



THE AINSWORTH ATTACHMENT CLINIC AND *The Circle of Security*® NETWORK

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OVERVIEW OF CIRCLE OF SECURITY INTERVENTION SERVICES

The Circle of Security® (COS) intervention is designed to transfer research knowledge to parents in a user-friendly way and to provide parenting psychotherapy that resolves a variety of attachment and trauma problems. This award-winning video-based program helps parents learn to observe and interpret children's behavior using the Circle of Security. Typical families served include adoptive, foster, and kinship families, families working toward reunification, families with children who have developmental disabilities, and families at-risk for out of home placement of a child. We now offer three versions of the COS intervention, each with a slightly different purpose and associated cost. Detailed descriptions for each service are available upon request.

CIRCLE OF SECURITY FULL INTERVENTION PROTOCOL

The Full Intervention Protocol is a high-intensity option following an empirically-developed protocol that moves through several stages in the treatment of attachment and/or trauma symptoms. Stages include psychotherapy utilizing the family's assessment data and education about scientific advances in child development, attachment, parenting, and emotion-regulation. Much of this work is based on detailed and repeated review of the assessment videotapes with the parent(s). Parents are coached in practicing their new observational and emotional responsiveness skills outside the treatment sessions to promote lasting changes. Trained Circle of Security® therapists meet with parents, in-home or in-office, twice a week (high dosage) or once a week (low dosage) with each session lasting approximately two hours. For these complex cases, the COS therapist receives regular ongoing consultation/supervision from other members of the Network team, and the team engages in ongoing consultation with the DSS Case Coordinator and other service providers. The expected length of service is determined by the family's level of complexity and risk. The average length of service during the past two fiscal years has been 12 months for a full intervention case.

CIRCLE OF SECURITY ESSENTIALS (New Service)

Circle of Security Essentials is a medium-intensity option for children and families with low-to-moderate histories of unresolved trauma, loss, or complex living situations (e.g., kinship, foster and adoptive families, as well as some birth families). It is most appropriate for families who are motivated to engage in therapy and obtain help in shifting or developing a relationship with their child. Incorporating the core principles of the full COS Protocol, COS Essentials combines the psycho-educational Parent Course with focused trauma and attachment psychotherapy. This package may include a full or abbreviated assessment to aid in treatment planning and to address specific problems in the parent-child relationship through video review. Sessions are held in-home or in-office twice a week with each session lasting approximately two hours. The expected length of service is 6 months.

The COS Essentials service is similar to the COS Parent Course in being more time-limited. It is similar to the full intervention in providing psychotherapy in addition to psycho-education. It is significantly less expensive, less technical, and less demanding of resources, than the full COS intervention. Further, it is different from the full intervention in that the COS Network team does not engage in as much extensive consultation and support of the DSS Case Coordinator and other professionals providing services to the family.

COS PARENT COURSE

A less intensive and time-limited option, the COS Parent Course is a great choice for low complexity/risk cases with motivated foster, adoptive, and relative placements. During the 10-week course, participants have hands-on practice in identifying emotional cues, reading through miscues, and generating ideas for helping children heal within their new relationships. This brief intervention is primarily focused on the psycho-educational component of the COS Intervention and may be completed with individual families, or in small groups at a lesser rate.

EVALUATION SERVICES

An attachment-caregiving and trauma evaluation focuses on the overall relationship between the parent(s) and child(ren), with special emphasis on the attachment-caregiving component of that relationship. While we often assess the developmental and psychological diagnoses for the child, our evaluations differ from a standard child-focused psychological evaluation in that the primary focus is to identify the attachment patterns between the child and caregiver(s), the nature and severity of attachment and/or trauma problems, and types and levels of resilience and risk exhibited within that relationship. Evaluations are videotaped to provide the evaluators and therapists implementing the COS intervention an opportunity to capture the nuances of emotional response and child-caregiver interaction that may be difficult to recognize in “real time.”

Attachment-caregiving and trauma evaluation may be relevant to assess the impact of:

- Trauma, neglect, or abuse
- Disrupted or terminated early parent-child relationships
- Attachment and parenting difficulties
- Childhood chronic illness on family relationships
- Parental Separation
- Military Family Separation and Reunion

Other areas of focus may include:

- Divorce, Custody and Parental Capacity Evaluations
- Visitation/Access Assessment Services
- Mediation-related Services

PRE-INTERVENTION ASSESSMENT

A research-based Attachment-Caregiving Assessment is the foundation and starting point for the Circle of Security® Intervention. This evaluation identifies existing patterns between parent and child and provides the therapist with a roadmap for the intervention; video clips from the assessment provide much of the basis for the therapist’s work with the family. Identifying each family’s natural strengths as well as their under-utilized capacities provides an individualized and targeted plan for the most effective and efficient treatment.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

INSERVICES/TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR PROFESSIONALS

The Clinic provides trainings for a variety of professionals involved or interested in research and/or evidence-based evaluation of children’s relationships with their caregivers. The Clinic’s areas of scholarship include parenting, attachment, trauma, grief and loss, and reaction to diagnosis. We provide professional trainings to social workers, therapists, adoption and foster care workers and child welfare service providers. Additionally, we train researchers, family court attorneys, judges, custody evaluators, foster care agencies, and staff at children’s residential facilities.

CASE CONSULTATION

In order to help professionals conceptualize the needs and organization of a case and the possible evaluation and treatment recommendations or considerations, the Clinic and the Network provide individual case consultation for DSS workers, legal professionals, community therapists, and other professionals. With decades of experience in research, clinical work, and training in the areas of attachment, child development, and pediatric psychology, Dr. Marvin and the Network staff can assist with planning, justification, and exploration to develop the most effective plan to support the placement, structure and service provision that is in the best interest of the child.

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION CONSULTATIONS

We offer a range of consultation services to areas of Virginia that are not within the Network’s normal service area, working in consultation with therapists or other providers in the caregiver’s community, depending upon availability. Consultation may include an evaluation at our Clinic in Charlottesville and regularly scheduled consultation sessions between a COS Supervisor and the family’s therapist, who is familiar with attachment and the COS framework.