullets on the slide.* Of course, routines only contribute to regulation if they feel comfortable and help us function better or more effectively. For instance, if your boss told you that you had to twirl in place three times before entering his or her office, you would probably ask why. The response might be something like, “because that is our routine,” “because those are the office rules” or “because that makes me feel more comfortable.” Maybe you decide to twirl in place each day, as requested, and as a result you begin each day by feeling very dizzy. The routine may make you feel slightly distressed each day as you both anticipate the twirling and actually twirl. Remember this point when you think about routines and rhythms to build with children and teens who have experienced trauma. Routines and rhythms should increase comfort and the feeling of safety for all parties, not just you. They should not be sources of distress.

HANDOUT: DAILY ROUTINE EXAMPLES

Use Routines to Target

- The challenge points
 - Transitions, hygiene, expectations (homework, chores), mealtimes
- Natural soothing opportunities
 - Bedtime, playtime, bathing
- Engagement and connection
 - Checking in, asking about the day, problem solving

SLIDE 33: TARGETED ROUTINES

Goal


To highlight key areas to target with routines when caring for children or teens who have experienced trauma.

Ask/Discuss

- The goal of routines is not to use them everywhere, but to use them purposefully.
- Routines are particularly useful around challenging moments in the day; to support soothing and regulation; and to build connection.
- *If time permits, invite participants to share examples of ways they have successfully used routines around these particular areas with children and teens.*

Olivia's New Routine

- Olivia's foster parents develop **a new evening routine** that gives Olivia a lot of control and seems to calm her distress. They make picture cards showing each step of her evening: finishing homework, brushing teeth, taking a shower, getting in pajamas
- Each card has two sides: one showing a child doing the task alone, and the other with support
- Every evening, Olivia puts her cards in the order she wants to complete them, and picks which side of the card she wants (support or no support)



SLIDE 34: OLIVIA'S NEW ROUTINE

Goal

To apply the concept of daily routines and rhythms to Olivia.

Ask/Discuss

- *Read the slide.*
- *Why do you think a routine like the new routine developed by Olivia's foster parents might be helpful for a child like Olivia? Select a few participants to share their ideas.*
- *Talk about the key themes in this example, which include the need for choice and control, both about the routine itself and the level of engagement/support from the caregiver because of early exposure to chaos, lack of control, lack of predictability and neglect. Link back to ways this routine addresses what the participants identified in the earlier three-column exercise.*

Ongoing Activities

- Certain activities are naturally modulating, such as:
 - Play (playing alone or with others)
 - Sports
 - Expressive art, dance, theater
 - Yoga
 - Reading
 - Listening to music
 - Crafts

SLIDE 35: NATURALLY MODULATING ACTIVITIES

Goal

To highlight the importance of creating opportunities for ongoing engagement in activities that may be naturally soothing.

Ask/Teach

- Many activities are naturally regulating. What activities do you do yourself that you find naturally modulating or soothing? *Invite a few participants to briefly respond.*
- There are many different energy needs we might have during the day or during the week, and a range of activities can help us to feel energized and engaged or soothed and relaxed.
- Similarly, it is important to provide predictable and ongoing activities for children and teens that are naturally modulating or soothing.

HANDOUT: MODULATION ACTIVITIES

Foundational Regulation Strategies

- Sensory strategies (sound, touch, smell, taste, sight)
- Gross motor activities
- Dedicated sensory or soothing space
- Ongoing opportunities for connection

SLIDE 36: SENSORY STRATEGIES

Goal

To provide a range of examples of strategies that can be used with children and teens to support foundational regulation.

Teach/Discuss

- Let's go back to our earlier discussion about infants for a brief moment. Think about strategies used to soothe an infant, such as rocking or playing calm music.
- Often these are strategies a caregiver uses routinely throughout a given day at times that are generally associated with comfort and safety. It is the association with comfort and safety that eventually increases the effectiveness of the strategy during moments of distress or discomfort.
- This is true for children and teens, too. You don't want to only offer strategies to soothe in moments of distress. Use them on a regular basis, so the child or teen sees them as familiar and connected to regulation. If children and teens are presented with regulation or coping strategies only at the moment of distress, those strategies are likely to be rejected because of lack of exposure and practice and because the strategies themselves are associated with distress and discomfort.
- There are a number of possible strategies that can be used in an ongoing way to support regulation.
- *Instruct participants to pull out their "Modulation activities" handout.* On this sheet are a wide range of strategies that can be used on a regular basis.
- Let's talk about sensory approaches to staying regulated. Many of us in the room have or are aware of our sensory diet. Some of us seek more sensory input in some areas and less in others. For example, some people are very sensitive to smells and tend to become dysregulated when they receive too much scent input. These individuals may be more apt to purchase odorless products. Other individuals may feel very comforted or regulated by smells; they might prefer scented products. The particular type of smell may be important, too.

