

# Building Strong Foundations

A photograph of two young children sitting on stone steps outdoors. The child on the left is wearing a red and black striped shirt and blue jeans, holding a red apple. The child on the right is wearing a blue denim jacket and blue jeans. They are both looking at the apple. The background shows green foliage and a stone wall. The text "Building Strong Foundations" is overlaid in large white letters. A small speaker icon is positioned over the apple.

**AIMHiTN**



# Scan Here to Check-in



# AIMHiTN

## Mission and Vision



AIMHITN SUPPORTS PROFESSIONALS THROUGH TRAINING, RESOURCES, AND ADVOCATING FOR OPTIMAL DEVELOPMENT OF INFANTS, YOUNG CHILDREN, AND FAMILIES.

AIMHITN ENVISIONS A HEALTHY, THRIVING TENNESSEE THAT PRIORITIZES THE MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF EVERY INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY AND COMMUNITY.

# Today's Objectives



**Understand Healthy Social  
Development in the First 5 Years**

**Identify How the Brain is Involved in  
Optimal Growth Development**

**Learn Intentional Ways to Support  
Social Development**

# So, Who's Ready?





# What Is Social Development?



- Experience, expression, and how we process emotions and challenges
- Ability to establish and develop positive relationships
- The process of how we see ourself and our relationships

# Early Social Development

## Birth to 12 Months Old



- Secure attachment
- Babies are learning who they are by how they are treated

# Birth to 12 Months Key Milestones



**Read and respond to adult cues and signals**

**Use simple gestures to start interactions**

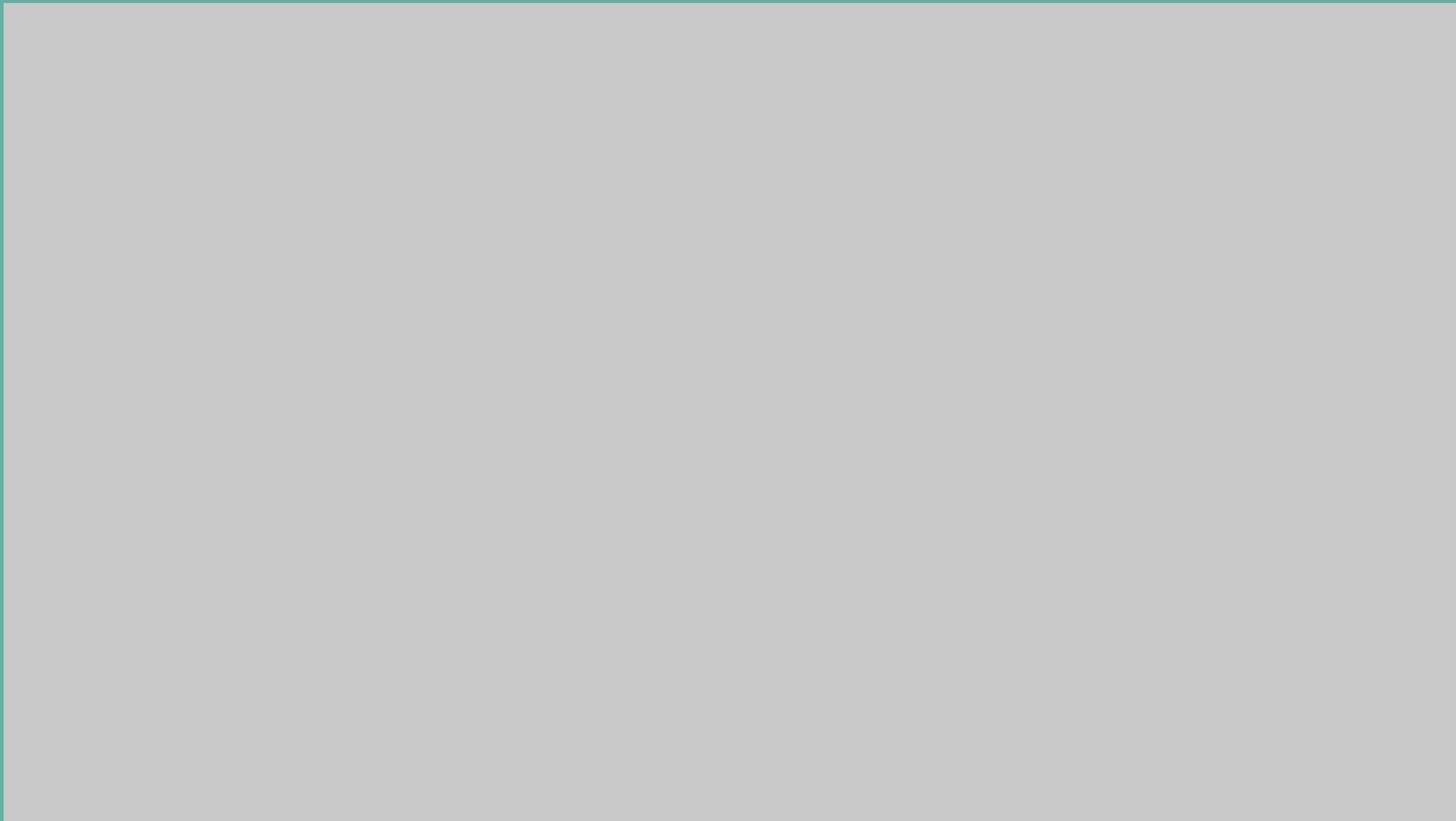
**Seek and develop relationship with one particular caregiver**

