



## *Using Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI)*

In April and May, PARC hosted the EMPOWERED TO CONNECT REWIND as a teleconference over a series of 4 Saturday mornings. Over 130 Adoptive/Foster/Kinship/Guardianship parents attended and learned the basics of TBRI. The conference is normally offered live as a simulcast each year but due to the Stay Home Stay Safe the 4 mini series worked well. We look forward to hosting it as an in-person event again next year.

Many parents who attended provided positive feedback regarding the content. The TBRI method was developed by Dr. Karyn Purvis to address the needs of children with trauma related behaviors and attachment challenges. The foundation of TBRI is the importance of a strong relationship between the adult and child. Here is some of the Empowered To Connect messages.

*Children who have experienced relational trauma will experience healing through safe, nurturing relationships.*

Tona Ottinger, Director of ETC

*What are some needs that might have gone unmet for your child in his or her past?*

*What can you do to meet those needs now?*

*Felt safety means the child feels safe. It's different from you knowing they're safe.*

Dr. Karyn Purvis

*Am I using fear or control to change my child's behavior?*

*How can I correct while staying connected and building greater trust and felt safety?*



Learning new ways of parenting is the first step, but practicing what we have learned is always the most challenging part. Here is what TBRI looks like when put into practice.

- ◇ Offer choices to help your child feel safe, heard, and valued. Keep in mind that you must be willing to accept either choice you offer.
- ◇ Teach by modeling desired behavior in a way that builds success, not shame or failure.

TBRI in practice, continued:

- ◇ Return to playful, warm interactions when conflict is resolved. When it's over, it's over.
- ◇ Stop, look, and listen when your child approaches you.
- ◇ Look into his or her eyes.
- ◇ Listen to his or her words and share his or her excitement and passion for what he or she is expressing.
- ◇ Find creative ways to give more "yeses."
- ◇ Find a new way to affirm your child's preciousness through words or actions.
- ◇ Use character praise to change your child's belief system about his or herself by recognizing his or her character traits. Some examples include: "I like playing with you. You are so fun to be with." "Thank you for sharing. You are so thoughtful." "You are so creative. That is a great idea."
- ◇ Find a new way to affirm your child's preciousness through words.
- ◇ Spend at least 10 minutes a day with your child, engaging in play with an activity of his or her choice that allows for creative expression. Allow space for your child to lead the play with his or her unique ideas. During this time, offer healthy touch (high fives, fist bumps, side hugs); and validate his or her ideas.
- ◇ Positive, joyful experiences with safe, loving adults are essential for rewiring the brain. Novel experiences also contribute to brain health. Combine the two and introduce one new, joyful experience every week to your child. Some ideas include having a tea party, hunting for treasure, visiting a museum, feeding the birds, making popsicles, making a fort, and painting rocks.

*If you missed Empowered To Connect this year, we hope you can join us next year.*

*For more information go to:*

*Empowered To Connect  
[www.empoweredtoconnect.org](http://www.empoweredtoconnect.org)*

*Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development  
[www.child.tcu.edu](http://www.child.tcu.edu)*

## Creating Routines When The Kids Are Home From School

Many parents find that parenting is more challenging when children don't have a daily routine. Finding a way to create routines without creating battles can be tricky.

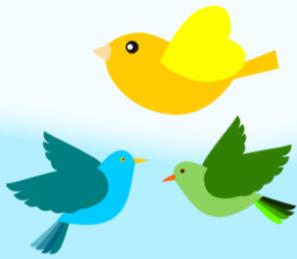
**Build events into that routine that your kids can count on.** The kids need to be able to count on some favorites that reinforce security and predictability. Schedule Family Fun Nights, picnics in the park, bike riding on Saturday afternoons or the library on Tuesday mornings. Get ideas from your kids for what they'd like to do weekly. Brainstorming with them gets children excited and involved. The added bonus is that giving them a voice will speak love to them and send the message that they can count on you to meet their needs.

Include some downtime or quiet activities. Surviving the summer with kids means healthy doses of mental and emotional downtime, even if it's "scheduled" down time! **Embrace the boredom.** Let the kids be bored now and again, it's actually good for them. Boredom can encourage imagination, resourcefulness and creativity to kick in, they might surprise themselves! Some chill out time - which may be perceived as 'boredom' - is really important for little ones (and big ones too).

Even with a plan in place there will be mishaps and upsets! Emotions, siblings bickering and push back will inevitably mean things will sometimes go awry. Don't worry, use it as an opportunity for children to learn and develop.

**Finally, use what you already know to drive it all!** You likely already know what drives your kid to succeed. You've figured out what makes your household run peacefully and your kids to grow in character. Decide now that this summer you can reinforce those things in fun ways. Look for opportunities to really make this summer break work FOR you. Offering the motivation to pursue what your child loves can also help you re-frame difficulties like sensory challenges or behavior struggles into opportunities for you and your child to taste success together. Honing in on what you know makes them feel successful is one of the keys to enjoying the summer with your kids.





# Resource Corner

We asked some of the families we have worked with, “What does PARC mean to you?”

Here are their responses

“I completed our adoptions in another state. When we moved to Michigan we did not have an adoption support system and it was very helpful to find PARC. We have only attended two events so far, but it has been very helpful to connect with other families and professional support. We appreciate PARC”

- A Lenawee County Mom

“I felt like my family was falling apart. None of my friends and family understood what I was going through and they weren’t helpful. PARC helped us to get more help for our son and we have learned how to parent differently. PARC has the best conferences and we have learned so much. Now I know that we can make it as a family and they are there to talk to when I need them.”

- A Jackson County Mom

“I was really naive going into this. The support group helps me to feel like I’m not alone and I learn so much. “

- A Washtenaw County Parent

## Introducing PARC Family and Youth Binders!

The PARC Family Binder is a collection of helpful articles that talk about common issues and themes found among adoptive parents. This binder is a tool for parents and looks to provide education to parents on topics effecting their family. Topics include general adoption information, birth parent conversations, trauma, genetics, mental health, parenting, school & education, safety, transitioning into adulthood and resources for families!

The PARC Youth Binder is a collection of articles that focus on transitioning into adulthood. This binder is aimed toward youth that are on their own or about to be out on their own. Topics include understanding their feelings about being adopted, birth family contact, higher education, “adulthood”, self-care and resources available to youth.

These binders can be personalized to fit your family



# Upcoming Events

Build connections with and get support from others who truly understand!

## Support Groups, Trainings and Events:

PARC is hosting Support Groups for both regions over Zoom. We've discovered that many parents really enjoy being able to connect and chat from their own homes. We look forward to resuming in-person activities, but we may also continue some Zoom Support Groups for those who are interested.

PARC has held Book Study Groups with recent books including *The Explosive Child* by Dr. Ross W. Greene. Parents gather on Zoom with a PARC facilitator and other parents to discuss the book as they read throughout a 4 week period. Watch for emails about upcoming book groups,

For information on support groups or book clubs,  
please contact

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Or

Region 6 Supervisor: Jonathan Albert at  
jonathon\_albert@judsoncenter.org or

810-732-8510

**PARC Trainings and Conferences have been moved to online formats as well.**

**For a complete list of events, visit the calendar page on our website. Additional activities and**



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