

# Where We Begin: Harnessing Relationships to Foster Collaboration

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**Safe Babies**  
A Program of ZERO TO THREE





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# As The Doers... Holding These Assumptions In Mind



Adults were once children too.

This work is hard and can evoke powerful emotions.

An important part of our jobs is to be in relationships with others.

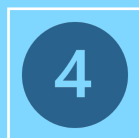
We are all doing the best we can.



# 4 – 7 – 8 Breathing



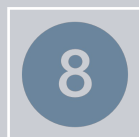
Empty the lungs of air.



Breathe in quietly through the nose for 4 seconds.

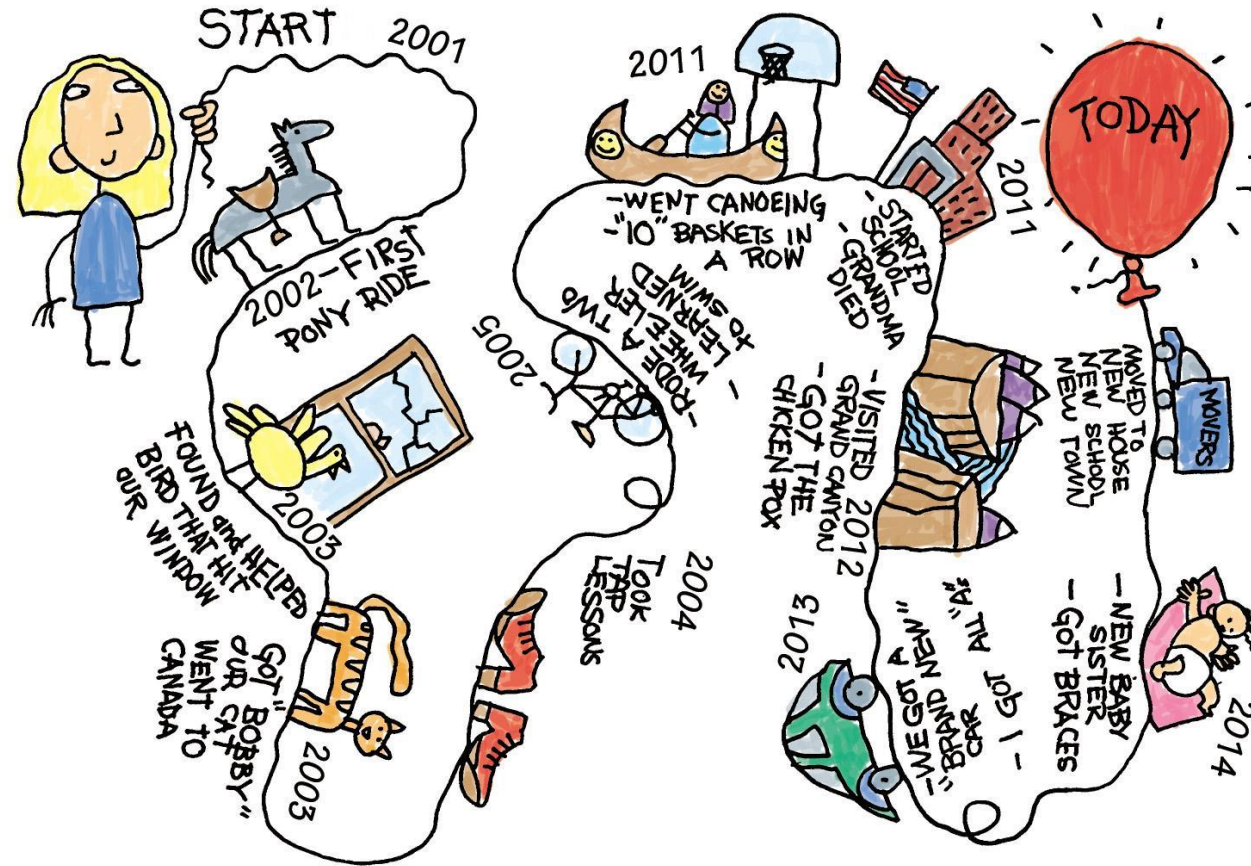


Hold the breath for a count of 7 seconds.

