



Biennial Report

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Program Overview

The Circle of Security (COS) program, encompassing both Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) and Circle of Security Classroom (COSC), is an attachment-based education curriculum designed to enhance the quality of relationships between adults and children. The program's overarching goal is to increase the adults' capacity to provide a "secure base" from which the child can explore, and a "safe haven" to which the child can return for comfort, ultimately promoting the child's emotional well-being and development across various caregiving contexts.

CIRCLE OF SECURITY PARENTING

In 2023-2024, **at least 227 COSP programs were offered**, serving 1,083 participants across Nebraska.

CIRCLE OF SECURITY CLASSROOM

In addition to the COSP programs, Circle of Security Classroom (COSC) programming is offered to provide training to early care professionals. In 2023-2024, **at least 85 COSC programs were offered**, serving 432 early care professionals across Nebraska.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

COSP and COSC are delivered through structured, group-based sessions designed to foster relationships with secure attachments. Both COSP and COSC follow an 8-week curriculum, with each session lasting 1.5 to 2 hours, providing a consistent and supportive learning environment.

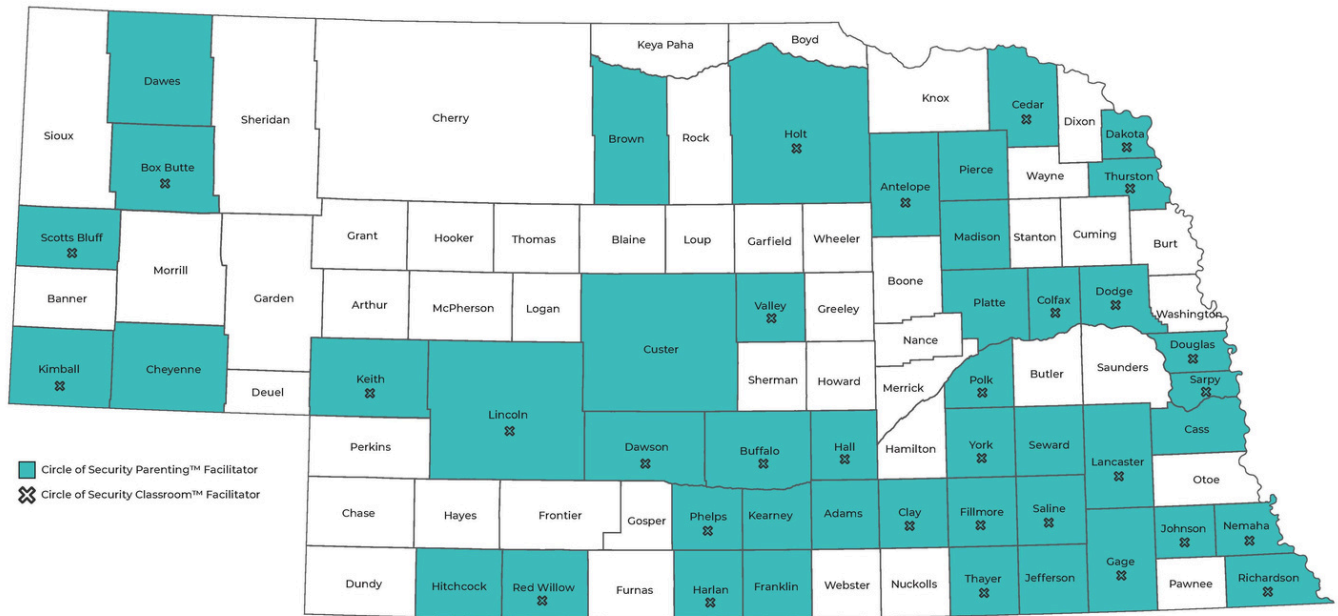
FACILITATOR SUPPORT

In Nebraska, multiple layers of support are provided for COS facilitators. Building and supporting an infrastructure that supports COS facilitators is essential to ensuring ongoing fidelity to the model and encouraging facilitators to continue offering programs. Rooted in Relationships (RiR) has offered opportunities for facilitators to participate in Fidelity Coaching and Peer Reflective Consultation as well as providing support for additional training when available. Question and answer sessions about facilitation are frequently offered, and resources are available on the state website (www.necosp.org).

"Reflective consultation has really reminded me to allow others to reflect and find ways to create goals and have productive conversations without just giving solutions to my coachees."

- A COSP Facilitator

Registered Circle of Security Parenting Facilitators



Many counties have multiple trained facilitators. Douglas, Buffalo, Lancaster, and Scotts Bluff counties have the greatest number of trained facilitators in the state. Facilitators must complete training provided by Circle of Security International in order to offer the COSP™ Program. In Nebraska there are facilitators available to offer COS in each of these languages: Arabic, Dari, Mandarin Chinese, English, Karen, Pashto, Spanish, Thai, and Vietnamese.



Program History

For the past 14 years, Circle of Security (COS) has flourished in Nebraska, driven by dedicated partnerships and strategic grant funding. Initially focused on parent/caregiver programs, Nebraska expanded its reach in 2021 with the introduction of Circle of Security Classroom (COSC). Recent years have seen significant growth in accessibility, fueled by virtual delivery options and a growing network of COS facilitators. Nebraska's commitment to evidence-based practice is evident in its participation in a research grant in partnership with Chapin Hall and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, aimed at strengthening the data supporting COS's efficacy.

