

The Circle of Security (COS)™ is a strength and evidence-based program designed to help caregivers identify their children’s emotional needs and respond to their needs and behaviors in ways that lead to secure attachments and greater resilience. COS goes beyond the surface behavior and digs into what is behind it. There is a strong focus on nurturing a child’s need for growth and independence from infancy and how developing secure relationships helps create that. COS addresses how to repair a relationship when a rupture occurs. Each week the class content consists of videos with parents interacting with their children as well as animated scenes to help visualize what is being taught in the class. This is combined with group discussions with class members and facilitators. Caregivers are provided a workbook where they can follow along with what is up on screen during our ZOOM class. They are encouraged to practice the skills learned during class and communicate progress and challenges the following week with other class members and facilitators.

#### **Week 1: Introduction of the Concept of Circle of Security**

Caregivers will explore how the Circle takes place in the lives of children and adults. Caregivers learn about going out and coming in on the circle and the parents being the receiving Hands to welcome their child back in. They will begin to explore a child’s needs that may be hidden in plain sight.

#### **Week 2: Exploring Children’s Needs All the Way Around the Circle**

Caregivers learn about being the hands on the circle and the challenge of being Bigger, Stronger, Wiser and Kind. They learn about the Needs on the Top of the Circle with moments of: Watch over me; Delight in me; Help me; Enjoy with me and the Needs on the Bottom of the Circle with moments of: Protect me; Comfort me; Delight in me; Organize My Feelings.

#### **Week 3: “Being With” on the Circle**

Caregivers will explore their challenges of “Being With” and meeting their children’s needs. Exploration of parents own upbringings and how that may be impacting their own parenting. Focus on helping parents with emotions they may be struggling with and how to manage that to meet their children needs.

#### **Week 4: Being With Infants on the Circle**

Caregivers will learn about the needs of an infant and how to develop secure attachments by “Being With” them and helping them organize their feelings with ongoing support. Caregivers will explore their challenges of meeting all the needs of an infant, especially if the infant requires extra levels of care. The concept of a caregiver cuing a child that it’s ok or not ok to come in to have their needs met is explored as is how to make changes to attach and meet their infant’s needs.

#### **Week 5: The Path to Security**

Caregivers will learn the Concept of Shark Music which helps them explore their struggles with caregiving. They will learn how children may cue or miscue caregivers depending on if they feel welcome to come in on the Circle to the Welcoming Hands of the caregivers. Parents will also explore the Path to a Secure Attachment.

#### **Week 6: Exploring Our Struggles**

Caregivers will explore their struggles in being the Hands to provide a Secure Attachment with their children. This is referred to as “Limited Hands”. Helping caregivers explore if they may become Mean, Weak or Gone in parenting their children and how to move that in the direction of becoming Bigger, Stronger, Wiser and Kind with “Balanced Hands”.

#### **Week 7: Rupture and Repair**

Caregivers will learn about how the quality of the relationship is the solution to a repair. When a rupture in the relationship happens and caregivers step off the Circle, parents will learn how to return to the Circle and see their children through a different lens. They will then learn about different techniques for repair.

#### **Week 8: Summary and Celebration**

Caregivers are given the opportunity to share what they have learned in the prior 7 weeks of class. A summary of what was taught is shown on a video which is followed up with questions and answers.