Do

- I'm going to play a couple of brief pieces of music. Notice how you react to it: Do you like it? Dislike it? Does your energy go up or down?
- *Play two short clips of music, about 30 seconds in length. Choose music that varies in tempo — for instance, a slow song and a fast song. Invite a couple of volunteers to share their reactions to the two clips. Briefly discuss the difference in responses, and the factors that might influence those differences — for instance, preferences, mood, etc.*

Teach/Do

- Gross motor activities can also help children and teens to regulate. Let's try something out ourselves.
- *Lead the participants in a simple gross motor activity. For instance, follow the leader, Simon Says, freeze dance, etc. Feel free to substitute in any activity that might appeal to the group. Be sure to provide permission for people to participate in any way that is comfortable for them. Invite a couple of volunteers to share their reactions to the activity. Again, briefly discuss the difference in responses, and the factors that might influence those differences.*
- Each individual's physiology is unique. Each individual will have a unique response to even subtle variations in movement, such as the type of movement (jumping, swinging, running, walking, etc.), the direction of the movement, (side to side, up and down, back and forth, etc.) and the pace of movement (slow, medium, fast, etc.), to name a few.
- Think of this as another opportunity to put on your detective hat. The goal is to experiment with different types of movement and varying directions/pacing to determine which combinations result in regulating/dysregulating responses.

Teach/Discuss

- As with the other strategies we have discussed, a dedicated, soothing space can help a child or teen learn to modulate, both in the moment and over time.
- Do you ever feel like you just need to escape, or take a break from other people or from what is going on? *Invite volunteers to share their own real-world examples of where they might go to get away. If no one volunteers, provide examples such as stepping outside for a moment, taking a walk, going to your room or closing an office door.*
- We can forget how important it is for even very young children to feel like they have a space that is theirs. Identify a space in the home (or outside on the porch for some teens) that can be used as a safe place. This can be as simple as a corner of the room with a blanket over it, or more elaborate. Work with your child or teen to decide what "tools" (pictures, pillows, sensory objects, etc.) should be in the space. Once the space is ready to be used, it is important to practice using the space at several, identified times throughout the day when the child or teen is regulated, as well as during moments of distress or discomfort.

- Building in predictable moments of engagement and connection can help prevent moments of distress or dysregulation, too, by providing children and teens with a sense of safety and security.
- Remember the lens that children or teens who have experienced trauma have for self and think back to the labels. Shame can often act as a trigger in the moment, leading to dysregulation. Because of this, the more that children or teens are engaged in activities that increase their sense of competence, the less likely they are to experience shame and associated distress.

Second Set of Tools: In-the-Moment Regulation

- Use tools to **support regulation in the moment:**
 - Catch the moment
 - Check in with yourself
 - Be a mirror
 - Meet the need
 - Support the child's or teen's tools
 - Control and choice
 - Reconnect



SLIDE 37: SECOND SET OF TOOLS: SUPPORTING REGULATION IN THE MOMENT

Goal

To discuss how to support regulation in the moment.

Teach


We've been talking about ways to build a foundation for regulation. Now let's switch gears and talk about in-the-moment tools. Many of the skills we will discuss are things we have talked in detail about in previous meetings; here, we are pulling them together.

HANDOUT: CHECK-IN

Olivia

Olivia has been getting really upset, yelling and screaming for her foster mother to help her whenever she has a hard time with something. If her foster mother doesn't respond right away, Olivia will call her names and will sometimes run to her and hit her.

Her foster mother has been worried about reinforcing this behavior, so tries to ignore Olivia or tell her she won't answer until Olivia calms down. This seems to be making things worse, and Olivia has been really demanding and aggressive lately.



SLIDE 38: OLIVIA IN A DISTRESSED MOMENT

Goal

To provide an example of a distressed child moment for discussion throughout the following the section.