A History of Circle of Security Parenting™ in Nebraska

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- A vertical timeline with colored speech bubble markers on the left and corresponding text boxes on the right. The markers are teal for 2011-13, 2020, and 2023; yellow for 2014, 2021-22; pink for 2015-16; purple for 2017; and blue for 2019.
- 2011-13** Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) programs begin taking place in Nebraska. A psychologist and other individuals in the Panhandle attend training out of state.
 - 2014** A four-day COSP facilitator training is held in Nebraska, with 114 facilitators trained. The Nebraska COSP leadership team is developed.
 - 2015-16** Rooted in Relationships (RiR) begins providing systems-level support to facilitators. Newsletters, conference calls, a state website (www.necosp.org) and evaluation materials are developed. The first Nebraska evaluation report is completed.
 - 2017** A second four-day COSP Facilitator training is held in Nebraska, with 96 facilitators trained. Peer Reflective Consultation groups begin in Nebraska.
 - 2019** DHHS streamlines a system to reimburse facilitators for court-ordered parents to participate. The process is managed by the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children (NeAEYC). COSP Facilitators are included in the Early Childhood Mental Health Community of Practice. Fidelity Coaching Support opportunities are made available in Nebraska.
 - 2020** Virtual programs are approved and materials are adapted for online use. Individuals are able to attend COSP Facilitator training online.
 - 2021-22** Circle of Security Classroom (COSC) begins. More than 30 facilitators are trained in the Classroom endorsement with grant funds and COSC programs supported. A training series is developed to support current facilitators.
 - 2023** Nebraska partners with Chapin Hall in a three-year research grant focused on the effectiveness of COS with families involved with DHHS.

Circle of Security (COS) Evaluation

Both COSP and COSC were evaluated using standardized evaluation processes. Data were submitted to Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF) or Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI) by both COS participants and facilitators.

At the end of the sessions, participants completed a pre-post retrospective survey (available in every language that facilitators utilize) that was co-developed by MMI, NCFF, and Circle of Security International. This 9-item survey asks participants to assess their parenting stress, parent-child relationship, and parenting skills. Facilitators completed a survey that describes the session logistics and provides feedback on the session and their own reflective consultation. Attendance data is submitted for each COS series.

It is important to note that the evaluation results presented in this report are not representative of all COS offerings that occurred in Nebraska. All facilitators in Nebraska are encouraged to utilize the evaluation tools so their data can be included in the statewide data pool.

This report is organized into three sections:

- ◆ Circle of Security Parenting (Traditional model)
- ◆ Circle of Security Classroom (adapted for Early Care and Education Professionals)
- ◆ Circle of Security Facilitators

Both quantitative and qualitative data are presented in each section, including participant demographics, outcomes, successes, and satisfaction with the COS model as implemented in Nebraska.



Circle of Security Parenting (COSP)



PROGRAM FORMAT

Among the 225 programs where format was specified, the majority were delivered online.



PARENTAL SUPPORTS

Of the **222** programs that reported, **78** programs provided at least one form of support (e.g., childcare, food, transportation, or incentives). The most common supports include:

- 56 programs** provided attendance incentives
- 34 programs** provided food
- 29 programs** provided childcare
- 18 programs** offered transportation support

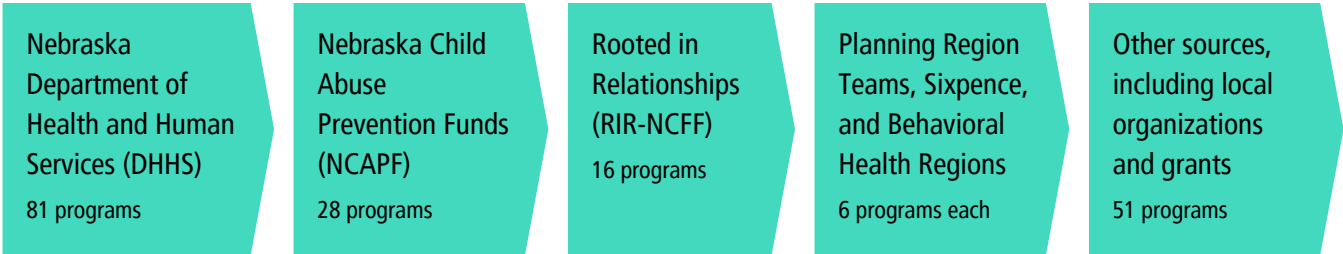
ADDITIONAL SERVICES REFERRALS

Facilitators referred **59 participants** to additional services, with some receiving multiple referrals:

- 42 participants (71.2%)** were referred to counseling
- 11 participants (18.6%)** were referred to social services (housing or food assistance)
- 4 participants (6.8%)** were referred to health services
- 3 participants (5.1%)** were referred to childcare or special education services
- 18 participants (30.5%)** were referred to other services

AGENCY/ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

A total of **204 programs** received support from various agencies and funding sources. The breakdown of key contributors includes:



Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) Demographics

During the reporting period, **791 participants** completed evaluations, providing demographic insights into those who engaged in the COSP program.

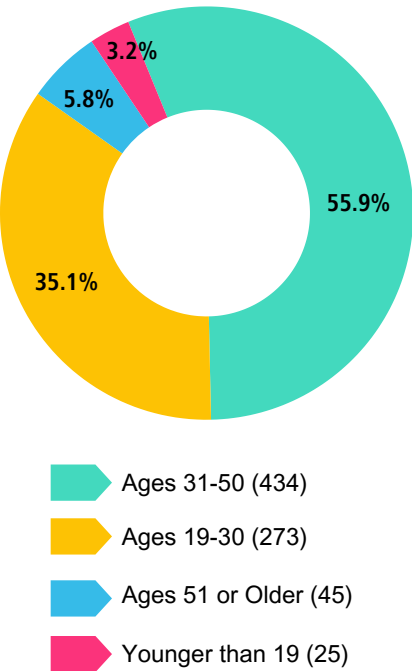
GENDER

The majority of the 779 participants who reported their gender were female.



