

# The Culture of Fatherhood:

## Relationships, Rituals, and Return on Investments

**Nicholas Kasovac**, MSOT, OTR/L, IMH-E

**The DAD Projects**

**Kids At Play Therapy**



# Land Acknowledgement

**"I acknowledge and honor that we are on the unceded ancestral territory of the Northwest Tribes. Even today the tribes continue to fight for their rights to exist throughout their traditional homelands. I express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to ancestors past, present elders, and future generations of these people that are still here continuing to persevere, illuminate, and share their ancient heritage."**

# Objectives

- ▶ Relationships
- ▶ Ritual
- ▶ Return on Investment
  
- ▶ Learn
- ▶ Share
- ▶ Integrate

*From <https://wafatherhoodcouncil.org/washington-interagency-fatherhood-council>*

# The Culture of Fatherhood

**culture** - "...the shared set of (implicit and explicit) values, ideas, concepts, and rules of behaviour that allow a social group to function and perpetuate itself. Rather than simply the presence or absence of a particular attribute..... [culture] is understood as the dynamic and evolving socially constructed reality that exists in the minds of social group members

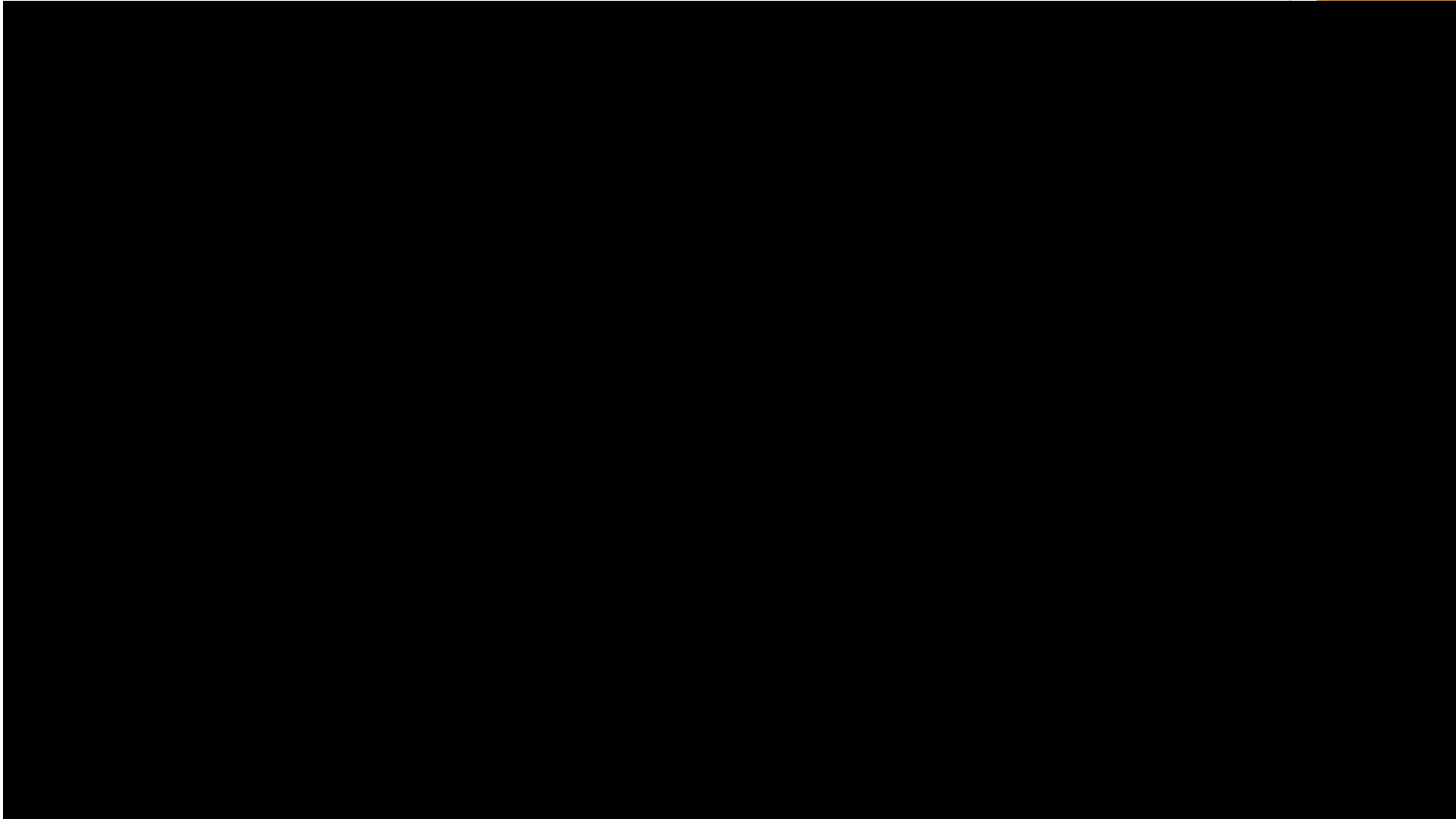
<http://intqhc.oxfordjournals.org/content/16/5/345.full>

