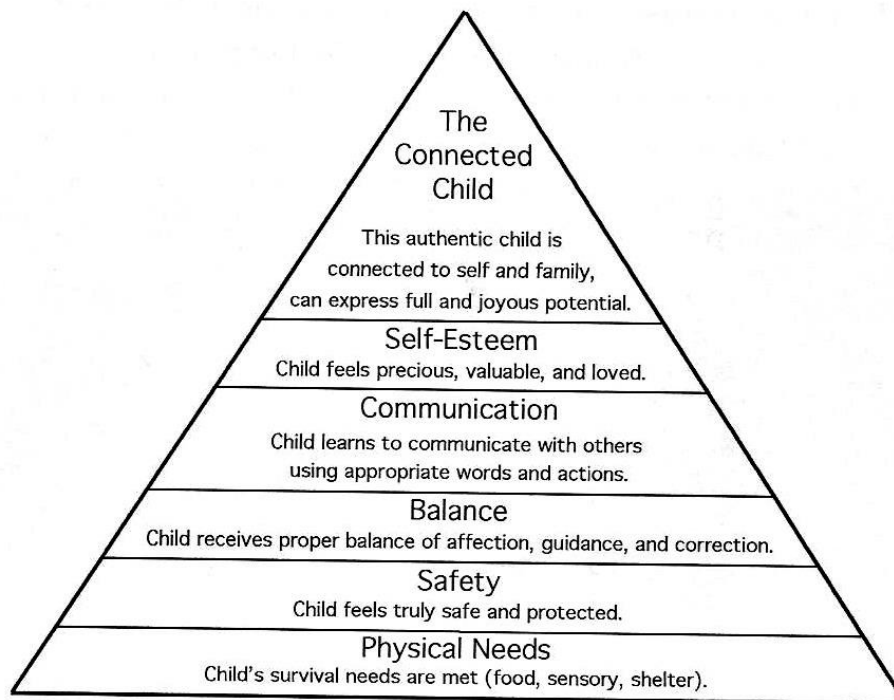


An Overview of Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI)

TBRI encompasses principles and strategies for the building blocks of facilitating healing in “children from hard places” – those whose development has been compromised through damaging experiences. Drs. Karyn Purvis and David Cross from the Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development at Texas Christian University have developed these principles over a decade of their practice and research with children from troubled backgrounds who have special behavioral and emotional needs. They teach parents how to provide for all their child’s physical and emotional needs. To be trained in this approach, you can visit the website of the Institute at: <https://child.tcu.edu/#sthash.x12Doa0Q.dpbs>

The book, *The Connected Child*, fully describes the principles and strategies of TBRI. There also are several DVD series available from the Institute, including a series of 7 sets of DVDs on *Trust-Based Parenting*. The DVDs in this module come from one of these sets: *Creating Lasting Changes in Your Child’s Behavior*. Trust-Based Parenting outlines three sets of principles, stemming from TBRI, that are part of creating lasting changes in the child’s behaviors – Empowering Principles, Connecting Principles, and Correcting Principles. We will hit some of the highpoints of this approach in this course, but there is much more to learn from the book, DVD series, and both parent and professional training.

The pyramid diagram below, from *The Connected Child*, shows how different levels of care build on each other to provide all the elements a child needs to feel fully connected. *Trust-Based Parenting*.



Levels of care build on each other (Purvis, Cross, & Sunshine, 2007, p. 217)

Empowering Principles: Laying the Foundation for Change

- Creating an environment of felt safety
- Self-regulation: raising self-awareness
- Discover your child's sensory needs
- Celebrate your child's needs
- Make the day predictable
- Share power
- Balance nurture and structure

Connecting Principles: Building a Trusting Relationship

Connecting Through Play: Fun play involving parent and child or the whole family is a powerful way to promote connection. Acting silly together, games, and laughter are non-threatening. At times, it is good to let the child take the lead. For example, you could play a game walking in sync, and the parent could match the child's strides.

Make Eye Contact: Eye contact can convey warmth and valuing of the child, and it is a way to get the child's attention. Very fearful children are resistant to eye contact; the parent would need to work slowly to make light eye contact and gradually work up to sustained, face-to-face eye contact.

Match Your Child: When a mother and baby communicate in a loving way, they are often matching each other. When a baby smiles and the mother smiles back, there is mirroring and physical mimicking. They are becoming attuned to each other and connecting.

Respect the Child's Need for Personal Space: This reduces the child's fear and stress. A parent may ask permission before hugging or touching a child who is resistant to this. Over time, the parent can work up to light touch, like a hand on the child's shoulder.

Set the Bar for Success: The parent needs to set expectations that the child has the capacity to meet, and gradually move the bar higher as learning takes place, much like shaping of desirable behaviors.

