

Workshop 2: Empowering early childhood: fostering the wellbeing of children and their caregivers

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Speaker

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TRANSFORMATION of the ECI in UKRAINE



2000 year

Family-oriented \ Center-based

2013 year

Family-centered \ Center-based work + home visits
interdisciplinary team

2017 year

Family-centered \ Routine -based
transdisciplinary team

Ukrainian team of ECI trainers (2019)





Achievements before 24 Feb.2022

- ECI is in the National agenda as a one of the priority (ECI LAW in the work, Cabinet of Ministry, Office of President)
- 43 ECI service providers and a “queue” from teams who want to be trained
- Deep cooperation between professionals and Ministry of Social Policy
- Team of trainers
- Parents’ movement



"All families have some internal strength that they use for managing stress in their family system"

(Olson, 2004).

Trauma Informed Care



REALISE

the impact of
trauma on
children, families
and organisations



RECOGNISE

the signs, symptoms
and consequences
of trauma in
children, families
and pathways to
recovery



RESPOND

by integrating
knowledge about
trauma into
policies,
procedures,
approaches and
interventions



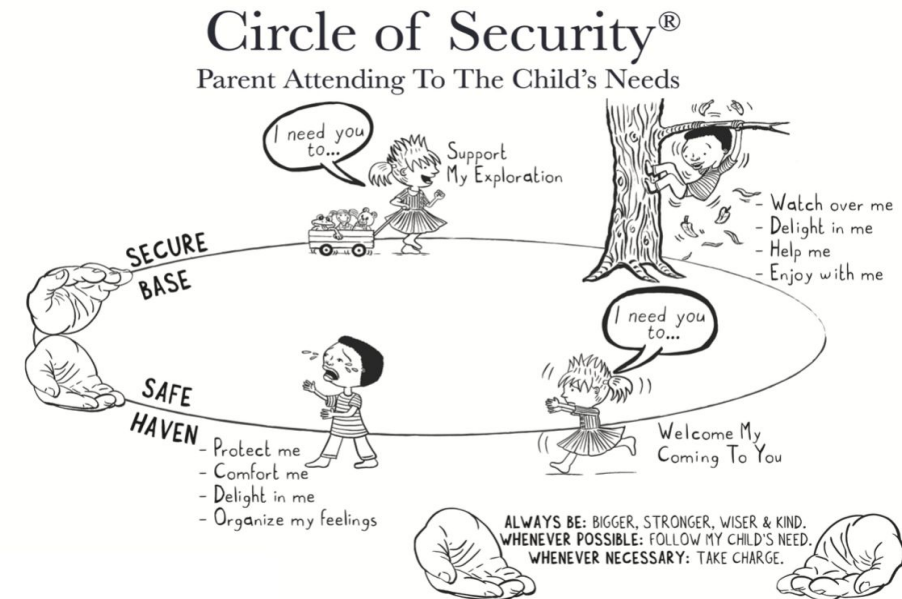
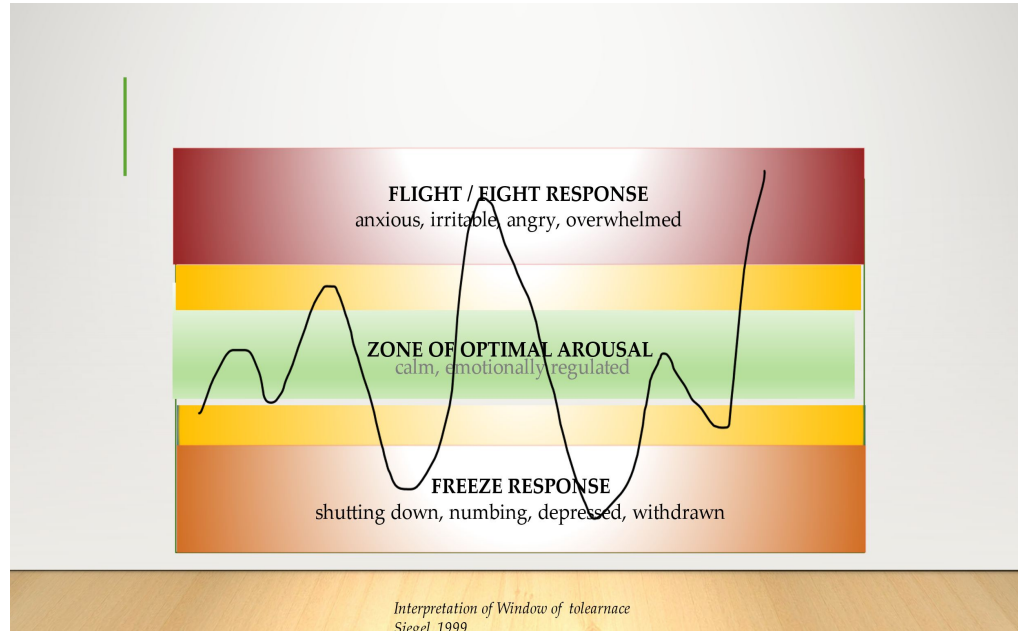
RESIST