**cultural knowledge** - information, skills, attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, values, and other mental components of culture that people socially learn during enculturation.

**cultural relativism** - understanding the ways of other cultures and not judging these practices according to one's own cultural ways.

<http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/anth370/gloss.html>

“I’m gonna be a Dad!”



# Fatherhood is a *Meaningful* Occupation

- ▶ “Occupation” refers to activities, roles, and rituals that occupy an individual’s time that has necessity and/or meaning for them
- ▶ Historical Influences (“Ghosts In the Nursery” – Selma Freiberg)
- ▶ Cultural Influences (Religious, Ethnic, Familial, Communal)
- ▶ This role is in the context of a “relationship”
- ▶ Relationship is “meaningful” for both father and infant – it’s dynamic

# When the Father-Infant Relationship is disrupted.....

## Occupational Deprivation

“A state of preclusion from engagement in occupations of necessity and/or meaning due to factors that stand outside the immediate control of the individual.” (Whiteford, 2000, p. 201)

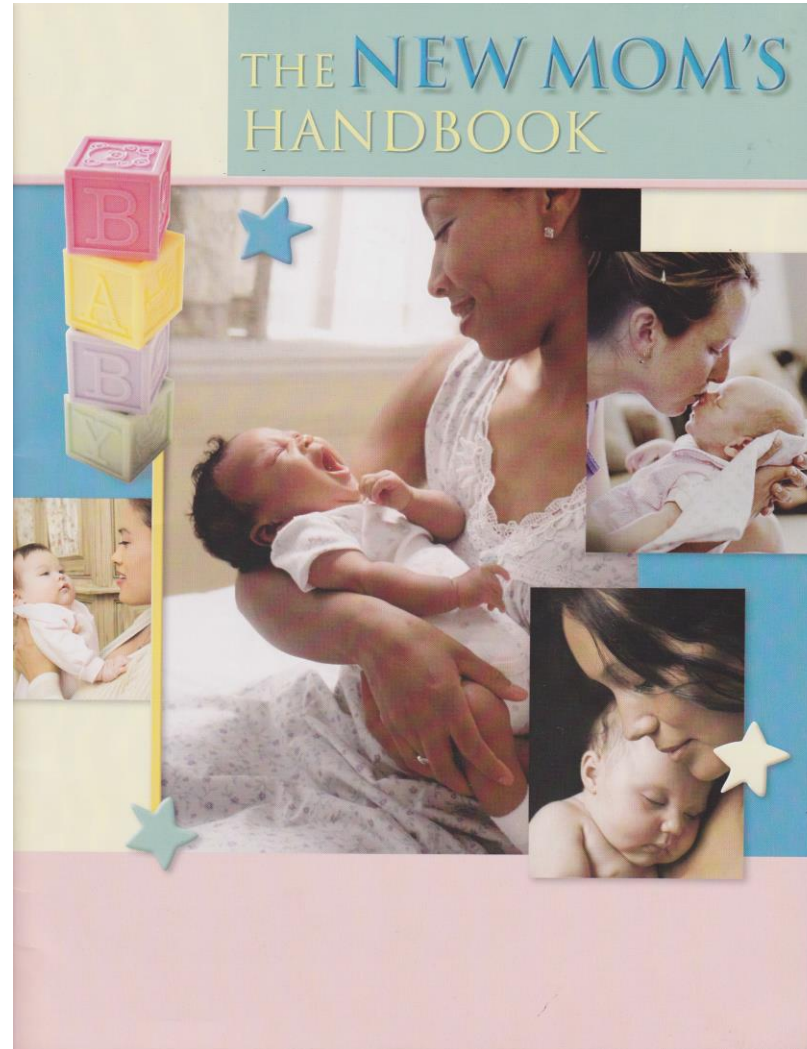
