

SAFETY AND SECURITY
(from the TLC *Early Childhood Grief Program*)

Ages: For infants through 3 year olds

When trying to create safety and security with children keeping a daily routine in place is very helpful. Other suggestions to make your child feel safe and secure are:

Make eye contact OFTEN

Hold your little one often, plan for “snuggle time” before bedtime or naptime

Engage in reciprocal smiling and laughter with your little one

Play games such as patty cake and peek-a-boo while holding your child

Swing your child in a blanket while singing a favorite song

Read a book or watch a short video together on the sofa

Crawl with your toddler, be excited when they crawl toward you

FEELINGS

(from Barbara Oehlberg's *Tools for Helping Children Cope with Overwhelming Memories and the Effects of Trauma*)

Hold your little one on your lap in front of a mirror. Demonstrate with your facial expressions while you encourage the child to join you. Say, “I feel surprised!” with exaggerated facial expression. Then, “Baby (child’s name) feels surprised!”

Continue with “I feel sad.” “Baby___ feels sad.”

“I feel lonely.” “Baby___ feels lonely.”

“I feel excited!” “Baby___ feels excited!”

“I feel happy!” “Baby___ feels happy!”

Repeat OFTEN, even after your child can easily copy your expressions. Try different feelings and expressions, always beginning and ending with positive ones. These exercises allow your child to begin to understand and manage his/her deep feelings while feeling safe and secure on your lap.

<http://www.tlcinstitute.org>

This information is made available courtesy of The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children (TLC), a non-profit 501(c)3 program of Children's Home of Detroit (CHD). If you have questions that you would like to ask our TLC Certified Trauma Specialist on staff, or would like a recommendation for a TLC Certified Trauma Specialist in your area, please call TLC toll-free at 877-306-5256 or email us at steele@tlcinst.org □