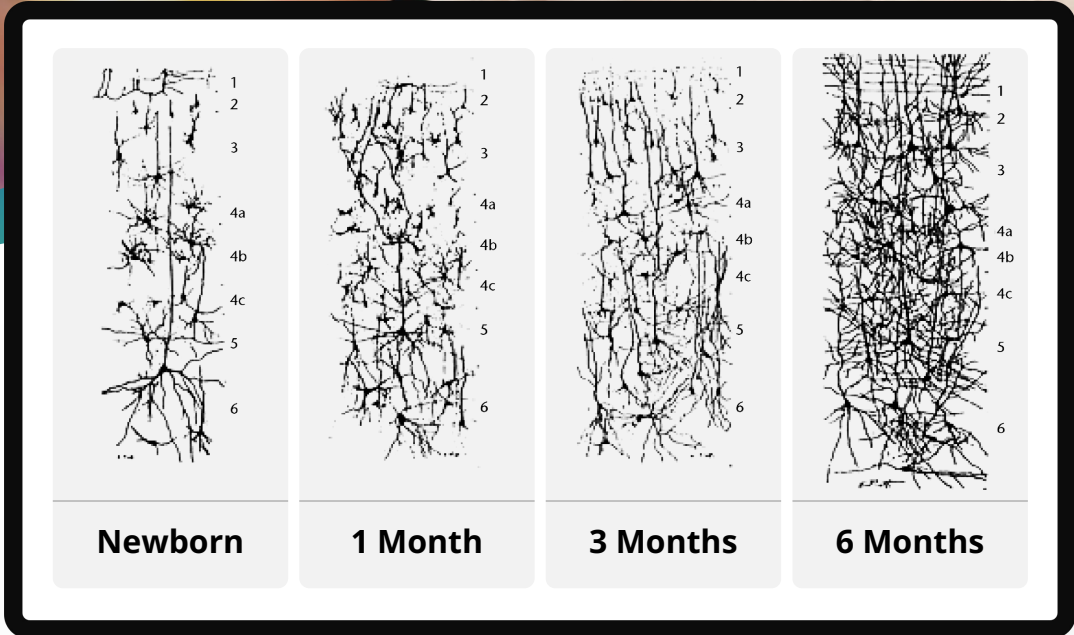


Exhale forcefully through the mouth, pursing the lips and making a “whoosh” sound, for 8 seconds.

# Mapping Your Journey







In a child's early years, every second counts—

**1 million new connections are made every second!**



During these first three formative years, **emotionally nourishing relationships** lay the foundation for lifelong health and well-being.



# Supporting Brain Development With the 5 R's

Responsive  
Interactions

Respect

Routines

Relationships

Repetition





# Random Room Warmers



Q: What completely safe animal are you inexplicably afraid of?

# Checking in...

- What is the current atmosphere around partnering with parents?
- What challenges do you see to developing relationships with parents and caregivers?
- Are there untapped opportunities to connect parents utilizing natural resources and/or supports?







# Our Challenge as Professionals

- ✓ Beliefs and Bias
- ✓ Family Engagement
- ✓ Access to Resources  
(traditional and unique)





