The Conflict Cycle

Supporting Children and Young People Emotionally to Diffuse Crisis Situations

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)
Residential Child Care Project
Cornell University, 2009
Logistics

❖ Please **display your name** (or parent of: child’s name) for attendance purposes, or send via chat to presenters.
❖ Please send **questions via chat** to presenters.
❖ Please **mute yourself** to limit background noise when not participating in breakout groups or activities.
❖ We will be **recording** this presentation.
❖ Please send us a private chat or email *if you do not consent* to this recording being shared with staff & other GC parents.
❖ Breakout groups will not be recorded.
The Four Questions

1. What am I feeling? ✓

2. What does the child feel, need, or want? ✓

3. How is the environment affecting the child? ✓

4. How do I best respond?
4. How do I best respond?

• What is the difference between *reacting* and *responding*?

• How can we increase our ability to best *respond* when faced with a crisis situation?

*take a deep breath*
A child's behavior is not always what it seems

*Behavior is communication*

What we see: Behavior

What we don't see: What's under the surface

- Social Skills
- Basic Needs
- Physical Safety
- Need to Belong
- Security
- Executive Functioning
- Environmental Stressors
- Thoughts
- Attachment
- Hunger
- Sleep
- Need for Connection
- Attention
- Sensory Needs
- Emotions
- Developmental Level
- Self-Esteem
- Anger
- Need for Attention
- Sadness
- Fear
The Conflict Cycle

• What does it mean to be “stuck in a conflict cycle”?
Breakout Session: The Conflict Cycle

• Think about some of the examples that were given in the chat tonight regarding power struggles. How does it **FEEL** when you are stuck in a power struggle with a young person?

• What are your own warning signs when you are in a power struggle or when you are escalating during a stressful situation? (write down for yourself, or share in the group if you are comfortable)

• What self-regulation skills have you used in the past to regain control of your own emotions during a stressful situation?
The Conflict Cycle
How can we break out of the conflict cycle?
The Stress Model of Crisis
Key Strategies for Avoiding and Breaking the Conflict Cycle: Positive Self-Talk

- Ask yourself the four questions!
- Silent, encouraging messages to yourself
- Take a deep breath
- Give yourself a moment to respond
Key Strategies for Avoiding and Breaking the Conflict Cycle: Listen and Validate Feelings

Child’s Behavior

- Child is yelling or talking over you
- Child is clenching their fist
- Child is crying or whining
- Child continues to try to negatively engage

Adult’s Response

- Try to wait before responding
- “It looks like you are really angry right now”
- “I can tell you are upset”
- “I know this is frustrating”
Key Strategies for Avoiding and Breaking the Conflict Cycle: Dropping the Rope

- Give child choices and TIME to decide
- Redirect child to another POSITIVE activity
- Appeal to child’s self interest
- Manage the environment

- Change or drop expectation
  - What does this sound like?
  - This is NOT admitting defeat!
  - But this CAN be a challenge for adults
Questions/Comments
Thank you!

Please complete our survey to help us improve: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GCparenttraining](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GCparenttraining)

**Parent support group** is **December 15th (6:30-7:30)**
The next parent training is **January 12th on Distress Tolerance**

Powerpoint can be found on our website (Parent Training and Support group) [https://www.greenchimneys.org/therapeutic-special-education/parents-families/tools-resources/clinical-resources/parent-training-support-groups/](https://www.greenchimneys.org/therapeutic-special-education/parents-families/tools-resources/clinical-resources/parent-training-support-groups/)