



Secure Beginnings

Joint Service with Dayspring Trust and Marinoto CAMHS

Project and Service Aims:

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To increase access for specialist perinatal infant mental health services to vulnerable families and infants. To develop a service that will enhance long term outcomes for children of parents with mental health and addictions (COPMIA). To establish an evidence based time limited, individualised attachment focused therapeutic intervention.

To develop a joint service in order to strengthen the interface with a community partner organisation and provide an alternative treatment pathway options for consumers.

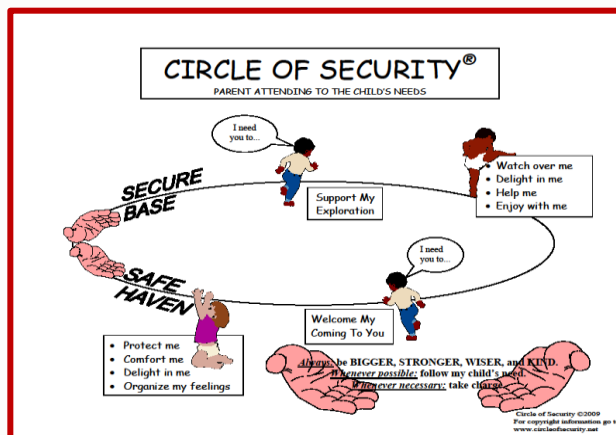
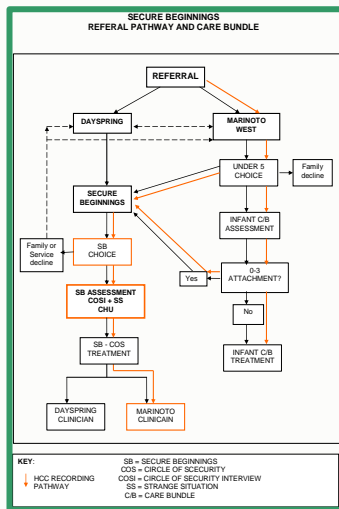
To use an internationally tested, evidence based treatment approach. The Circle of Security® is a parent education and psychotherapy program designed to shift patterns of attachment-care giving interactions in vulnerable caregiver-child dyads to more appropriate developmental pathways. The intervention involves at-risk mothers, fathers or caregivers of infants and toddlers who meet with a psychotherapist for an hour and a quarter each week for up to 20 weeks (Marvin et al, 2002).

To measure the effectiveness of the intervention at increasing caregiver observation of child attachment needs;; shifting parental state of mind in regards to child behaviour; increasing empathy towards child; improving caregiver emotional regulation.

Quick Facts

- ❖ The risk of developing mental disorders for children whose parents have a mental illness ranges from 41% to 77%
- ❖ Family interventions have the potential to reduce children's mental illness symptoms
- ❖ Family interventions have the potential to reduce the risk of children acquiring a mental illness by 40 %

(Source – COPMI Australia 2013)



Several pre and post measures have been used.

- Strange Situation Procedure has been used to identify attachment style. Pre test only.
 - Parental sense of competence Questionnaire (PSOC)
 - Coping with Toddlers Negative Emotion scale (CTNES)
 - Parental Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (PRFQ-1)
 - Post interview. Post test only.
- Low sample size and limited resources have meant that data cannot yet be analysed. Further data analysis is required. Early results indicate positive shifts.

Results: Parents report very high level of satisfaction with the Secure Beginnings program. Post interviews reveal that satisfaction is related to a number of key areas : **Significant increase in empathy towards their children;** Increased sense of competence and confidence as a parent; **Reduction of negative attributions towards their child's behaviours;** Increase in delight shown in their children; **Increased responsiveness to their child's emotional needs;** Increased awareness in regards to parenting struggles ; Program drop out rates are significantly lower than other parenting programs.

What the parents have told us -

"I think that every parent should have the opportunity to do this course.." "I have learnt so much about myself and my child" "I think I am a much better mum now to my child", "Doing this course has changed everything for my family, we are so much happier now"