Image: Pixabay

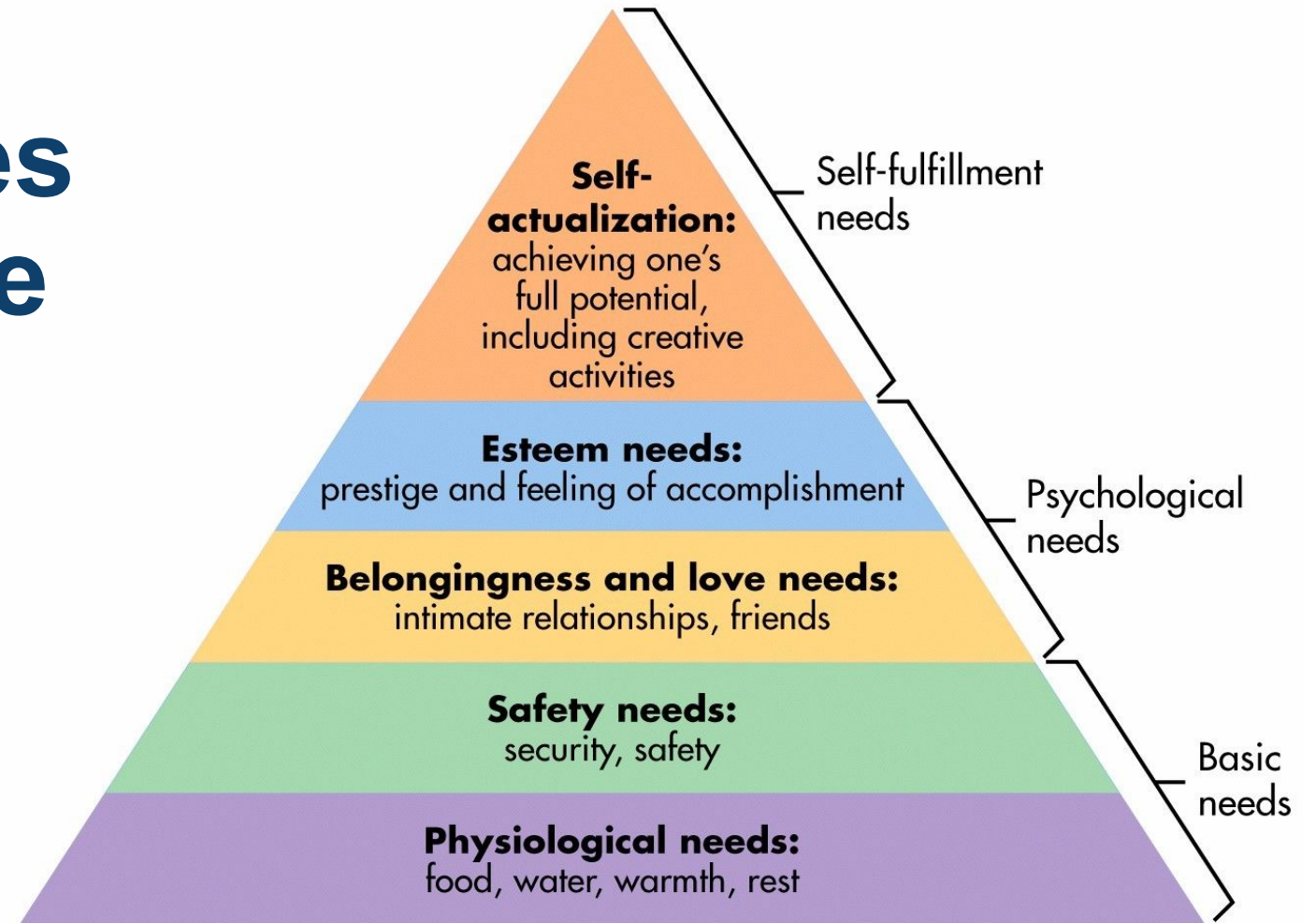
***... People don't like to do what we believe we are bad at...***

Where do you focus more of your energy when working with families?

- Mastery or Competence
- Autonomy vs Choice
- Passion or Purpose
- Readiness or Empathy



