Infant Mental Health

Baby 1: observe & be educated to the baby's cues (body language, facial expressions, etc.)
- understand caregiver's behavioral cues & interactions
- reflective dialogue with caregiver to build reflective functioning for you!

Baby 2: understand caregiver's behavioral cues & interactions
- reflective dialogue with caregiver to build reflective functioning for you!

Baby 3 = IMH Practitioner
- glosses/angles in the baby's "voice"
- "what about the baby?"
- Be aware & mindful of of on IMH practitioner

Baby #1 = infant
Baby #2 = caregiver
Baby #3 = IMH Practitioner

Caregiver's Infant's IMH

HOW?

But... how young babies?

Infant-Caregiver Relationship

CLIENT?

INTERNAL WORKING MODEL (IWM)
- mental representations about ourselves, others, & their roles in relationships based on early attachment experiences with primary caregiver

X 3, because...
3 babies

Secure attachment
Secure base
Secure base
Secure haven

"Circle of Security" (Parent attachment & adult Something is wrong)

Goals to SELF SUSTAINING PATHWAYS
- IWM creates expectations and patterns that influence on individuals interactions throughout life!

Secure attachment
Insecure attachment

How to → Help this caregiver get there

OBSERVATION VS. ASSUMPTION
- Practice coding what I objectively observe vs. assume

Q's:
- what do I think?
- why might I be having this reaction?

→ Conduct role-play scenarios where parent practices responding with comfort & security

→ Encourage stimulating play between parent & infant

SAFE HAVEN + SECURE BASE

SCAFFOLDING ← CO-REGULATION
Parent/IMH Practitioner
Infant

Improves relationship between
- IMH practitioner & caregiver
- caregiver & infant

HOW?
1) videotape caregiver-infant interaction and reflect on it with caregiver - how did it feel? what came up for you in that moment?
2) As an IMH practitioner, can also speak for the infant (giving words to what the baby is experiencing)

therapeutic voice supports parent's voice as a child

co-regulation

ultimately helps the infant

infant's exploration while parent there to support

VS.

RESILIENCE
- complete bounce-back
- = burdensome for caregivers & infants

Celebrate caregiver's & infant's progress
- after painful coaching

WELLDONE!
- reflective discussion with caregiver to highlight things that are doing well

X
- trauma transformed by caregiver taking small steps, moments of sense of pride

ATTACHMENT

EARNED SECURITY
attachment → attachment (can alter over time)
↓
develop secure attachment patterns
↓
healthy relationships later in life

★ Parents who appear frightening
most likely to be frightened as a child

TRAUMA = DANGER
- different behavior
- different for different caregiver

Ask the Caregiver
"What is your memory of Scary moments when you were little?"

★ Provide consistent emotional support — HOW?
build trusting relationship with caregiver (empathy, show up on time, be consistent)

Self-reflections:
- how do I introduce myself to the client?
- What are my initial reactions to the client? → check my bias

Supervision
- unpack challenging cases with supervisor
  - biases
  - strong emotions
  - differences in social location

BARRIERS!

Who am I? How do I view my clients?

Infant
"Who are you as a parent? Who are you as an infant? (Movie or Talk)"

- race & ethnicity
- gender
- class
- religion/spirituality

Created by: Shreeja Vachhani
SW724
June 10th, 2024