(re)traumatisation
of children, parents
and the mental
healthcare
professional

After the TIC model of SAHMSA 2014

Infant Mental Health

Attachment and parent-child relations
 Neuroplasticity and the influence of stress
 Circle of security
 Window of tolerance





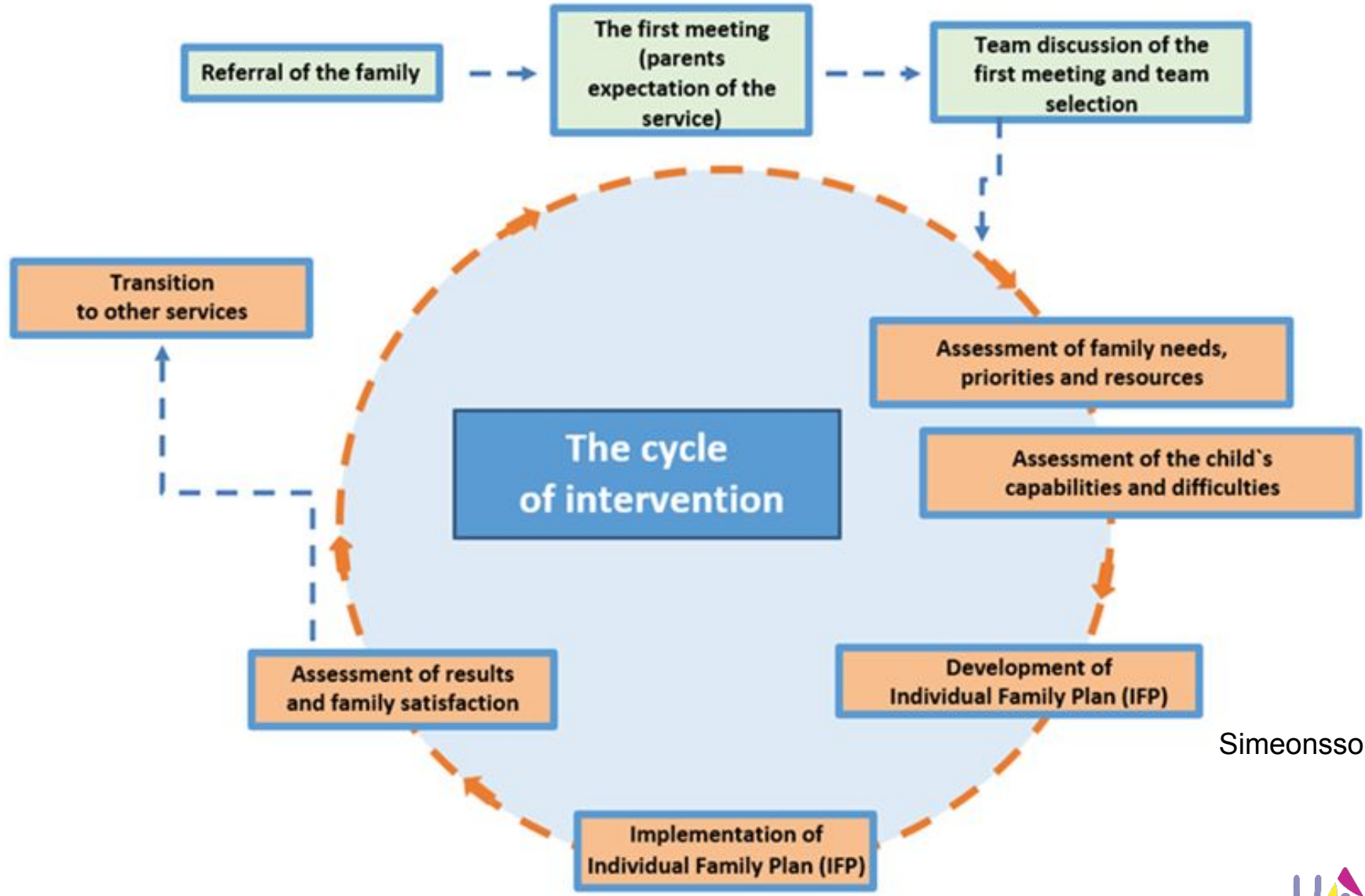
What is needed to cope with stress?

