



RESOURCES  
FOR INFANT  
EDUCARERS

# Why Infant Mental Health Experts Say Sensitive Care & Play Trump Early Academics

April 27, 2016

Early Childhood Investigations Webinar  
with  
Ruth Anne Hammond



# Poll #1

## Why are you here today?



# What is Mental Health?



# Poll #2

## What is *Infant* Mental Health?



# Infant Mental Health is...



Alicia Lieberman, PhD

**“Babies come into the world looking for us.”**

**-- Jeree Pawl**

**Clinical Professor Emerita, UCSF School of Psychiatry  
Past President, Zero to Three  
(IMH Goddess!)**





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**Babies' Love  
is like  
Romantic Love**



# Poll # 3

## What is Attachment?



# Lateralized Right Hemisphere Development

“...developmental neuroscience indicates that attachment transactions shape the connectivity of specifically the early developing right brain, which is dominant for control of vital functions supporting *survival* and for the processing of emotions.” – Schore (1994, 2005, 2013)

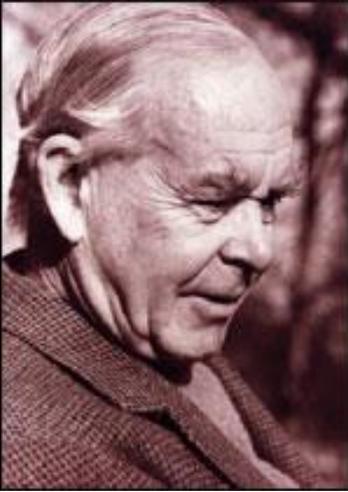
# The Brain is an Experience-Dependent Organ

The infant brain increases from 400g to 1200g in the first year – it triples in size – because of learning.

# Embodied Awareness

Relationships are built through body-to-body to communications which are

- rapidly exchanged
- outside of conscious awareness
- processed by and encoded in the right brain



## Bowlby's Attachment Theory

John Bowlby was the first to see the consistency of the child's relationship with a primary caregiver as essential to later mental health.

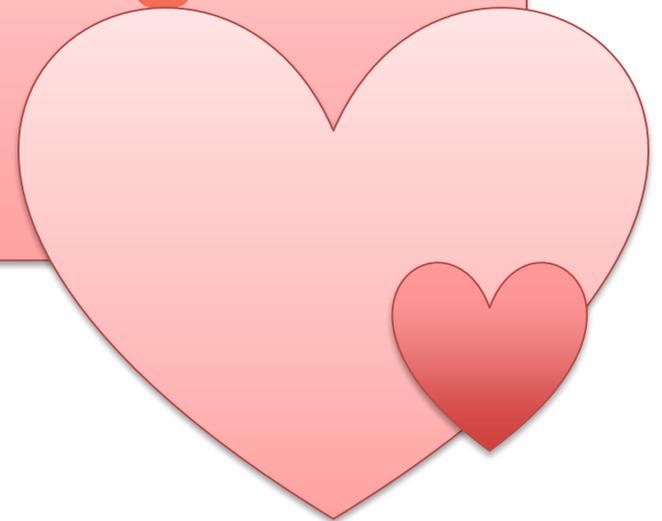
His student, Mary Ainsworth, expanded this insight to describe specific patterns of relationship and their effect on the child's attachment security.

# Patterns of Attachment per Mary Ainsworth

- Secure
- Insecure/Ambivalent (or Anxious)
- Insecure/Avoidant
- Disorganized



**Babies Need Love  
All Day Long**



# Poll # 4

## What is IPNB?





## **What is Self-Regulation?**

It is a system of biological survival mechanisms that support homeostasis and sociostasis.



# States of Arousal in Infants

Quiet sleep

Active sleep

Drowsy

Quiet alert

Active alert

Flooded

## Schore's Regulation Theory:



“The experience of being with a regulating (or dysregulating) other is incorporated into an enduring interactive representation.” – Allan Schore (1994)



# Regulatory Boundaries

When arousal levels are too high or too low, outside the boundary within which the individual is able to successfully stay integrated, a caring partner is needed to help the individual return to a healthy sense of self...and self worth. This is the role of the caregiver.



# Dissociation

If a child is either under-aroused due to lack of attention, affection and care (neglect), or in a chronic, unrelieved state of anxiety and fear, the child may simply “check out” and go into pathological hypo- (low) arousal. If this dissociation happens, development of the brain is stalled.



# Down Regulation and Up Regulation

“...experiences with a self-regulating other are essential for encountering the normally expected range of self-experiences, and without the other’s presence and responsive behavior, the full range simply does not develop.” -

- Daniel Stern  
(1986, pp. 198-199)



# Auto-Regulation

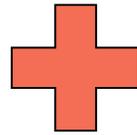
Self-soothing and self-initiated interest or excitement can be seen as activities of auto-regulation.



## **Interactive (or Co-) Regulation**

Turning to others for help in recovering from stress or feelings of low vitality leads to interactive regulation.

Co-regulation (with the input of another)



Auto-regulation (independent)



**Healthy Self-Regulation**



**Reciprocity is the Goal  
of  
Mutual Regulation**



# Trauma Interferes with Development

When young children are victims of serious trauma (or regular, ongoing smaller traumas), and their stress is un-regulated, they cannot build optimally healthy brains, relationships and ways of being.



**“There is no such thing as a baby.  
There is a baby and someone.”**

**-- D.W. Winnicott**



# Educaring<sup>®</sup> is Preventativ e & Promotes Security

# How does PLAY fit into the Infant Mental Health picture?



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## PLAY is a Primary Process



“The most wonderful tool provided to achieve full socialization of the brain is the psycho-physical PLAY system of the mammalian brain.”

-- Jaak Panksepp (2008)

**Play is babies' work.  
(Thanks, Dr. Montessori!)**



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# Poll # 5

## What is RIE?



# Educaring<sup>®</sup> Includes:

- RESPECT FOR & TRUST IN THE INFANT
- FOCUSED ATTENTION DURING CARE
- FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT & PLAY
- SENSITIVE OBSERVATION
- EMOTIONAL AUTHENTICITY
- SELECTIVE INTERVENTION
- SAFE, PREPARED ENVIRONMENT



**Loving relationships and uninterrupted play, as promoted by the Educaring® Approach, allow babies and young children to follow their bliss, and bliss builds the best brains!**



## References

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- Alicia Lieberman (RIE Keynote 2010)
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- Jaak Panksepp (American Journal of PLAY 2008)

# Recommended Reading

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How to access RIE courses and materials:

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