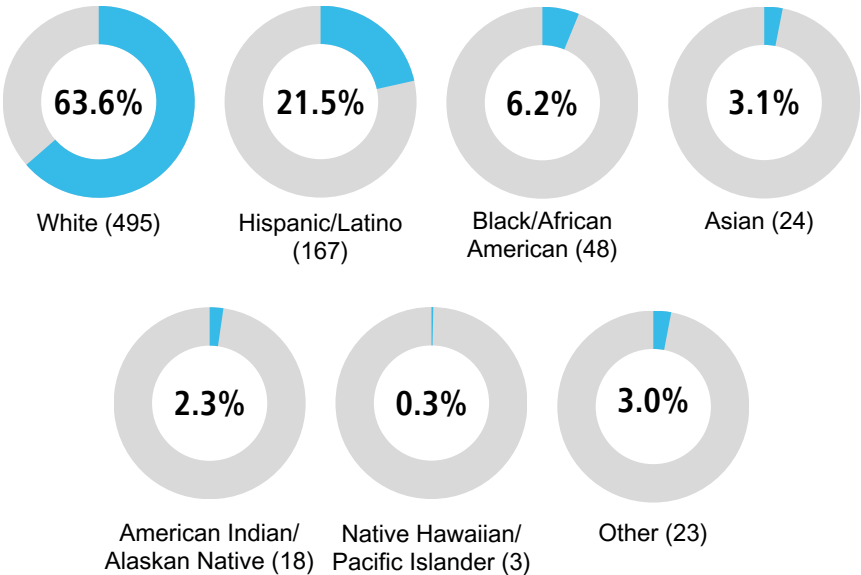
CAREGIVER AGE

Among the 777 participants who reported their age, more than 50% were ages 31-50.



RACE/ETHNICITY

Of the 778 participants who provided race/ethnicity information, 64% identified as White.



MILITARY SERVICE

Out of 780 participants who answered the question, most reported no military service.

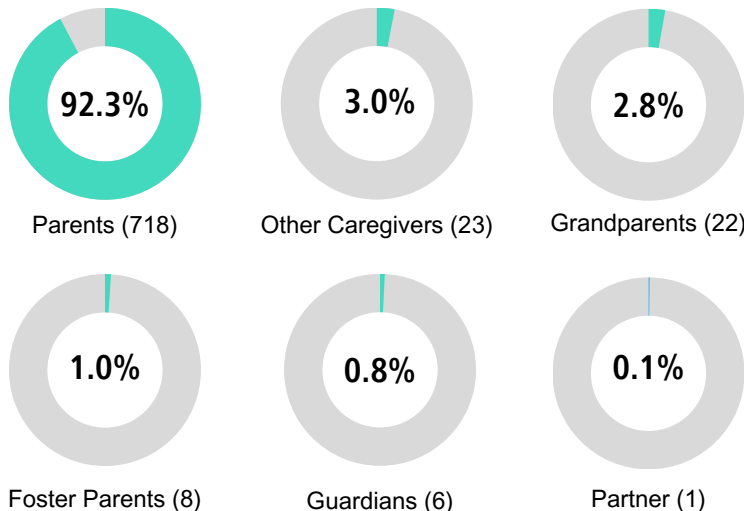
- 738 participants
No military service (94.6%)
- 42 participants
Military service (5.4%)

Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children (NeAEYC) in Lincoln coordinates most of the COSP referrals for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in Nebraska. During 2023 and 2024, **DHHS referred 741 parents**, all of whom had an open Child and Family Services (CFS) case. **Of these, 463 parents fully completed COSP.**

Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) Child Demographics

RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILD

Of 778 participants who reported their relationship to the child, most reported themselves as parents.



REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN COSP

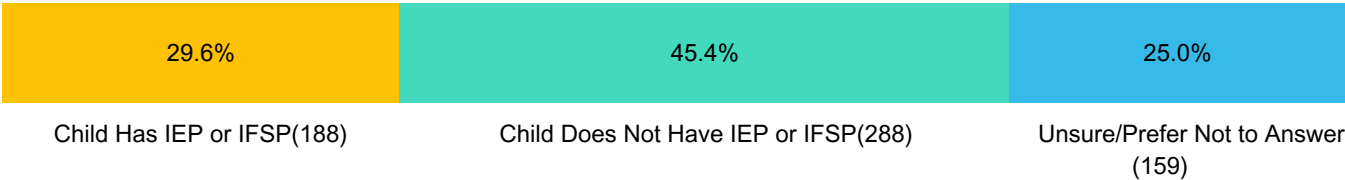
Participants (n=780) reported on how they heard about COSP. The most common sources were:



Participants joined COSP for a variety of reasons. Many reported that they wanted to improve their parenting skills, learn how to be a better parent, improve relationships with their children, and gain a better understanding of their children. Others reported that the COSP programs were either recommended by a caseworker or court ordered. Some participants joined COSP because it was provided or recommended by their workplace.

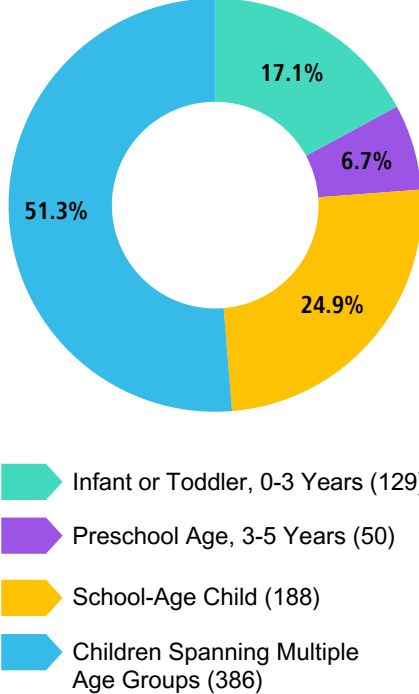
CHILD'S INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN (IFSP) OR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) STATUS

Out of the 635 participants who responded:



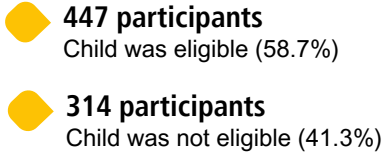
AGE OF CHILDREN SERVED

Of the 753 participants who provided their child's age:



ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH OR TITLE XX (CHILD CARE SUBSIDY)

Out of 761 participants who answered this question, the majority had children who were eligible for assistance.