Praise Your Child Often: Praise the child often when he is succeeding and behaving well. The parent may have to look for small positive steps to praise at first.

Stick Together: the concept of working together as a team or a family promotes appropriate connections with others.

Give Voice to Your Child: Nurturing parents naturally give voice to their babies as they read and verbalize their needs and emotions. Parents need to use questions, reflective listening, and empathy in reading the needs and feelings of their child when they are upset, and encourage the child to express these verbally.

Follow Through on Promises: consistent expectations and nurturing responses build trust. This includes parents following through on promises they make to the child.

Correcting Principles: Scripting New Behavior (focus of Lesson 4)

Scripting New Behavior: Using short, direct phrases to teach children appropriate social skills, life values, and the right way to act – to get along with other children, to negotiate, to obey caregivers. These skills come from years of social interaction with competent adults, which a child may not have experienced. Demonstrate the right way to act and help the child practice or rehearse the skills during calm times, so that he/she can use them during emotional times. Praise child for right behavior ... “good showing respect!”

- Show respect
- Use your words
- Making eye contact
- Ask permission
- Listen and obey
- Gentle and kind
- No hurts (on the outside or inside)
- Compromises
- Who’s the boss?
- Accepting “no”
- Understanding consequences and making good choices

New Approach to Discipline and Dealing with Defiance: Many think of discipline as meting out punishments, but we need to find ways to correct that are not wounding to the child and do not lessen the child’s connection to adults. If you use force, you can get compliance, but you lose trust. Use a teaching approach with a balance of structure and nurture that targets behaviors, coaches the child in right behaviors, and seeks an immediate resolution. Parents need to maintain self-control of their own behaviors, be the boss, and show a child that she is valued by giving her undivided attention, playing with her, and recognizing her value and preciousness. Parents need to model the life values that they are trying to teach the child, make regular eye contact when speaking to the child, use affectionate touches, and be consistent in their responses.

- **Scaffolding:** Give a lot of guidance as you teach a child new skills. When children are starting to learn, parents may have to give strong negative statements, such as “We do not hurt people”, but as the child makes progress, we need to word statements positively as much as possible, “explain what you want with respect”. Begin to withdraw direction as children learn the new skills and can do it on their own.

- **Sharing power and offering choices:** Allow children to exercise appropriate levels of control and choose between options you have selected; they feel empowered and more in control when they have choices.
- **The Re-do/Try it again:** Use behavioral re-dos to follow incorrect behaviors with having child demonstrate the correct behavior. This gives the child a sense of accomplishment and a body memory of the correct behaviors.
- **The “Real Child”:** Support children’s self-image by focusing on the “real child” inside of them. At times when praising positive behaviors, parents can refer to the “real girl” or “real boy” and point out the precious inner core of the child.
- **Avoid negative labeling of the child or shaming.**
- **The IDEAL Response:**
 - Immediate (within a few seconds)
 - Direct (fully present to child, make eye contact)
 - Efficient (parents match their level of response to level of child’s response)
 - Action-based (if child acts out the right behavior, has a motor memory for the positive behavior)
 - Leveled at behavior (not at the child)
- **Time-In instead of Time-Out**
- **Levels of Response:**
 - Playful engagement – to respond to a low level of pushback from a child, such as sassy language, a parent may respond with a playful, warm tone, such as “Try it again with respect”.
 - Structured engagement – if the child is emotionally present and not so angry or out of control that he cannot reason, the parent may offer structure, such as giving the child two choices for an acceptable response...”Would you rather play a board game or sit quietly and let me read you a book?”
 - Calming engagement – the child is really struggling to stay in control, and the focus is on helping to soothe him.
 - Protective engagement – the child is violent to the point that there is a risk of hurting himself or others. The parent seeks to restore safety and help the child self-regulate as quickly as possible.
- **Recognize and celebrate positive changes in the child**

There are many videos and previews of videos on the internet that explain the TBRI principles, including the following links:

Introduction to TBRI: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vjVpRffgHQ>

Trust-Based Parenting Preview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGq wz8L6JBo>

TBRI: An Overview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T43zJDgTNPA>

A TBRI Portrait: individual tapes made by 10 individuals on using TBRI (on youtube)

TBRI for Teens: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2sRKTiyGyl>

The IDEAL Response for Parents: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3CFmT02SKs>

10 Common Questions series: <http://empoweredtoconnect.org/topics/10-common-questions/>

Effective Discipline Strategies for Adoptive & Foster Parents: <https://vimeo.com/4013209>

Better Understanding Our Children: <https://vimeo.com/4005215>

What is That in Your Hand: <https://vimeo.com/3706315>