Do

Read the slide to participants. Note that as you move through the next section, the group will be applying the content to this moment between Olivia and her foster mother.

Catch the Moment

- Try to **catch the moment** at the earliest possible point — when the child or teen is still able to self-regulate
 - Ideally, try to catch the child or teen when he or she is still on the main road
 - If you can't, aim to increase your ability to read and anticipate your child's or teen's patterns. Ask yourself, "What clues does my child or teen give that he or she is starting to get upset?"
 - Plan what to do when your child or teen starts to struggle and adjust over time. Keep in mind that different strategies are likely to work at different times

SLIDE 39: CATCHING THE MOMENT EARLY

Goal


To highlight the importance of identifying and responding to early clues of distress to prevent Express Road behaviors.

Teach

- Why is it important to identify and respond to a child's or teen's early cues of distress? It is because we want to keep him or her from getting on the Express Road.
- As we get to know children or teens, we are better able to read those clues early.
- Let's think about Olivia — earlier we identified some push buttons or triggers and clues of distress. What do you see in this interaction with her foster mother?

Check In With Yourself

- Use your own emotional coping toolbox:
 - Prepare yourself
 - In-your-pocket tools
 - Recovery tools
 - Ongoing self-care



SLIDE 40: CHECK-IN: USE YOUR TOOLS TO KEEP STEADY

Goal

To review the importance of self-care for caregivers in supporting child regulation.

Teach

- In session three, we talked about your own self-care tools. To review, they include:
 - **Prepare yourself.** Remember to use your self-talk, have a plan, use your supports and take good care of your own basic needs, such as sleeping and eating.
 - **In-your-pocket tools.** Have tools in your pocket in case something unexpected happens: deep breathing, count to 10, relax your muscles, walk away for a moment, self-affirmation.
 - **Recovery tools.** When you have been through something stressful, identify strategies that you can use to get yourself back on the main road: call a friend, make a cup of tea, exercise. *If time permits, review the list generated during session three.*
 - **Ongoing self-care.** Find ways to actively attend to your self-care needs on an ongoing basis. Review some of your self-care strategies from session three when possible and continue to practice them throughout the week.

Discuss

Think about Olivia's foster mother. What do you think she might need in this moment? What advice would you give her to support her in addressing her own emotional needs?

Be a Mirror

- **Remember to use your mirroring skills**
 - **Provide simple reflection** by naming feelings, validating experience and normalizing ("Looks like you're feeling sad right now")
 - **Less is more.** If a child is upset, he or she will be less able to hear language. Consider mirroring with relationship, energy, body state

SLIDE 41: BE A MIRROR

Goal

To review the concept of mirroring from session five and see how it supports regulation.

Teach

- Let's review what we learned in the last session about mirroring. Mirroring is the primary strategy you can use to let another person know you see him or her, are paying attention and understand the person and his or her needs.
- Think about Olivia in this moment: What strategies might you use for mirroring her? Can someone give an example of a way to validate or normalize her experience? What about behavioral strategies (for instance, tone of voice, approach or withdrawal)? How do you think this might help her to regulate in this moment?

Meet the Need

- **Dysregulation is often a signal of unmet needs** (such as the need for survival or safety or an emotional, physical or relational need)
- Our responses to a child's or teen's behavior can inadvertently increase rather than decrease distress and arousal
- One of your most important tools for addressing dysregulation early is identifying and meeting the child's perceived needs

SLIDE 42: MEET THE NEED

Goal

To highlight the importance of need fulfillment in supporting regulation in children and teens who have experienced trauma.

Teach

- Earlier, we talked about some of the different needs that Olivia might be communicating — for instance, reassurance, connection or comfort.
- In an earlier meeting, we discussed that there are two primary functions of children's and teens' trauma-related behavior:
 - **Safety:** Those actions designed to keep a child or teen safe in the face of perceived danger.
 - **Getting needs met:** Actions designed to help the child or teen meet his or her physical, emotional or relational needs in the face of perceived deprivation, rejection or abandonment.
- A key strategy to support regulation when a child or teen is experiencing distress is to meet the need being communicated whenever possible.

Ask

How do you think Olivia's foster mother might be able to meet Olivia's needs in this moment? How might that help with her dysregulation?