Relationship support

Predictable routines

Support and encourage participation

Tools for emotional regulation



Simeonsson, R., 2000

Difficulties

- Anxiety and fear - both parents and specialists
- Emotional state ("How am I?«, "How are you?")
- Unpredictability - what now? what tomorrow what in an hour?
- External worries (sounds for children, lack of transport, impossibility of arrival)
- Without heat and light (in winter)
- Adaptation difficulties for families raising children with developmental disabilities
- Difficulties in finding a job
- Difficulties in daily routines

Supporting parents & families

Assessment

How war affects parents, children and families?
How family members cope with it

Psychoeducation

Normalisation
Externalisation
Understanding

Trauma informed Interventions
to support parents and children

Broadening coping strategies

Changing the situation
Emotion regulation
Changing perception/belief
Seeking social support

Strengthening family resources

Mutual support
Emotional co-regulation
Clear communication
Co-constructing meaning

Activating external social support

Informational
Instrumental
Emotional

BASIC NEEDS



#ChoiceAndControl

Weekly meetings with families (online, home visits, center meetings)

Clients:

- families who remained in their region;
- families who moved to another region of Ukraine;
- families who moved to another country.

Home visits



Online meetings



Parents' support

- psychological support groups for parents;
- educational trainings for parents;
- art therapy
- holidays and rituals



“Operation of the ECI network in Ukraine during the war” (May 2022)

The **purpose of the study** was to examine the context of early childhood intervention (ECI) service during the third month after the outbreak of large-scale hostilities in Ukraine.

The objectives:

- Provide a detailed description of the situation of families and professionals three months into the war;
- Describe specific aspects of ECI service delivery at the time of the study;
- Identify the key characteristics of the ECI service that were relevant for parents at the start of the war.

Participants:

- 80 parents from different regions of Ukraine

The study was carried out by: Charity Foundation ‘Early Intervention Institute’, Kharkiv, Ukraine and Institute of Child and Adolescent Health, National Academy of Medical Sciences, Kyiv, Ukraine

In partnership with: Dzherelo Education and Rehabilitation Centre, Lviv, Ukraine, Healthy Society NGO, Odesa, Ukraine, Zakarpattia Regional Center of Comprehensive Rehabilitation ‘Path of Life’, Uzhhorod, Ukraine

With support from: Foundation Caritas, Dutch Foundation SOFT tulip, National Assembly of People with Disabilities of Ukraine, Wilde Ganzen Foundation

“Operation of the ECI network in Ukraine during the war” (May 2022)

I. The ECI service

- 1) ensured continuity and offered a broad range of support (emotional, informational and material) to families;
- 2) helped to maintain social contacts and fostered a sense of stability in a situation of dramatic changes;
- 3) responded to parents' expectations regarding the development of their children, even in the circumstances of the war, and helped to avoid regresses in children's development;
- 4) helped to maintain and increase the levels of parents' competence and self-efficacy in a situation characterized by inadequate safety, instability and a change of familiar environment

II. Parents highlighted

The most valuable aspects of ECI service

- the continuity of the ECI service,
- relationships with professionals
- professionals' qualities

III. The experience of the war brought together parents and professionals and created a new context for partnerships and for mutual support.