**Express distress and other negative emotions**

**Demonstrate interest in others**



# What This Might Look Like



# Social Development

## 12-24 Months Old



- Develop a growing awareness that they are separate and independent from others
- Independence and the emergence of “NO!”
- Language growth

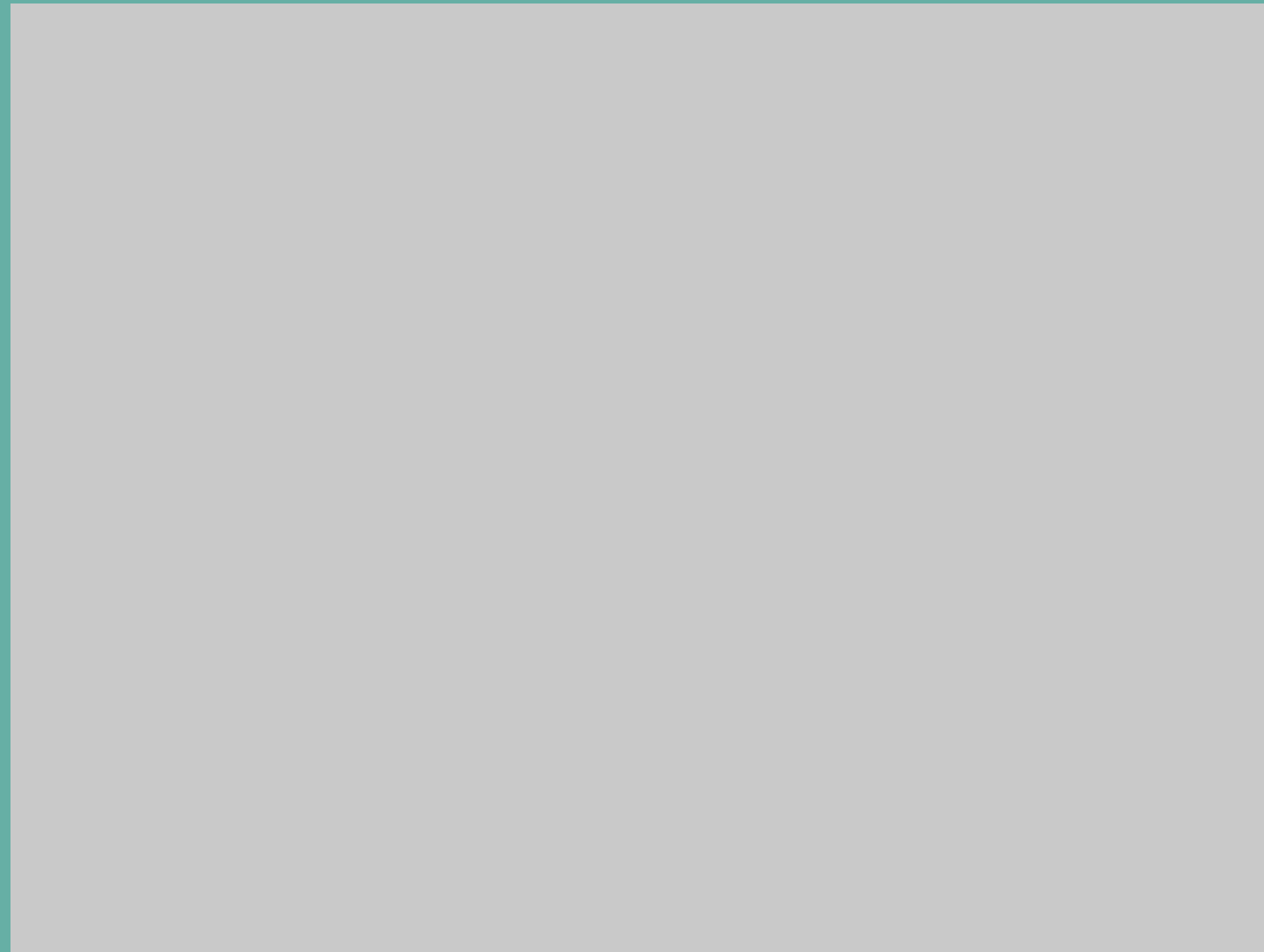
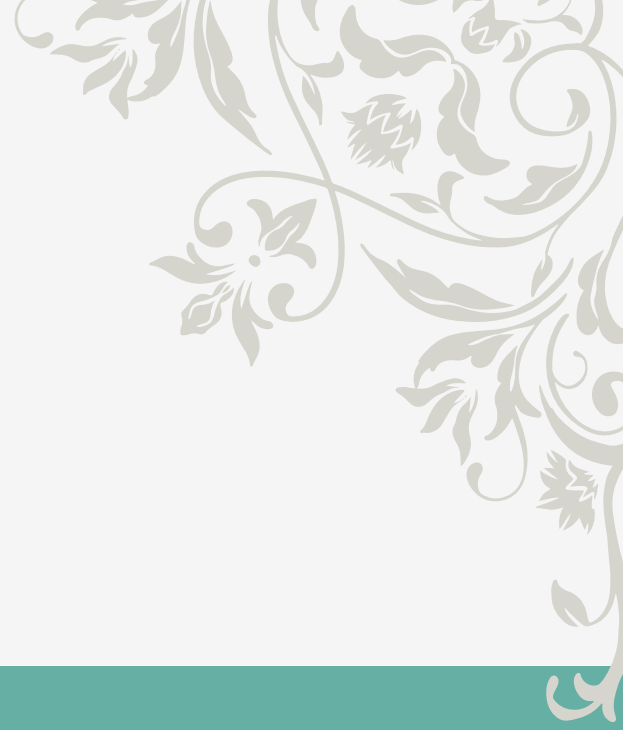
# 12-24 Months Key Milestones



- ✓ Back and forth interactions
- ✓ Feel secure to explore independently
- ✓ Begin to take turns
- ✓ Recognize self in picture or mirror
- ✓ Cooperate by helping put things away
- ✓ Get angry if they don't get their way
- ✓ Respond to simple commands
- ✓ May hit, bite, or fight over a toy
- ✓ Imitate adult behaviors in play
- ✓ Use a range of emotional expressions
- ✓ Begin interactive play
- ✓ Move from parallel to interactive play