Participant Satisfaction and Experience with COSP

Participants provided feedback on their experience with COSP groups, including the value of group meetings, facilitator effectiveness, and their sense of respect and inclusion.

HELPFULNESS OF GROUP MEETINGS

Among the 789 participants who responded:

- 701 (88.9%) agreed or strongly agreed that meeting with a group of parents was helpful
- 50 (6.3%) were neutral
- 38 (4.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

FACILITATOR EFFECTIVENESS

Of 789 participants who provided feedback on the leader's work with their group:

- 751 (95.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that the leader did a good job
- 6 (0.8%) were neutral
- 32 (4.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed

FEELING RESPECTED AND VALUED

Out of 758 participants who responded:

- 725 (95.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that they felt respected and valued
- 5 (0.7%) were neutral
- 28 (3.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed

WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS TELL US ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE?

Overall, participants had positive things to say about their experience with COSP. Participants reported the programs were “very helpful,” and that they “learned a lot.” Many participants provided positive feedback about their facilitators, saying that facilitators were “very knowledgeable,” “very relatable and very kind,” and “very informative and mind opening.” Other feedback included:

“It was such a great class that reminded me of important parenting strategies, reaffirmed what I was doing well, and gave me the tools to strengthen my relationships with my children.”

“I learned that the circle applies to every relationship not just parent and child. It helped me make sense of my childhood more.”

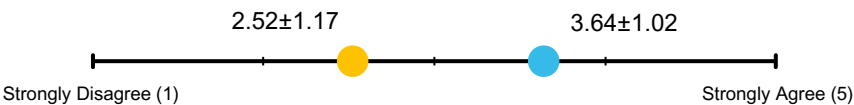
COSP Participant Outcomes

Parents were asked to describe their level of agreement with a series of statements before their attendance and after completion of the Circle of Security-Parenting program. Agreement was measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).

A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test* of paired samples was conducted for the effective sample size to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between pre- and post-program scores. The results revealed a significant difference between the scores before and after the training in all seven areas of outcomes.

LEVEL OF PARENT STRESS

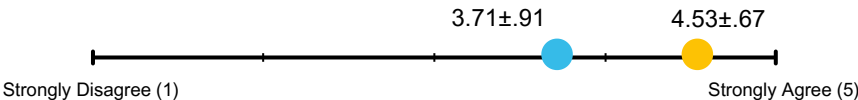
The observed decrease in the mean scores from before and after the training suggests a meaningful improvement in parent stress levels.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant decrease** in scores, $z(786) = 16.23, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.57$), suggesting a large meaningful improvement.

POSITIVE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

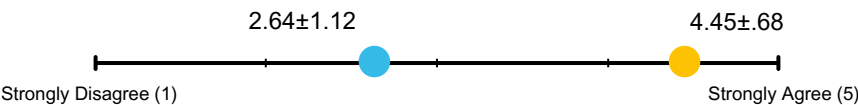
An increase in the agreement mean scores before and after the training suggests a meaningful improvement in positive parent-child relationship.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(788) = 18.72, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.67$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE NEGATIVE RESPONSE BEHAVIOR

The observed increase in the mean scores from pre to post suggests a meaningful improvement in parents' ability to recognize negative response behavior to their children.



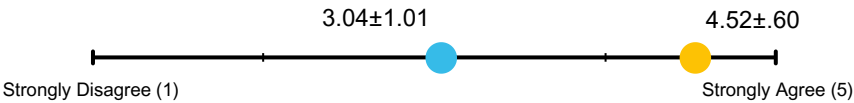
The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(788) = 21.88, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.78$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

● Pre-Assessment ● Post-Assessment

* Survey items results include high levels of "ties." In a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, a tie occurs when the difference between pre- and post-test scores is zero (i.e., no change). A high number of ties can reduce the test's power, making interpretation more challenging. While a significant result, as seen in the survey items, still indicates a meaningful difference, a high number of ties may suggest a smaller effect size. Interpretation should consider the context and potential limitations.

ABILITY TO IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO CHILD NEED

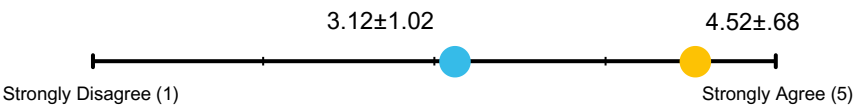
The observed increase in the mean scores of the outcome before and after the training suggests a meaningful improvement in parents' ability to identify and respond to their child's need.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(789) = 22.02, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.78$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

ABILITY TO REPAIR RELATIONSHIP

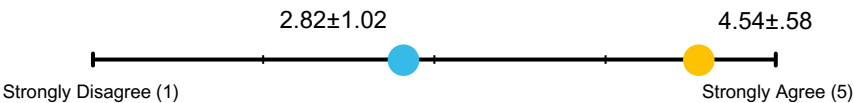
The increase in the agreement mean score from pre to post suggests a meaningful improvement in parents' ability to find ways to repair the relationship with their children after they fail to respond to the child's need.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $t(786) = 21.36, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.76$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

ABILITY TO STEP BACK AND THINK

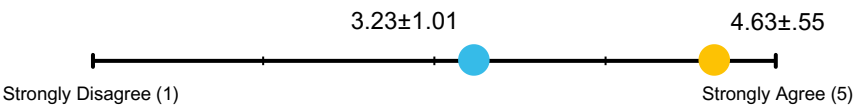
The observed increase in the mean scores of the outcome before and after the training suggests a meaningful improvement in parents' ability to react to a behavior by stepping back and processing how the child's behavior communicates their needs.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(787) = 22.89, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.81$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

CONFIDENCE IN MEETING CHILD'S NEEDS

The increase in the mean score from before training to after suggests a meaningful improvement in parents' confidence in their ability to meet their children's need.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase in scores**, $z(788) = 22.17, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.78$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

● Pre-Assessment ● Post-Assessment

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Circle of Security Classroom (COSC)



PROGRAM FORMAT

Among the 84 programs where format was specified, the majority were delivered online.