# Meeting Families Where They Are



# Your Connection... *Incorporating Cultural Humility*

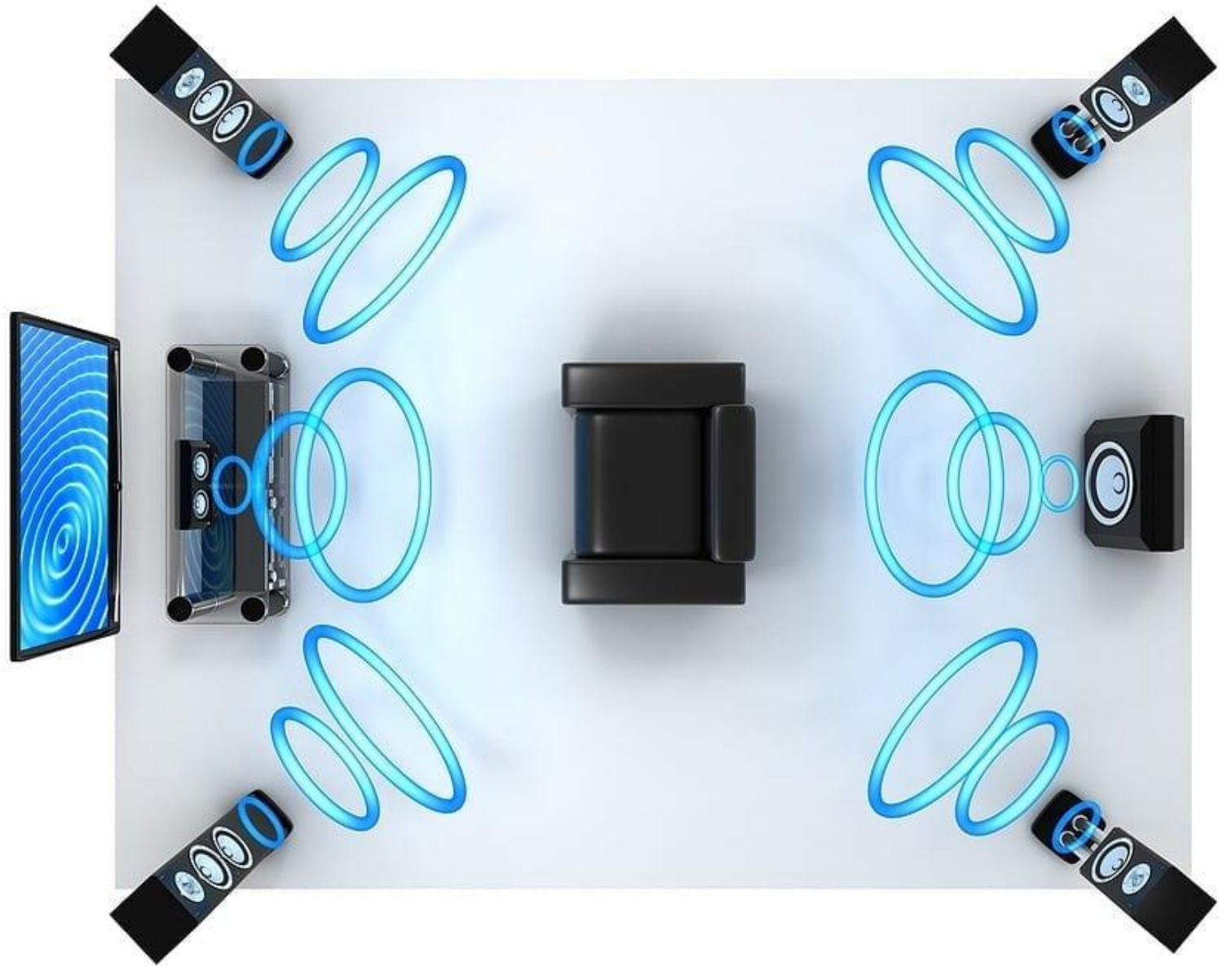


# Curiosity to Guide Early Engagement

- What is my initial reaction?
- What are my thoughts/feelings?
- With whom do I identify?
- Does this situation remind me of a situation in my life?
- Am I having especially strong feelings in this situation?
- Do I act/feel differently with this family than I generally do?
- What am I taking for granted?
- What are my cultural biases?
- What more do I need to know?
- How might my presence impact their normal interactions?



# Surround Sound







## Switching Hats and Switching Views



1. On one side of your hat – write what you believe the family needs (from their perspective).
2. On the other side of the hat – write down what you know your agency hopes to see happen with this family.
3. What ideas come to mind for increasing engagement this family?
4. What challenges do you face in providing support for this family?
5. Who could you partner with? Does anyone else need to be involved?