- ECI helped to "remain calm",
- provided "psychological support",
- "the possibility to restore psychological balance",
- "not to lose contact with reality",
- "don't get depressed", "don't go crazy",
- "keep feelings of connection with what was before the war",
- gave hope "to be even stronger, courageous",
- "to believe that everything is fine"
- the opportunity to "just be a mom with a good mood"



ECI helps "to understand how to behave in modern realities",
"find solutions in difficult situations",
"to know that I'm doing everything right",
"to see my own mistakes", "to understand that our efforts are necessary, important".



«Abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation is a normal behavior»

- Viktor Frankl, psychiatrist, psychologist, founder of logotherapy

SUPPORT OF ECI SPECIALISTS

Use of the experience accumulated during the COVID time (online work)

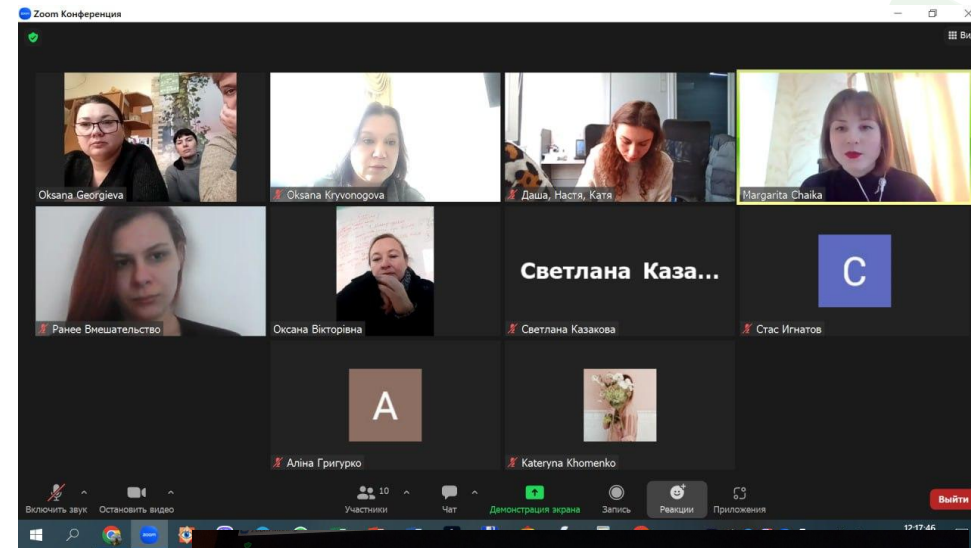
New knowledge about trauma Trainings from Amna, from ARQ foundation

Supervision from international colleagues

Weekly meetings of the ECI Ukrainian network

Service provision for families (about 700 families)

2022-2024 Trainings of the new ECI teams with support of UNICEF (Ukraine) - new ECI teams



"Families have become more open, partnerships have emerged, early intervention services are now more relevant for them than before";

"Parents feel our support and participation, and in turn now support specialists";

"In the conditions of war, I feel strong support from families";

"We support each other, the family supports me, I support them, because everyone is in equal conditions."



UAEI

UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION OF EARLY INTERVENTION



- At the moment of war, the "simple" things that are the essence and heart of early intervention have become more apparent: the importance of relationships, the power of routines, the ability to control one's life
- We are realizing the power of ECI
- We are realizing our own strength
- We are realizing the strength of the ECI team(s) and network
- We are realizing how important **for us** are the relationships with the families
- We see the future of ECI in Ukraine and a lot of work
- We continue to build a National ECI system



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