# Birthing Class

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.multicare.org/womens-care-pregnancy-classes/>. The page features a navigation menu on the left with links for 'Urogynecology', 'Other Specialty Care', and 'Girl Stuff Guidebooks'. A blue button at the top reads 'Register for Classes or Tours'. Below this is the 'List of Classes' section, which includes a blue header for the '5-Week Childbirth Series'. The text describes the class as comprehensive, covering pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care, and offers non-medication pain relief techniques. The cost is listed as '\$105 or Provider One Card'. A blue button for 'Register for 5-Week Childbirth Series' is circled in red. Below the button, a note states: 'Please call 253-697-5300 if using Provider One Card to register.' and 'With all class registrations, a birth partner can attend at no additional charge and the partner's information is entered when mom registers.' A '2-Day Class' section is partially visible at the bottom.

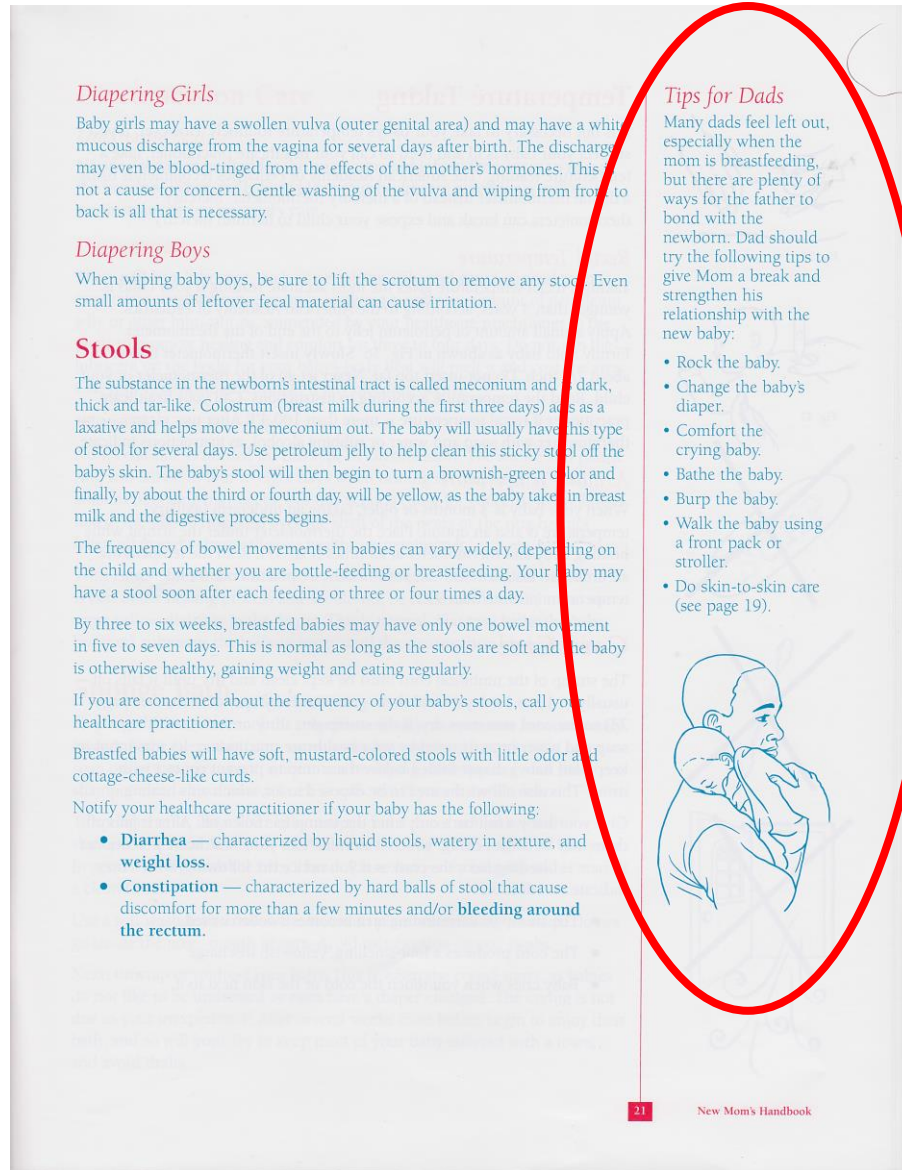
*“With all class registrations, a birth partner can attend at no additional charge and the partner’s information is entered when mom registers.”*