# What This Might Look Like



# Social Development

## 24-36 Months Old



- Recognize they are fully separate beings
- Increase in interactive play
- Increase in pretend play
- Feelings still trump thinking
- Aggression, frustration, whining, clinging, possessiveness, emotional shifts, and even biting or hitting

# 24-36 Months

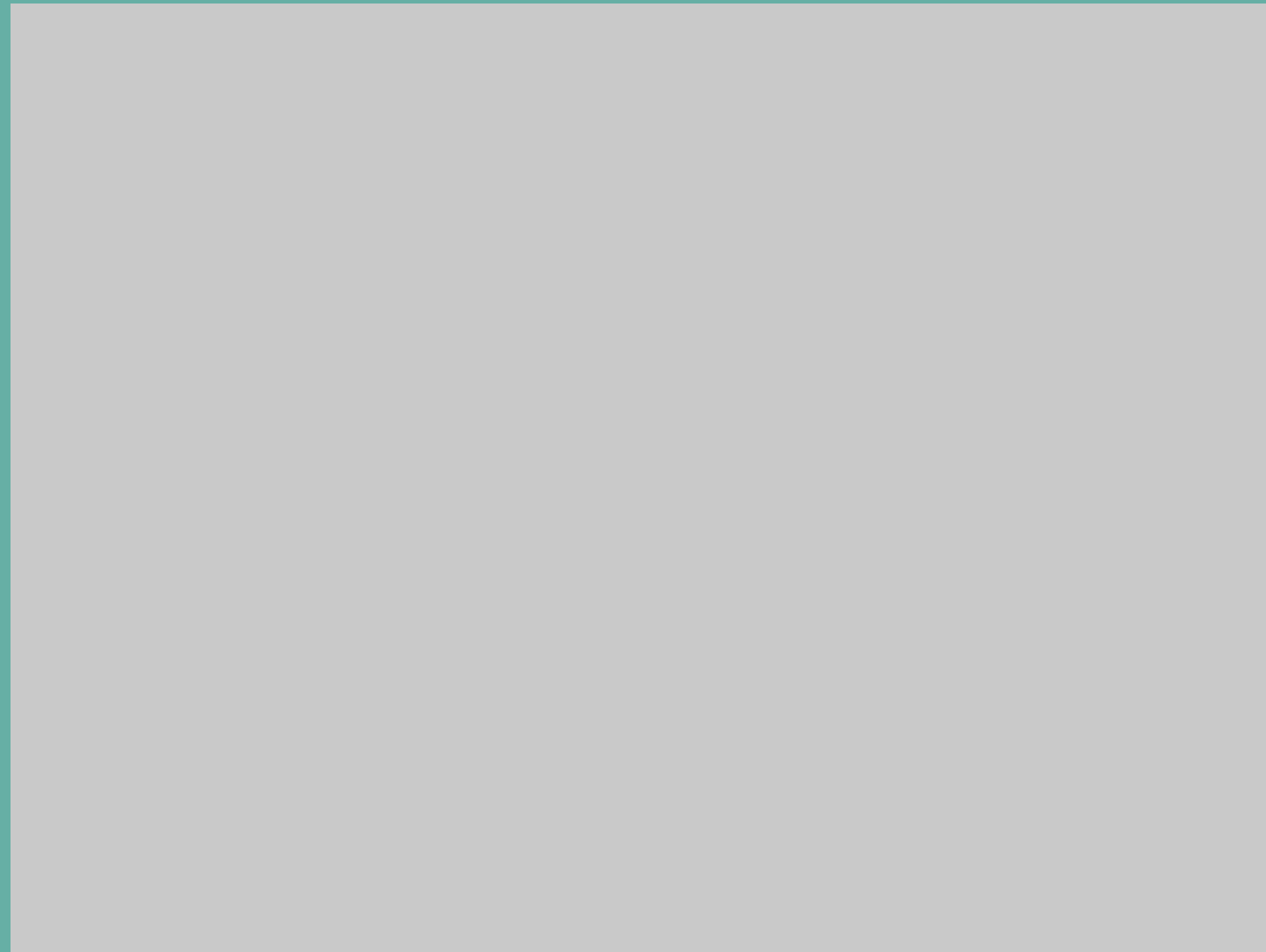
## Key Milestones



- ✓ Strong sense of self-independence
- ✓ Aware of gender differences
- ✓ Separate more easily
- ✓ Strong possession of loved ones
- ✓ Feel frustration and have tantrums
- ✓ Begin to obey simple rules
- ✓ Play simple games
- ✓ Play more cooperatively with peers
- ✓ Communicate thoughts and feelings
- ✓ Share their own ideas
- ✓ Complete complex tasks independently
- ✓ Share and exchange objects
- ✓ Enjoy a wider range of relationships
- ✓ More eager to meet new people



# What This Might Look Like



# Social Development

## 3-5 Years Old



- Growth in the prefrontal cortex which allows children to exhibit greater self-control and impulse control.
- Children play more collaboratively with peers, but still need help processing their emotions.
- Self-concept is growing rapidly (awareness of how others see them).

# 3 -5 Years Old Key Milestones



- ✓ Solve more complex problems
- ✓ Play more complex games
- ✓ Collaborate pretend play with peers
- ✓ Describe their own feelings and wants
- ✓ Greater impulse control
- ✓ Respond to others' emotional needs
- ✓ Comfort others
- ✓ Regulate attention, thoughts, and feelings with less help



# How Is The Brain Involved?



While the science suggests that most of our brain cells (called neurons) are present at birth, the connections between these neurons are still developing and multiplying at a rapid-fire pace—more than 1 million neural connections per second in the first 3 years

(Center for the Developing Child, n. d.).