# Coming Back Together



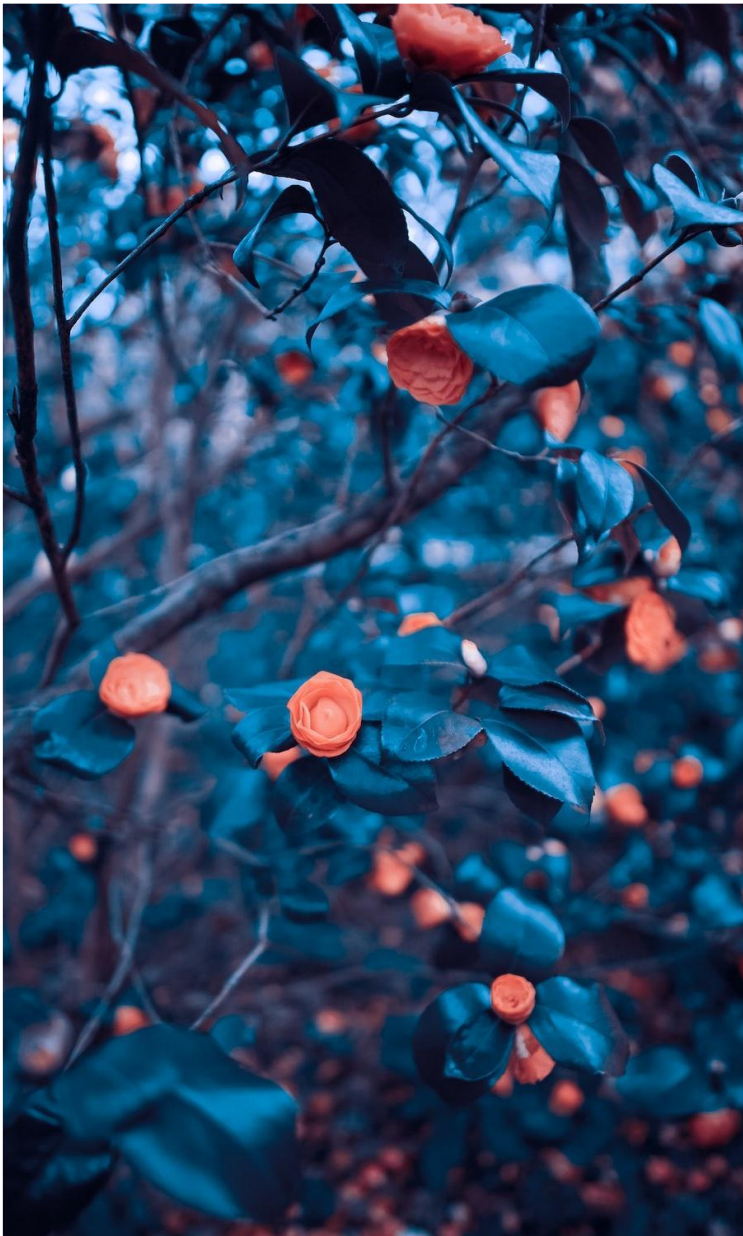


# Random Room Warmer



Q: If you were invisible for a day, what would you do?

# Key Ingredients that Strengthen Collaborative Impact





# Being Ready When Families Reach Out...

- ✓ Resource Availability
- ✓ Resource Accessibility
- ✓ Provider Familiarity and/or Knowledge



# Scouting Universal Services to Build Partnerships

- ✓ Place-based, centrally located in the communities where families live, ensuring easy accessibility
- ✓ Align with community values, norms, and culture
- ✓ Offered by a public, nonprofit, faith-based or private provider, that may receive funding from the state or county child protection agency but operates independently of government
- ✓ Available to anyone that lives in the community, not just to families deemed to be at risk and are offered in normalized, non-stigmatizing ways
- ✓ Focus on enhancing parental protective factors
- ✓ Include concrete supports (limited financial, food, and housing assistance; legal services; respite, or childcare), clinical services, and peer mentoring or support services and activities