# “New Mom Handbook”



# Where's the Father???

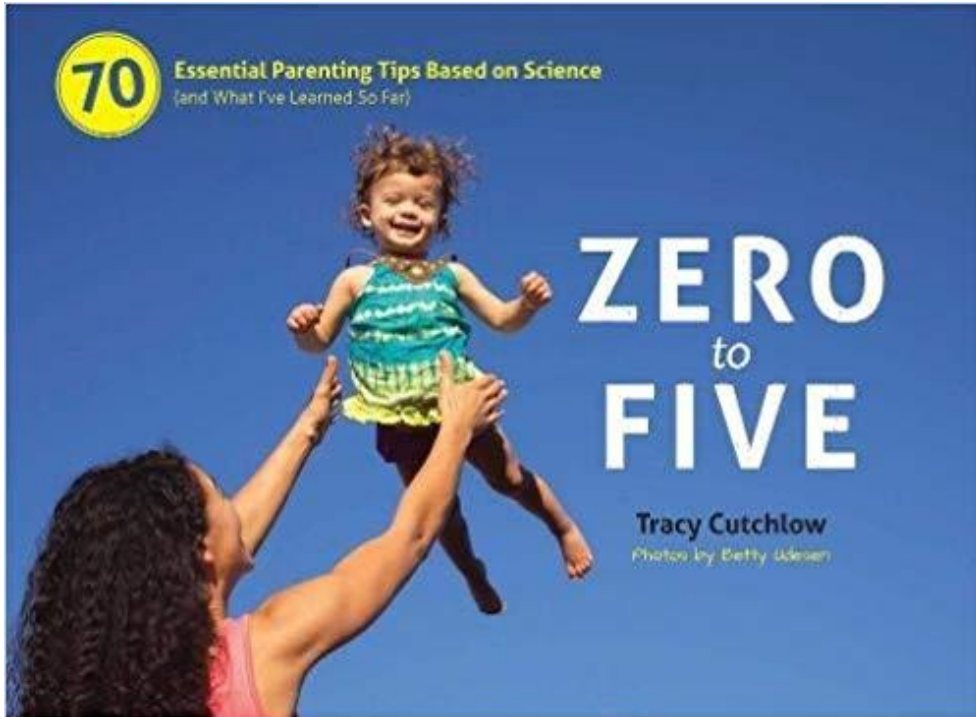


Not on the cover.....

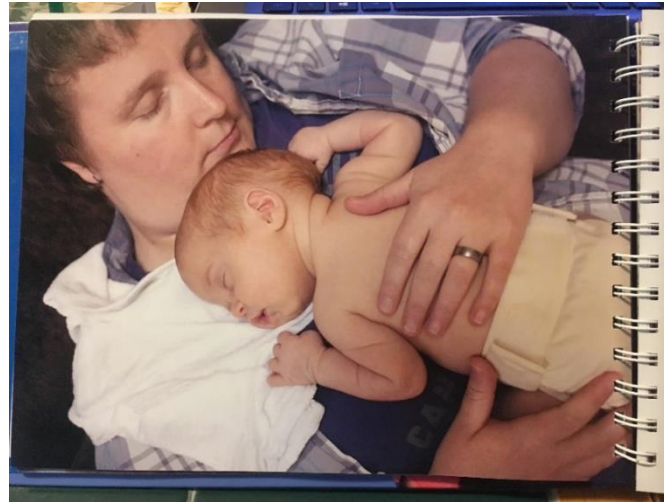
Not in the Table of Contents...