# Experiences Shape the Structure and Functioning of the Brain

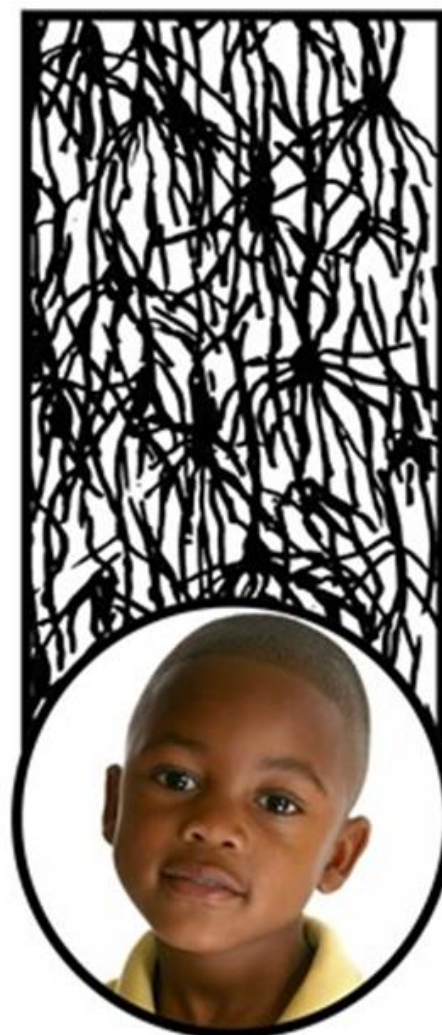


- 1 million neural connections per second
- Influenced by early experiences

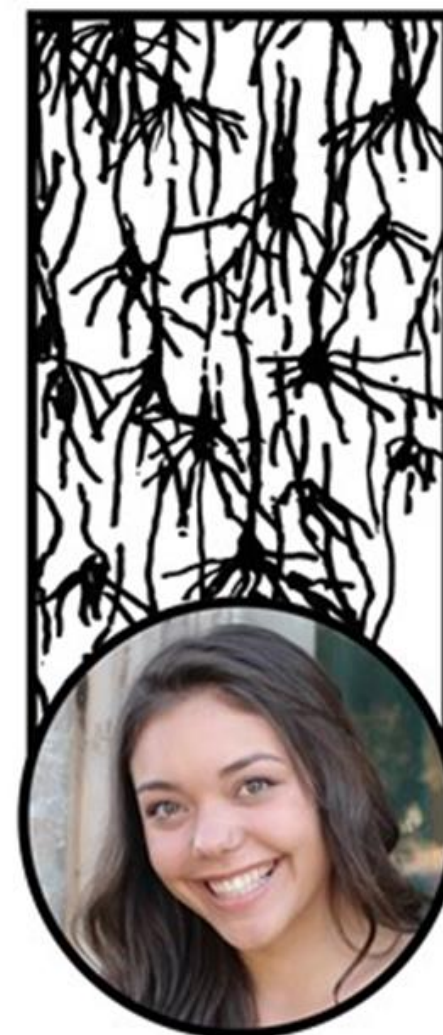
**At Birth**



**6 Years Old**



**14 Years Old**





# What Can We Do?



- Understand Secure Attachment
- Start With You; Self-Regulation
- Identify the Brain State
- Focus on Positive Connections
- Create Compassionate Environments



# Secure Attachment



Positive interactions help to form a strong bond with our students that help them feel safe and secure while in our care.

This happens through:

- Understanding the whole child
- Creating unique connections with each child
- Building self-confidence in children