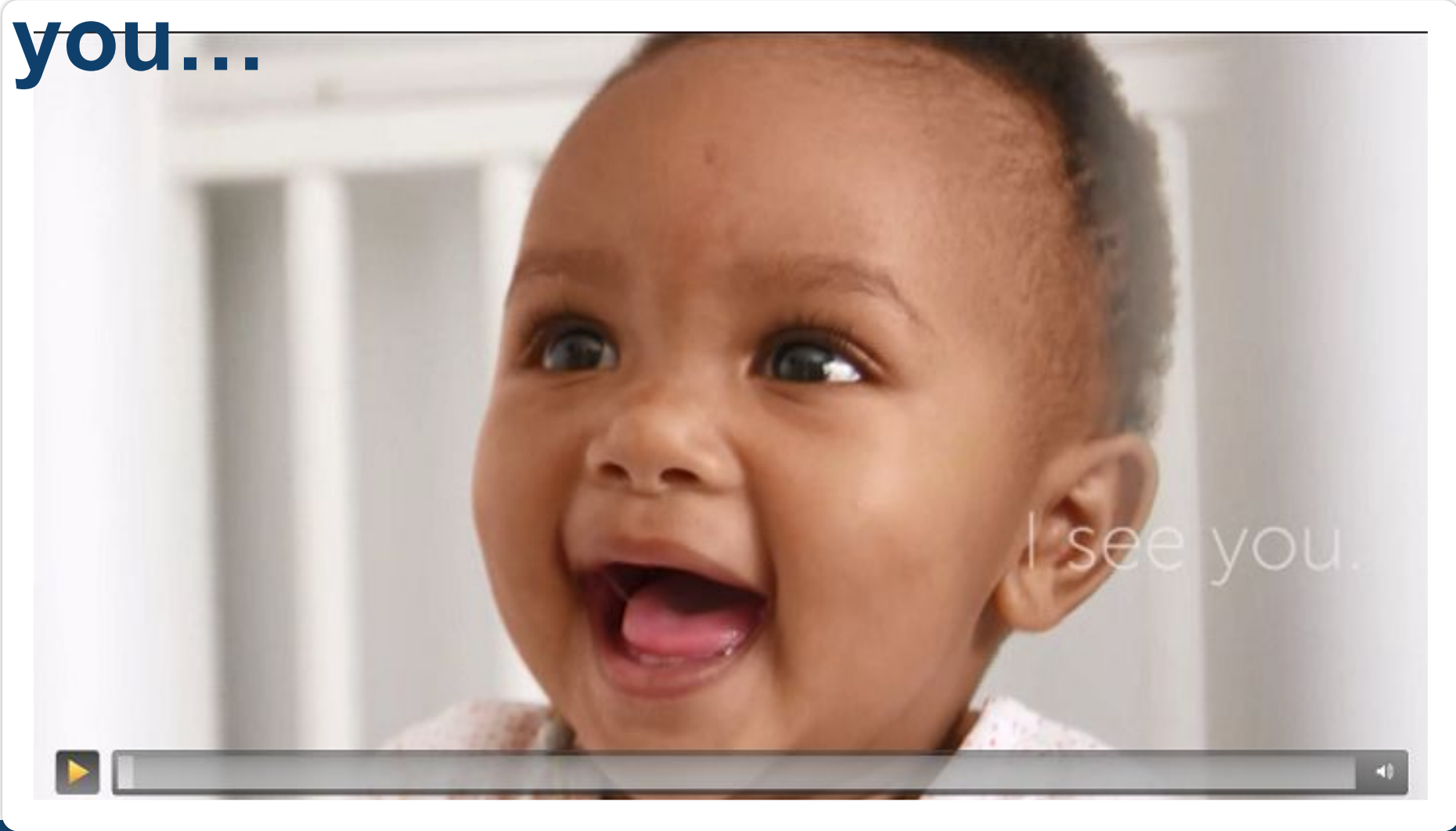
- How you are is as important as what you do.
- Hold people up. Believe in them when the parent doesn't yet believe in him/herself. See them as parents and not problems.
- Recognize your own triggers and areas of vulnerability. Know when you're feeling burned out.
- People don't always receive messages the way we think they will. How do you share information in ways that will be perceived by parents as respectful?

Please hold in  
mind...



# Because it doesn't happen without

you...



# References and Resources

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- Accelerating Child Health Transformation - [Child Health Transformation Resource Center](#)
- Understanding the History of Race in Health and Other Systems: Center for the Study of Social Policy/ ITCP - [Health Equity Learning Series- Center for the Study of Social Policy\\_ITCP](#)
- Maternal and Child Health Journal (December 2023) - [Maternal and Child Health Journal | Volume 27, Issue 1 supplement \(springer.com\)](#)