Page 21 -

Only in the “margin” (out of 36 pages)



Page 18  
Chores – first pic of Dad



Page 32  
First pic with Dad & Infant

# Examples of “Potential” Father Exclusion/Father-Infant Disruption

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prenatal</li><li>• Labor &amp; Delivery</li><li>• Couplet Care/Postpartum</li><li>• Breastfeeding Support</li><li>• Postpartum Follow Up</li><li>• Infant/Parent/Family Research</li><li>• Professional Articles/Research</li><li>• Pediatrics</li><li>• Early Childhood Organizations</li><li>• Programs</li><li>• Agencies</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policies</li><li>• Peers</li><li>• Work</li><li>• Government (DHS, DES, DCYF, Courts)</li><li>• Maternal Gatekeeping</li><li>• Grandmothers</li><li>• Refusal of Visitation (especially Teens)</li><li>• Artwork/Photography</li><li>• Print Media</li><li>• Social Media</li></ul> |
|--|---|

# Father's brain is sensitive to childcare experiences

## PC Fathers' Brains changed because of "primary caregiving"

“Primary-caregiving fathers exhibited high amygdala activation similar to primary-caregiving mothers, alongside high activation of superior temporal sulcus (STS) comparable to secondary-caregiving fathers, and functional connectivity between amygdala and STS. *Among all fathers, time spent in direct childcare was linked with the degree of amygdala-STS connectivity.*” (Abraham et al, 2014)

# Relationships – Rituals - ROIs

- ▶ Caring for his infant/child is what builds the relationship...
- ▶ Nurturing Care establishes routines that become rituals.....
- ▶ The time spent engaging in rituals that are consistent, predictable, and reliable yields a return on investment (ROI) that will last a lifetime....with compound interest

What do you notice?