# Self-Regulation



**“My state regulates  
their state.”**

**Dr. Becky Bailey**

Prefrontal Lobes  
**Self-Regulation**




**Problem-Solving**



Limbic System  
**Attachment**



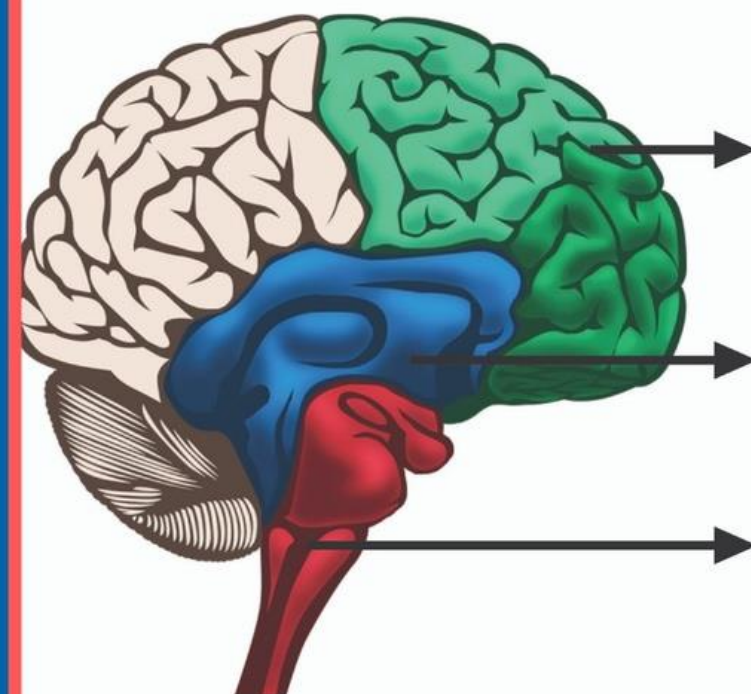

**Connection**



Brain Stem  
**Arousal**




**Safety**

### Executive State

**Developmental Need:**

Problem-solving opportunities

