



*Infant and  
toddler  
wellbeing*



With delivery partners



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Included below are reflective questions referred to during the webinar along with links to additional information, resources and references.

## In practice reflective questions

These reflective questions can be used to form the basis of a conversation with your Be You Action Team or Learning Community Leadership.

- ④ What does infant and toddler mental health look like, feel like and sound like?
- ④ In your daily interactions with children, how you can help to influence their brain architecture and social and emotional skills to develop in a positive way?
- ④ How intentional are we about the quality of our daily interactions with infants and toddlers?
- ④ Reflect on how you use co-regulation in your everyday practice with infants and toddlers
- ④ Do you engage in any rituals with your group of children through the day?
- ④ Reflect on 'tuning-in' to infants and toddlers – think how much you learn about them when you do this
- ④ How representative is your learning environment of the families in your community?
- ④ Do you engage in intentional teaching with infants and toddlers?
- ④ Do you consider infants and toddlers have a sense of agency?

## Links to additional information, resources and references from the webinar

### Be You resources

Always Be You: supporting embedding Aboriginal and Torres Islander ways of knowing being and doing

<https://beyou.edu.au/resources/always-be-you>

Be You Wellbeing Tools

<https://beyou.edu.au/resources/tools-and-guides>

Be You Professional Learning

<https://beyou.edu.au/learn>

BETLS observation tool

<https://beyou.edu.au/resources/tools-and-guides>

## **Defining mental health and wellbeing for infant and toddlers**

World Health Organization

[https://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental\\_health/en/](https://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/)

Hunter Institute of Mental Health

<http://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/everymind/assets/Uploads/PDF/connections-resource.pdf>

## **Research evidence**

The first thousand days: A case for investment (April 2019) ARACY

<https://www.aracy.org.au/documents/item/608>

Australian Early Development Census AEDC

<https://www.aedc.gov.au/resources/resources-accessible/brain-development-in-children>

## **Brain development and architecture**

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health

<https://www.aaimhi.org/key-issues/media-releases/>

Be You Professional Learning, Learning Resilience domain Affirm module

<https://beyou.edu.au/learn/learning-resilience/affirm>

Center on the Developing Child Harvard University

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu>

How brains are built, The Royal Melbourne Children's Hospital

[https://www.rch.org.au/ccch/publications-resources/chd/Children\\_s\\_health\\_and\\_development\\_-\\_September\\_2014/](https://www.rch.org.au/ccch/publications-resources/chd/Children_s_health_and_development_-_September_2014/)

## **Attachment**

Attachment styles

<https://www.verywellmind.com/attachment-styles-2795344>

Bowlby J. (1969). Attachment. Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Loss. New York: Basic Books.

Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1973). The development of infant-mother attachment. In B. Cardwell & H. Ricciuti (Eds.), Review of child development research (Vol. 3, pp. 1-94) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

## **Relationships and self-regulation**

Stuart Shanker: 5 domains of self-regulation

[https://self-reg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/5DOMAIN\\_printable.pdf?pdf=5-domains](https://self-reg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/5DOMAIN_printable.pdf?pdf=5-domains)

## **Socio-ecological influences**

Bronfenbrenner: Be You Professional Learning Resilience domain, Affirm module  
<https://beyou.edu.au/learn/learning-resilience/affirm>

## **Optimising infant and toddler mental health and wellbeing**

Risk and Protective factors: Be You Professional Learning, Mentally Healthy communities Understand module  
<https://beyou.edu.au/learn/mentally-healthy-communities/understand>

'Care as curriculum: investigating teacher's views on the learning in care' K.Bussey; D.Hill: 2017  
<https://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/33282>

## **Relationships**

Circle of Security  
<https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/>

Jude Cassidy University of Maryland  
<https://psyc.umd.edu/facultyprofile/cassidy/jude>

The Whole-Brain Child  
[http://drdanielj.siegel.com/books/the\\_whole\\_brain\\_child/](http://drdanielj.siegel.com/books/the_whole_brain_child/)