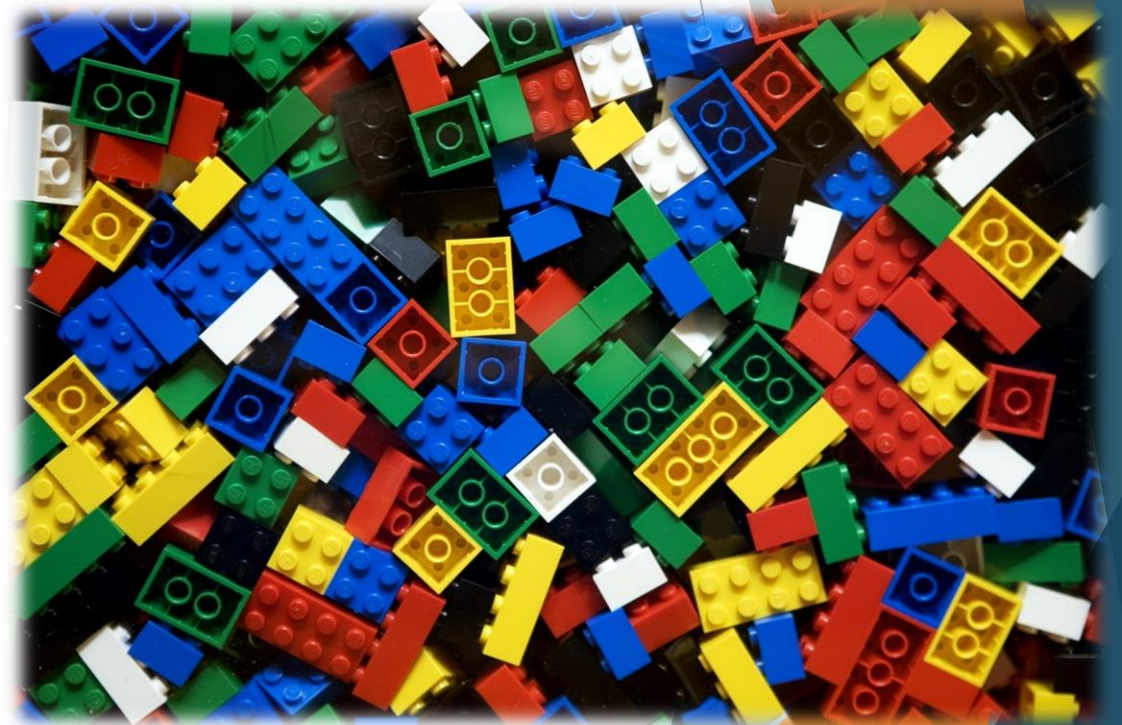


# The Lego® Principle

*“Why is Lego® the most ingenious toy in the world?”*

*~ Sophie’s World ~ by Jostein Gaarder*

- ▶ Easy to assemble
- ▶ All pieces fit together despite different sizes
- ▶ Unbreakable and still look new
- ▶ Construct any object
- ▶ Deconstruct and reconstruct with same pieces







## More Lego® Principle

### ▶ ***What is the most important characteristic of Lego®?***

~ Nicholas Kasovac ~

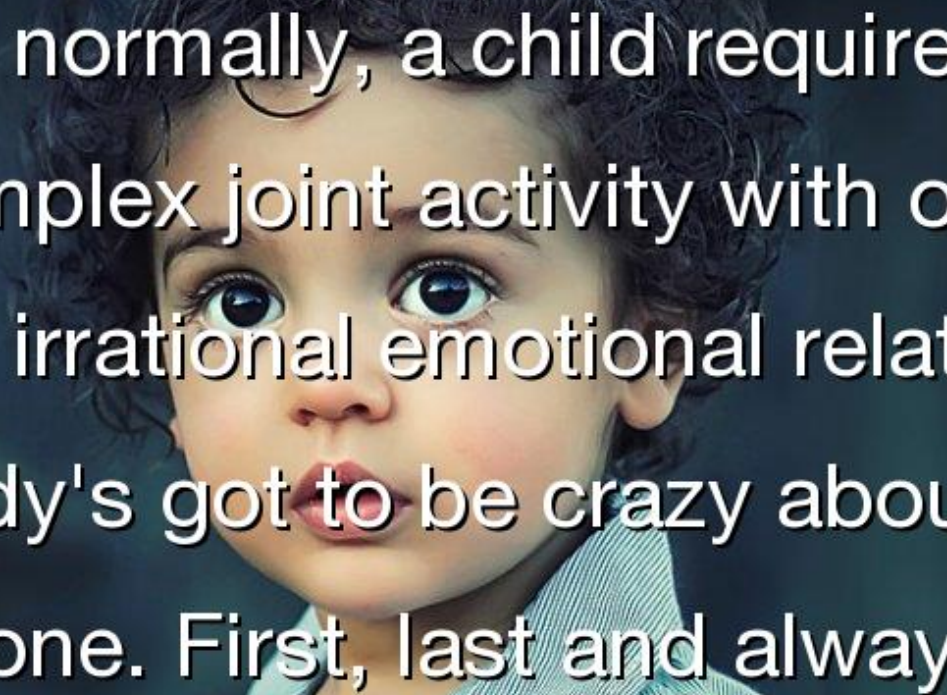
- *The “connection” between the pieces....*

*.....otherwise, they are useless and cannot achieve any of the above.*

- ▶ It is the same as with your child – the “connection” is the most important thing.
- ▶ “Every time you see a Lego® toy, think about the connection with your child.”

# Relationship/Connection is Most Important!

- ❖ It underlies all the developmental domains  
(social/emotional, language, gross motor, fine motor, cognitive)
- ❖ It's the precursor to Life Course Health Development – Physical & Mental (ACEs)
- ❖ It's the most important factor in developing resiliency as a “skill”
- ❖ It will be the basis for every relationship for the child's entire life