PARENTAL SUPPORTS

Of the **84** programs that reported, **59** programs provided at least one form of support (e.g., childcare, food, transportation, or incentives). The most common supports include:

- 56 programs provided attendance incentives
- 17 programs provided food
- 5 programs provided childcare
- 1 program offered transportation support)

ADDITIONAL SERVICES REFERRALS

Facilitators referred **12 participants** to additional services, with some receiving multiple referrals:

- 6 participants (50.0%) were referred to counseling
- 1 participant (8.3%) was referred to childcare
- 1 participant (8.3%) was referred to special education services
- 6 participants (50.0%) were referred to other services

AGENCY/ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

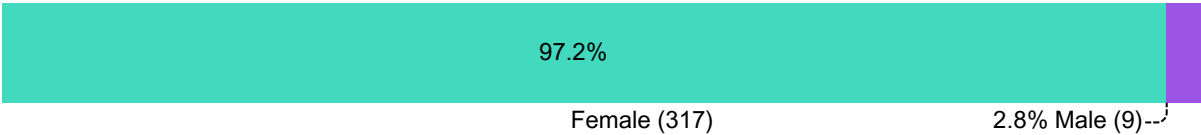
A total of **70 programs** received support from various agencies and funding sources. COSC program funding is secured through a range of organizations and initiatives, including Rooted in Relationships and Sixpence (Nebraska Children and Families Foundation), Early Learning Connection Coordinators, the Preschool Development Grant, and other various local grant opportunities.

Circle of Security Classroom (COSC) Demographics

During the reporting period, **333 participants** completed evaluations, providing demographic insights into those who engaged in the COSC program.

GENDER

The majority of the 326 participants who responded identified as female



CLASSROOM AGE RANGE

The 331 respondents reported working with the following age groups:

- Infants 45.9% (152)
- Toddlers 54.4% (180)
- Preschool 65.0% (215)
- Grades K-2 26.0% (86)
- Grades 3-6 16.0% (53)

Many participants reported working with a combination of infant, toddler, preschool, and/or elementary-aged children

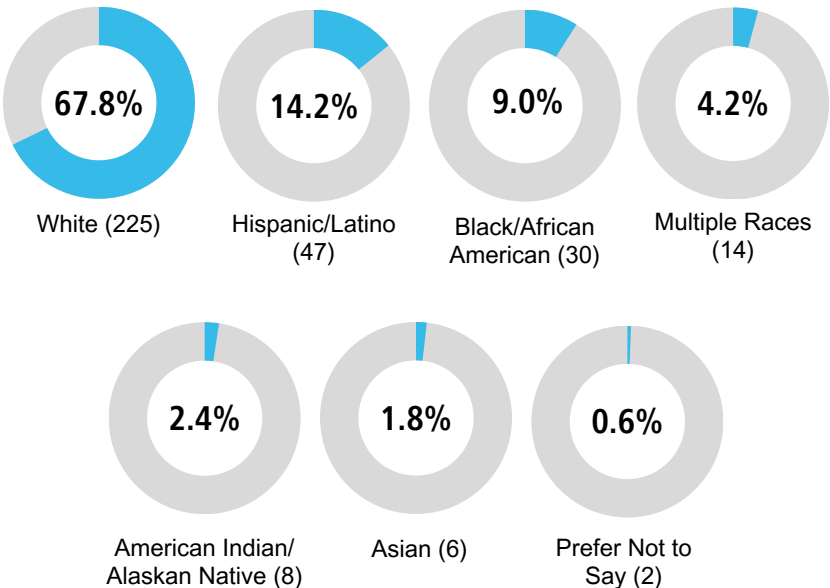
ROLES OF PARTICIPANTS

Among 222 respondents, roles included:

- 47.7% **Childcare Providers**
106 participants
- 12.2% **Preschool Teachers**
27 participants
- 9.0% **Paraeducators**
20 participants
- 3.6% **Early Childhood Coaches**
8 participants
- 1.4% **K-12 Teachers**
3 participants
- 0.9% **Early Intervention Providers**
2 participants
- 25.2% **Other Roles or Multiple Roles**
56 participants

RACE/ETHNICITY

Of the 332 participants who provided race/ethnicity information, 68% identified as White.



REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING

Participants (n=361) reported on how they heard about COSC. The majority of participants heard about COSC from **another childcare provider** (36.6%) or **school** (21.3%). 16.1% heard about COSC from a **friend**, followed by **therapists** (1.9%). Less than 7% of participants heard about COSC from the court system or print/social media. Some participants selected **multiple** options.

Participants joined COSC for a variety of reasons. Many reported that they wanted to learn how to better help, communicate with, and serve the children in their care. Several reported the stipend of \$300 was extremely appreciated.

Participant Satisfaction and Experience with COSC

Participants provided feedback on their experience with COSC. Survey responses indicate high levels of satisfaction with peer interactions, facilitator effectiveness, and participant respect.

HELPFULNESS OF GROUP MEETINGS

Among the 331 participants who responded:

- ◆ **308** (93.1%) agreed or strongly agreed that meeting with a group of parents was helpful
- ◆ **11** (3.3%) were neutral
- ◆ **12** (3.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

FACILITATOR EFFECTIVENESS

Among the 330 participants who responded:

- ◆ **315** (95.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that the leader did a good job
- ◆ **4** (1.2%) were neutral
- ◆ **11** (3.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed

FEELING RESPECTED AND VALUED

Out of 331 participants who responded:

- ◆ **316** (95.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that they felt respected and valued
- ◆ **9** (2.7%) were neutral
- ◆ **6** (1.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed

WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS TELL US ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE?

Overall, participants felt their experiences in the COSC trainings were “excellent,” “supportive,” “encouraging,” “helpful,” “interesting,” and “informative.” Other feedback included:

“It was one of the most eye-opening trainings I’ve ever been a part of”

“I love to understand the circle. Now I can clearly identify the circle in almost all activities of the kiddos.”