When Olivia Is Upset

- As an experiment, Olivia's therapist suggests that when Olivia shows distress, Olivia's foster mother go to her immediately, offer comfort and support, and, when she is calm, **remind her of the many ways she can ask for help**
- At first, Olivia's foster mother needs to offer a lot of comfort (holding, rocking) before Olivia calms down. But within a few weeks, this becomes less necessary. **The distress calms quickly** unless there are other stressors



SLIDE 43: MEETING OLIVIA'S NEEDS

Goal

To provide an example of ways Olivia's foster mother was able to support in-the-moment regulation by meeting Olivia's need for connection, soothing and comfort.

Discuss/Teach

Read the slide aloud. As relevant, note similarities to ideas generated by participants.

Support a Child's or Teen's Use of Self-Regulation Tools

- **Model your own tools** ("I'm going to take a big breath so I can be calm and help you")
- Prompt the use of tools previously identified ("Olivia, I see you're so frustrated. Do you want to go to your calm-down corner with me?")
- Using tools a child or teen likes when calm may not work in the moment, when the child is upset. Be prepared to **experiment over time**

SLIDE 44: SUPPORT CHILD OR TEEN IN USING TOOLS

Goal

To teach key skills involved in supporting the use of regulation tools in the moment.

Teach

- Ideally, as part of building foundational regulation strategies, you and your child or teen will have begun to build a toolbox of regulation strategies.
- As these are solidified, they can be cued or prompted in the moment using these three strategies:
 - **Modeling.** Shame and vulnerability are common triggers for children or teens who have experienced trauma. When they feel shame or vulnerability, it can be hard to acknowledge they are distressed and harder still to ask for help. When a trusted adult models vulnerability and shows how he or she uses tools to support regulation, it allows children and teens to feel safer doing so themselves. It can also provide opportunities for co-regulation.
 - **Prompting use of tools.** It is essential to prompt the use of specific tools instead of making general statements, such as, "go calm down." Regulation is a complicated skill. They may need support to identify and implement each of the steps involved in the calm-down process. This is also true for children or teens who have shut down, or gone numb, and who need to wake up or re-engage with their world.
 - **Experimenting.** If one strategy doesn't work in the moment, try another. There is no single strategy that is going to work all the time. Even preferred tools may not work when they are most needed.

Discuss

Think about Olivia. Let's say we've identified that Olivia likes blowing bubbles (deep breathing), tossing a ball and getting hugs. How might you model, prompt or help her experiment with one of these strategies in the moment?

Allow Control and Choice

- **Offer opportunities for control and choice.** When a child or teen is triggered, feeling out of control or powerless increases distress and arousal. Look for opportunities to give kids lots of choices:
 - "I see you need some space. Would you rather go to your comfort space or to your room?"
 - "Do you want me to sit with you or wait over here until you feel calmer?"
 - "Right now your behavior isn't safe, so you can't have that toy. We'll try again later. Do you want me to put it on the shelf or in the closet?"

SLIDE 45: OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHOICE AND CONTROL

Goal

To teach about why it is important to increase a child's or teen's sense of control and provide examples of how to do so.

Teach

- Choice and control can be very powerful for children or teens who have experienced trauma. They have likely had countless experiences in which they experienced a lack of control and feelings of powerlessness. Many of those experiences felt threatening and dangerous.
- Ironically, when children or teens are very dysregulated, one of the things we do as adults to try to keep a situation safe is to take control away. This can actually escalate the situation, rather than helping a child calm down.
- This is because perceiving a loss of control may act as a trigger and lead children and teens to increased arousal and in some situations, survival behaviors.
- To avoid triggering and prevent survival behaviors, find opportunities for control and choice.

Discuss

Look at the examples on the slide. Can you imagine any of these being effective with Olivia? What are other possible ways you might help her feel more in control in this moment?

Reconnecting

Reconnect When Everyone Is Calm

- **Moments of crisis offer the best opportunities for repair**
 - Children like Olivia doubt that anyone can tolerate, care about or connect to them when they have moments of being out of control
- After everyone has calmed down, look for ways to re-engage and reconnect at the child's or teen's (and your) pace
 - Be explicit that even if all behaviors are not acceptable, all feelings (and the child himself or herself) are

SLIDE 46: RECONNECT/RE-ENGAGE

Goal

To highlight the importance of reconnection and repair in the aftermath of a challenging situation or crisis.