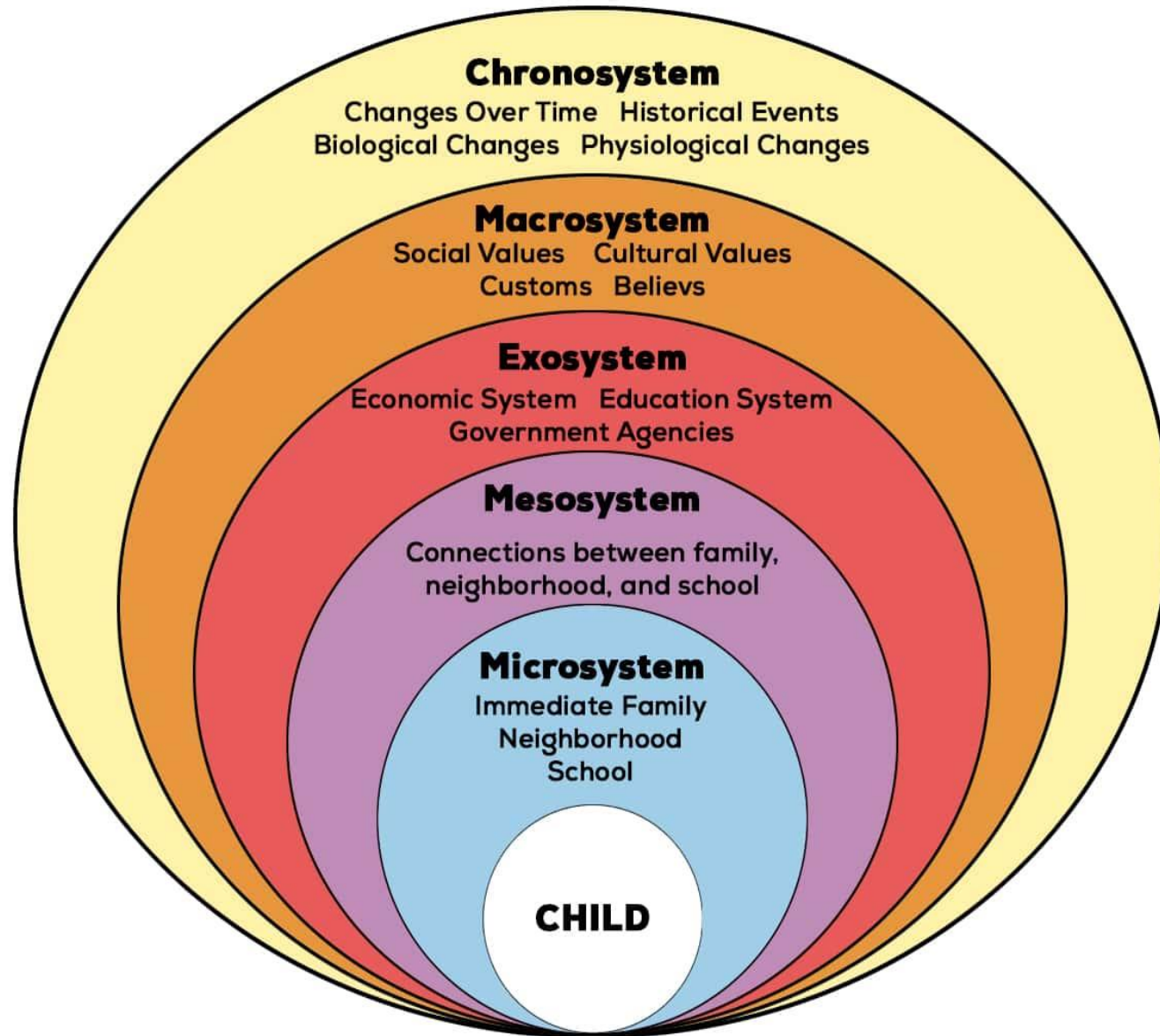


In order to develop normally, a child requires progressively more complex joint activity with one or more adults who have an irrational emotional relationship with the child. Somebody's got to be crazy about that kid. That's number one. First, last and always.

*Urie Bronfenbrenner*

QUOTESSS.COM

# Where Can You Make a Difference?



# Summary

- ▶ What did you LEARN?
- ▶ Where will you SHARE?
- ▶ How will you INTEGRATE?



# Butterfly Effect

What is one change that you can make...

...that will change everything?!

# Thank You!