## **Promoting inclusion and connectedness**

Anne Stonehouse  
<https://thespoke.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/leading-excellence-threes-programs-simple/>

Queensland Government, Children's Health  
<https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/mental-health-services/babies-and-parents/>

## **Professional practice**

Degotardi, S. (2010). High-quality interactions with infants: relationships with early-childhood practitioners' interpretations and qualification levels in play and routine contexts. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 18(1), 27-41. doi:10.1080/09669761003661253

Duhn, I. (2015). Making Agency Matter: Rethinking Infant and Toddler Agency in Educational Discourse. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 36(6), 920-931. doi:10.1080/01596306.2014.918535

Houen, S., Danby, S., Farrell, A., & Thorpe, K. (2016). Creating Spaces for Children's Agency: 'I wonder...' Formulations in Teacher-Child Interactions. *Journal of OMEP: l'Organisation Mondiale pour l'Education Prescolaire*, 48(3), 259-276. doi:10.1007/s13158-016-0170-4

## Attendee questions and answers

### **Where can we find Professional Development on Circle of Security?**

Circle of Security training is offered by the CoS organisation. If you do an internet search you will find this information. There are also a number of CoS trainers in Australia who might be able to help.

Circle of Security: <https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/>

### **How do you encourage other educators to understand the importance of Circle of Security when they ignore the child and do not meet their needs-emotionally?**

Be You helps you to slowly work through this sort of knowledge, look at what you already do and what else you can do. Be You can bring the whole team along - and this takes time. Receiving support from a Be You consultant will help you use the Be You tools in a way that best meet the needs of your educators, children and families.

### **Should we be encouraging the use of the words 'mental health' rather than 'social emotional wellbeing' or is it okay to use this terminology?**

That is something only you can decide - what is best for your community. We do encourage the use of the words Mental Health but this needs to be something that will work with your community. This is a conversation for you, your team and your community.

### **How do we encourage educators to use the words mental health with confidence? In understanding what this means for each of us as professionals, I feel there may be a fear attached to using such terms with children.**

We can recommend the Be You framework: as your team slowly learns more about early childhood mental health, and works through the framework over a couple of years, with the help of a Be You consultant, you will see changes in understanding and practice in your team. We also want to acknowledge the fear and stigma around the words: Mental Health. However this is something education and knowledge can change.

### **How do you support a child attached to only one educator to build attachment with rest of the educators?**

This is a common question. There are many reasons why a child can find it difficult to move from one educator to another:

- are they getting enough secure attachment from that one educator?
- are they having trouble negotiating change?
- is there something in their environment or biology involved?

Using the [BETLS tool](#) can refine your observations and help decide on your next steps.

## **Is care part of learning?**

Care and curriculum are inherently connected - the child is a whole person and needs care and curriculum together to flourish.

**We are debating over the Macrosystem, Exosystem, Mesosystem and Microsystem circle. Housing being in the Exosystem Circle, and family in the microsystem - how can they be so far apart when environmental factors such as their home environment can be detrimental to their brain development, architecture and ultimately their mental health? Especially when the home-school connection fits in the Mesosystem? We believe this circle chart contradicts a lot. It could just be our professional point of view or a misunderstanding but we are all protesting that we don't agree.**

Great thought! Remember this is just a model. We love your critical reflection about this. Consider creating your own model that reflects your place, your understanding and your practice.

**I'd be interested in learning also about promoting and practicing our own mental health as educators. Is this something we can also learn about?**

There are some great resources on the Be You website on educator wellbeing. Look at our [Resources](#) for the *Your Wellbeing Fact Sheets*. The [Include module](#) has the topic, 'Your Wellbeing' and finally, [Be You News](#) has three great News articles that might be a good starting point.

**I think acknowledging their feelings and efforts are very important for inclusion.**

Yes - acknowledging feelings and efforts is important to all of us - infants and toddlers are no exception.

**I find it hard to give enough time to a child with a mental health problem with loads of paper work in child care.**

This is a real problem for many educators. However sometimes giving the time the child needs will 'fill their bucket' so later they need less time. Also look to get extra support for children with mental health problems.