Teach

- In sessions one and two, we discussed that children and teens develop a sense of themselves and of others — a lens for self and a lens of relationships — based on early experiences with caregivers.
- To reduce a child's or teen's feelings of shame and hopelessness, it is essential that you find a way to reconnect, re-engage and repair once everybody is back on the main road.

Ask

- Why do you think it might matter to a child like Olivia to experience reconnection or repair with her foster mother after a difficult moment?
- Let's briefly review our discussion from session four, when we talked about how to handle disconnects. We mentioned four strategies, including to:
 - **Reaffirm the relationship.** Find a way to assure the child or teen that the relationship can exist and continue, even when times are hard.
 - **Reconnect at the child's or teen's pace.** Give the child or teen permission to protect him- or herself, even if you don't believe it is needed.
 - **Make repair if needed.** Give apologies, but don't expect them.
 - **Move on.** Try to shift out of the hard and into something positive. You're not reinforcing the negative when you reconnect in positive ways.

Wrap-Up

- Remember how infants and young children learn to regulate
- Children and teens who do not get enough soothing as young children have a much harder time managing feelings and behavior
- You can help by:
 - **Laying a good foundation** (routines, ongoing strategies, engaged connection, learning patterns)
 - **Responding in the moment** (read the clues, use your own tools, cue and support the child's or teen's tools, offer opportunities for control and reconnect)

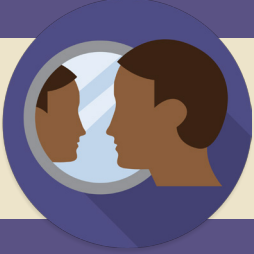
SLIDE 47: WRAP-UP

Goal

To review the teaching points from today's session.

Ask

Let's review what we have discussed today. Are there any remaining questions?



SELF-REFLECTION

Question

Think about what happens when you are very upset

- What are the ways you like to manage feelings and experiences? Is it the same for every kind of feeling, or is it different depending on mood (sad, mad, hurt)?
- **Pick one feeling.** What are you able to do independently to manage your experience? Why do you think that works for you?
- In what ways do other people support you? What do you like from others when you are upset? Why do you think that is?

SLIDES 48 AND 49: SELF-REFLECTION

Goal

To apply the concept of self-regulation to caregivers' own lives.

Do

Ask participants to get into groups of two or three. Ask them to read and discuss the questions on the slide. If time permits, invite one or two volunteers to share something from their discussion with the larger group.

HANDOUT: SELF-REFLECTION WORKSHEET



SLIDE 50: TAKE HOME


Goal

To identify at least one take-away concept from today's session.

Ask

Please identify at least one take-away concept from today's session — an idea, concept or something you learned that you can apply in your own life, or that felt relevant or important to you. Please take a minute to write this down in your log.

PRACTICE AT HOME



PRACTICE

Practice

- Look around your home
- What do you have that lends itself to supporting regulation?
- What might you need to add? (Keep in mind that this includes items as well as daily practices)
- Make a list of what you have and what you need

SLIDES 51 AND 52: PRACTICE


Goal

To apply the concept of regulation to the home setting.

Practice

Does everyone have the self-regulation inventory handout? At home this week, please look around your home. Identify what tools are available to support regulation in all members of your family. What might you need to add?


HANDOUT: SELF-REGULATION INVENTORY



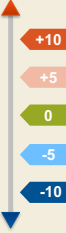
CLOSING CHECK-IN

What Is Your Energy Right Now?


Totally Comfortable



Really Uncomfortable



Great Match



Terrible Match

SLIDES 53 AND 54: CLOSING CHECK-IN

Goals

To increase awareness of internal experience and the effect of this experience on our ability to be present and engaged; to increase awareness of coping strategies; and to engage caregivers in a parallel process, as this is a skill set they will be supporting in their child or teen.

Do

- Let's take a moment to check in again before we go. I would like you to notice the level of energy or arousal in your body right now and rate it on the provided scale. Then, notice the degree to which this energy or arousal is comfortable or uncomfortable and rate that. Lastly, notice the degree to which your energy/arousal is a good match for the current situation (i.e., leaving the group) and rate that.
- Then, take a minute to consider the various tools you tried out today. Identify any that might be helpful in supporting you to feel comfortable and effective in your body.

HANDOUT: CHECK-IN



SEE YOU NEXT TIME!

SLIDE 55: CLOSING

Closing

- I am looking forward to our next session. Our theme will be “Respond, Don’t React.”
- *Note the date and location of the next meeting.*