“I would love to see more classroom setting training videos with providers and multiple children’s individual circles.”



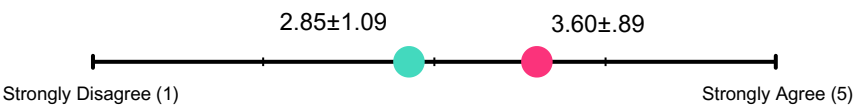
COSC Participant Outcomes

Teachers were asked to describe their level of agreement with a series of statements before their attendance and after completion of the Circle of Security-Parenting program. Agreement was measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).

A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test* of paired samples was conducted for the effective sample size to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between pre- and post-program scores. The results revealed a significant difference between the scores before and after the training in all seven areas of outcomes.

HIGH LEVEL OF TEACHER STRESS

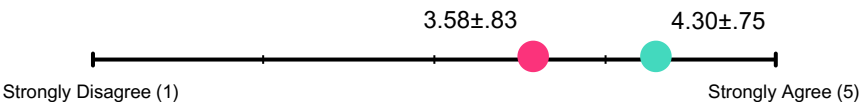
A decrease in the mean scores from before to after COSC training suggests a meaningful improvement in teacher stress levels.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant decrease** in scores, $z(330) = 8.82, p < .001$. The effect size was moderate ($d = 0.48$), suggesting a medium meaningful improvement.

POSITIVE TEACHER-PARENT RELATIONSHIP

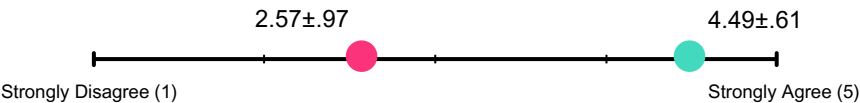
An increase in the mean scores of the outcome before and after the training suggests a meaningful improvement in positive teacher-parent relationship.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(330) = 11.43, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.62$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE NEGATIVE RESPONSE BEHAVIOR

The observed increase in the mean scores from pre to post suggests a meaningful improvement in teachers' ability to recognize negative response behavior to children in their care.



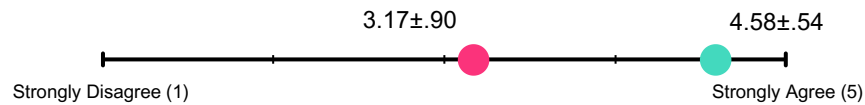
The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(330) = 14.94, p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.82$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

● Pre-Assessment ● Post-Assessment

* Survey items results include high levels of "ties." In a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, a tie occurs when the difference between pre- and post-test scores is zero (i.e., no change). A high number of ties can reduce the test's power, making interpretation more challenging. While a significant result, as seen in the survey items, still indicates a meaningful difference, a high number of ties may suggest a smaller effect size. Interpretation should consider the context and potential limitations.

ABILITY TO IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO CHILD NEED

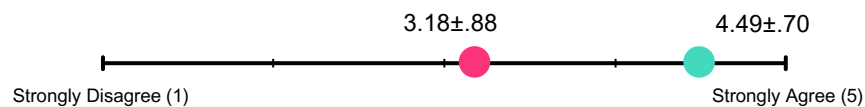
The observed increase in the mean scores of the outcome before and after the training suggests a meaningful improvement in teachers' ability to identify and respond to the needs of children.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(330) = 14.97$, $p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.82$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

ABILITY TO REPAIR RELATIONSHIP

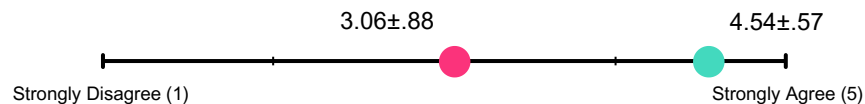
The increase in the agreement mean score from pre to post suggests a meaningful improvement in teachers' ability to look for ways to repair their relationship with a child when they fail to respond to the child's need



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(331) = 14.28$, $p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.76$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

ABILITY TO STEP BACK AND THINK

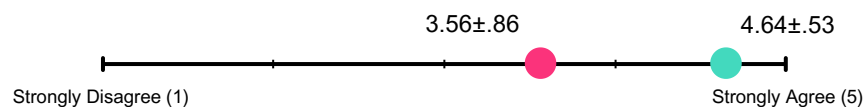
The observed increase in the mean scores of the outcome before and after the training suggests a meaningful improvement in teachers' ability to react to a behavior by stepping back and thinking about what the behavior communicates about the child's needs.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase** in scores, $z(331) = 15.19$, $p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.83$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

CONFIDENCE IN MEETING CHILD'S NEEDS

The increase in the mean score from before training to after suggests a meaningful improvement in teachers' confidence that they can meet the need of children in their care.



The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a **statistically significant increase in scores**, $z(331) = 14.05$, $p < .001$. The effect size was large ($d = 0.77$), suggesting a meaningful improvement.

● Pre-Assessment ● Post-Assessment

* Survey items results include high levels of "ties." In a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, a tie occurs when the difference between pre- and post-test scores is zero (i.e., no change). A high number of ties can reduce the test's power, making interpretation more challenging. While a significant result, as seen in the survey items, still indicates a meaningful difference, a high number of ties may suggest a smaller effect size. Interpretation should consider the context and potential limitations.

COS Facilitators

WHAT DID COS FACILITATORS TELL US ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE?

Overwhelmingly, facilitators had positive experiences facilitating the COSP and COSC programs. Many stated how much they enjoyed facilitating the programs and working with the parents and providers. Facilitators were encouraged by seeing participants grow throughout the program. One facilitator stated: *“It was great and participants seemed to walk away with a great understanding of COSP.”*

Another facilitator reflected on their experiences leading the program: *“It was so gratifying and rewarding to lead this group. I could sense the cohesiveness of the participants due to the flow of the material. I could feel the level of commitment they had for this class.”* Another facilitator noted that they enjoyed teaching the COSP™ programs and learned immensely *“from their common experience of trying to apply the Circle when they were sharing custody and managing their children's distress at difficult divorces and parental discontent.”*

Some facilitators stated that certain programs they taught were a struggle for them, mostly due to group dynamics, low participation, and little engagement during the programs. Overall, however, it was an enjoyable experience for the facilitators leading the programs. One of them stated: *“I had so much fun, even if challenging at times, facilitating this group! It was great to hear the wonderful feedback both during the group and afterwards and I am excited to lead it again!”*

A PARENT SUCCESS STORY

“The group had an ‘ah-ha’ moment when talking about shark music. It started with them noticing the parents’ shark music when dropping off and picking up their children, and the providers were able to recognize how the parent’s shark music effected their children’s behaviors and miscuing. Then, with reflective questioning, the providers were able to tap into their own shark music of feeling guilty that even though they are home with their children, they do not get to spend the quality amount of time with them due to them caring for other children in the home. The group gained more empathy for the parents and how they are the hands for both parents and children.”

— A COSP facilitator

CHALLENGES

Facilitators were asked to describe any challenges or suggestions for improving COSP programs. Most responses were positive (e.g., *“It was great and participants seemed to walk away with a great understanding of COSP.”*). However, a few challenges and opportunities for improvement did emerge that are summarized in the following:



In addition, some facilitators of the COSC series commented that the videos were more geared towards parenting, and sometimes did not easily translate to a classroom setting. As a result, sometimes classroom teachers had trouble connecting with the COSP material.

Support for COS Facilitators

12

Facilitators participated in fidelity coaching

43

Facilitators participated in peer reflective consultation

18

Facilitators engaged in additional support opportunities

FACILITATOR SUPPORT AND TRAINING

Nebraska's Circle of Security facilitators receive multiple levels of support to maintain fidelity to the model.

FIDELITY COACHING

The purpose of Fidelity Coaching is to assist each facilitator to deepen their understanding of the COSP model as they practice implementing the model; help to deliver the model with fidelity; and to enhance each facilitator's capacity to support stressed parents to think in new ways about themselves and their relationships with their children.

The Fidelity Coaching structure is designed as a 9-week intervention consisting of 90-minute sessions each week with a Circle of Security International trained Fidelity coach. This is a prescriptive process which involves reflection using a Fidelity Journal that highlights topics specific to the COSP process and at the same time helps shape the facilitator's awareness of their "shark music" and its roots. Upon completion of the two sessions of Fidelity Coaching they will receive a COSP Facilitator II endorsement by Circle of Security International.

FIDELITY COACHING IMPACT

Facilitator Confidence Growth: Pre/Post assessments show a 42% increase in facilitators' confidence in implementing COSP.

Stress Reduction: Participants reported a 35% reduction in stress levels related to facilitation.



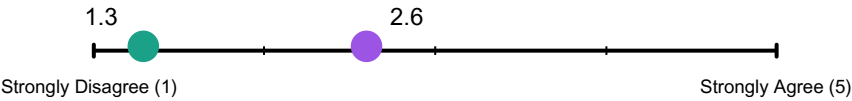
"It was very helpful to take the fidelity training at the same time as facilitating the class. I always learn from the group and it helps to feel more confident in facilitating."

- A COSP Facilitator

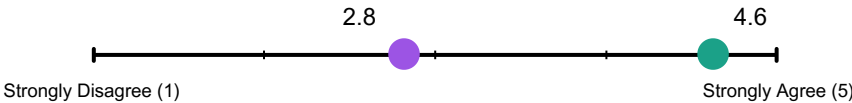
COACHING OUTCOMES

During this past two years, 4 sessions of Fidelity Coaching were offered, and 12 facilitators participated in Fidelity Coaching (3 completed more than one round). A retrospective pre/post survey was completed by the facilitators to determine the degree that Fidelity Coaching supported building their capacity as facilitators. Respondents (n=10) reported improvements in all outcome measures from pre- to post-participation in Fidelity Coaching.

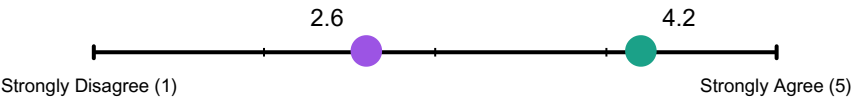
My level of stress about facilitating COS-P is high.



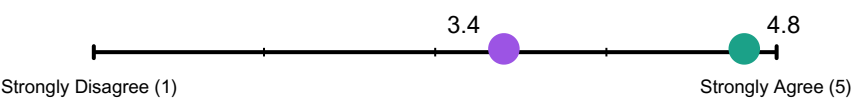
I recognize parallel processes across relationships and use what I am observing to explore relationship needs.



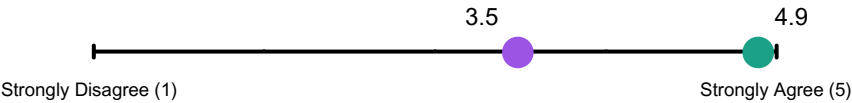
I recognize the behaviors that trigger my negative response to parents.



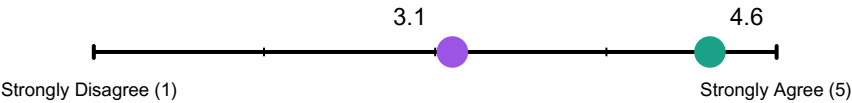
I identify and respond to parent's needs for support to explore and for comfort and contact.



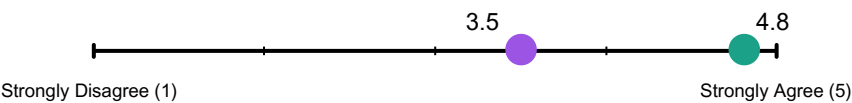
When I fail to respond to a parent's need, I look for a way to repair our relationship.



I step back and think about what a parent's behavior is telling me about his/her needs before I react.



I feel confident that I can be with and meet the needs of parents in my group.



● Pre-Assessment ● Post-Assessment n=10

PEER REFLECTIVE CONSULTATION

All COS facilitators were provided the opportunity to participate in peer reflective consultation via video conference. During the past two years, RiR supported four different consultants to offer reflective consultation opportunities. Consultation sessions were two times per month throughout the year and facilitators were able to participate as available. Facilitators were asked at the completion of the last COS session to complete a brief facilitator survey to share their experiences. 43 facilitators reported that they participated in peer reflective consultation.

Facilitators were asked to evaluate their experience with peer reflective consultation at the end of each session. Overwhelmingly, the responses to this survey were very positive. All facilitators (n=43) reported that peer reflective consultation helped them reflect on their experience as a COS facilitator, positively impacted their capacity as a facilitator and being in the group was beneficial to them.

ABILITY TO REFLECT ON EXPERIENCE

Regarding opportunities to reflect on their experiences as COSP Facilitators:

◆ **43** (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to reflect while engaged in Reflective Consultation

IMPACT ON CAPACITY OF FACILITATORS

Regarding the groups' impact on participant' capacity as COSP Facilitators:

◆ **43** (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that participating in Reflective Consulting groups had a positive impact

BENEFIT OF PARTICIPATING IN REFLECTIVE CONSULTATION GROUPS

Regarding whether groups were helpful to them in their roles as COSP Facilitators:

◆ **43** (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that participating in Reflective Consultation groups was beneficial

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

Other support opportunities provided included:

- ▶ A training to support facilitators working with parents involved with DHHS was offered twice.
- ▶ Monthly Q and A calls were held as an “open office” opportunity for facilitators to ask questions. A representative from RiR, NeAEYC, and technical website assistant were typically on.
- ▶ In December 2024, online, self-paced training through Circle of Security International was supported for 18 facilitators to enhance their skills in working with caregivers. COSP facilitators completed a google form in the weeks prior to show their interest in completing one of three trainings options. Facilitators from across the state were selected and chose to enroll in one of the following training courses: Bigger, Stronger, Wiser, and Kind Facilitator, COS Classroom Tier 1, or Shark Music and Core Sensitivities.

“I just wanted to let you know that I completed my Bigger Stronger, Wiser Kind Facilitator course today. I want to thank Rooted in Relationships for this professional development opportunity. This course will be so helpful in all the programs I teach and in my reflective practice consultation. Thank you again for sponsoring the training.”

- A COSP Facilitator

Evaluation Summary

The Circle of Security (COS) program, supported by the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, is a vital, research-backed initiative aimed at strengthening secure attachment relationships between children and their caregivers. Grounded in attachment theory, the program equips parents, caregivers, and educators with the tools to support children's emotional and social well-being. This program is especially crucial in fostering emotional resilience, reducing parenting stress, and enhancing the overall well-being of children and families. With its structured, evidence-based curriculum, COS promotes secure attachment and long-term positive developmental outcomes.

PROGRAM REACH AND IMPACT

In this reporting period, Circle of Security (COS) was provided through two key programs:

COSP (Parenting Program):

In 2023-2024, 227 programs supported 1,083 parents statewide.

COSC (Classroom Program): In 2023-2024, 85 programs trained 432 early care professionals to enhance child support in educational settings.

PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION & EXPERIENCE

COSP Satisfaction Overview

- 88.9% found meeting with other parents helpful.
- 95.2% rated facilitators as effective.
- 95.6% felt respected and valued.

COSC Satisfaction Overview

- 93.1% found peer discussions valuable.
- 95.5% rated facilitators as effective.
- 95.5% felt respected and valued.

EVALUATION RESULTS & KEY FINDINGS

A pre-post retrospective survey revealed significant improvements among participants. The program effectively reduced parenting stress, boosting confidence in caregiving. It strengthened parent-child and teacher-student relationships by helping caregivers and educators better understand children's emotional needs and behavioral cues. Participants also enhanced their ability to recognize and respond to distress, fostering emotional security in children. Additionally, they gained greater confidence in repairing relationships, ensuring they could positively reconnect with children after challenges.

REFLECTIVE CONSULTATION: STRENGTHENING FACILITATOR EFFECTIVENESS

An essential component of COS's success is Reflective Consultation, which provides ongoing professional support, problem-solving strategies, and stress management techniques for facilitators. Most participants found Reflective Consultation highly beneficial, enhancing their problem-solving skills, stress management, and confidence in collaborating with colleagues.



PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION

The majority of COSP parents and COSC teachers found group meetings highly beneficial, felt respected and valued, and reported that the program transformed their approach to parenting and professional caregiving.

COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS YEARS

Compared to the 2021-2022 report, participation in COSP increased by 40.65%, with 313 more parents completing the program. Similarly, COSC saw a 43.05% increase, reaching 130 more early care professionals. Referrals, calculated by using the number of participants increased by 8%, suggesting a strong facilitator engagement in connecting families with additional support services. Fidelity Coaching participation remained steady at 12 facilitators, reflecting a continued focus on training quality.

CONCLUSION: THE IMPORTANCE OF CIRCLE OF SECURITY

The COS program is not just another parenting or educator course, it is a transformative approach to caregiving that fosters emotional intelligence, security, and trust in children. Research has long confirmed that secure attachment is a predictor of positive mental health, academic success, and healthy relationships later in life. By participating in COS, parents and educators lay the foundation for a child's emotional and social well-being, preventing behavioral issues and strengthening long-term resilience.

The Circle of Security program is a cornerstone in building emotionally secure families and communities. It goes beyond traditional parenting or teaching models by fostering deep, lasting changes in adult-child relationships. The evaluation findings shared in this report underscore the program's proven effectiveness and ongoing commitment to enhancing child well-being. As the COS program continues to expand, its positive impact on families, educators, and communities will shape future generations, creating a positive influence on emotional security and healthy relationships.



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