**Looks like:** Wisdom, unlimited skills

**Message:** What can I learn?

### Emotional State

**Developmental Need:** Connection

**Looks like:** Back talk, sass, yelling, verbal reactions

**Message:** Am I loved/connected?

### Survival State

**Developmental Need:** Safety

**Looks like:** Hiding, fighting, surrender, physical reactions

**Message:** Am I safe?

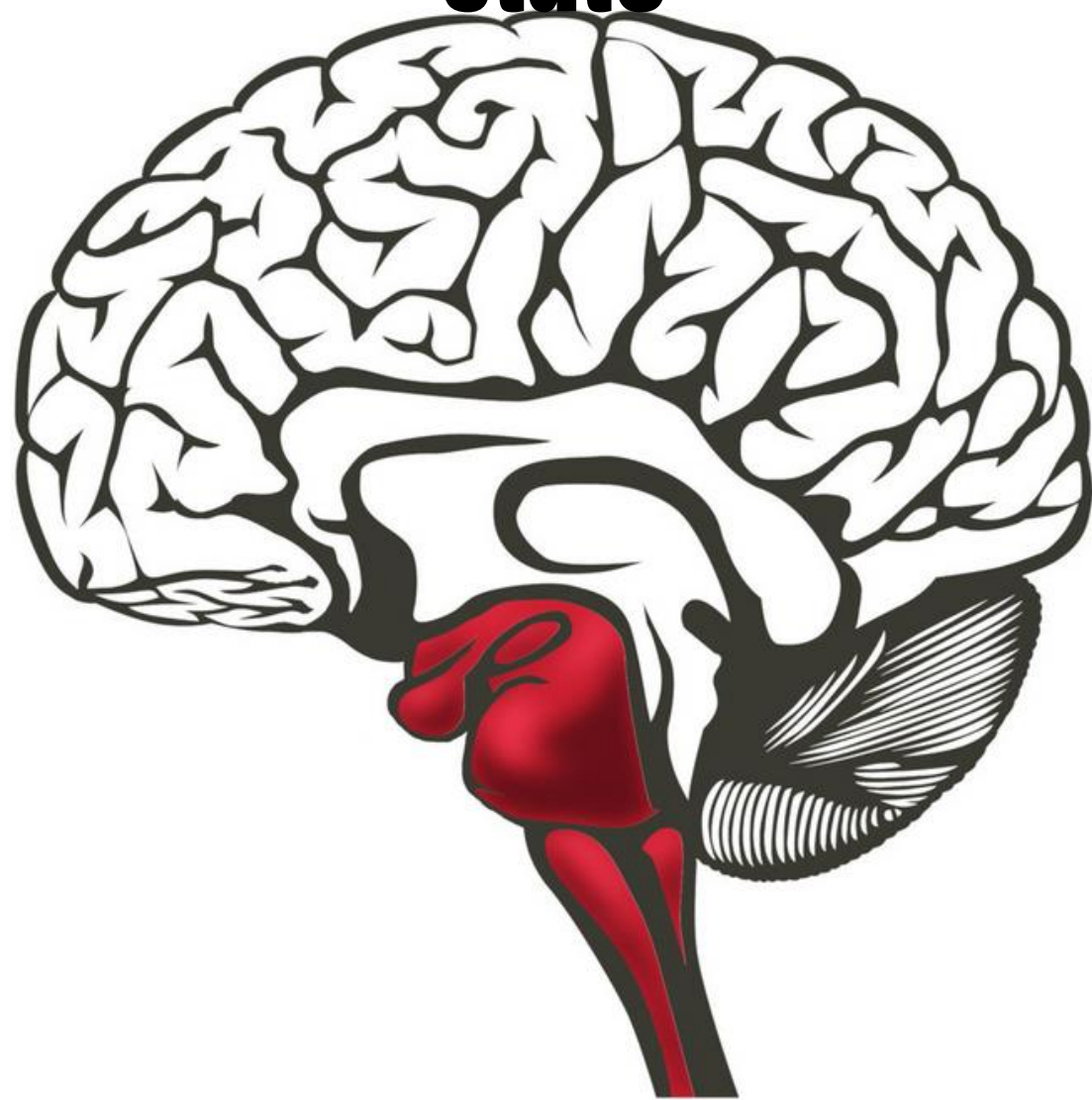
# Brain State Model





# Brain

## Survival State



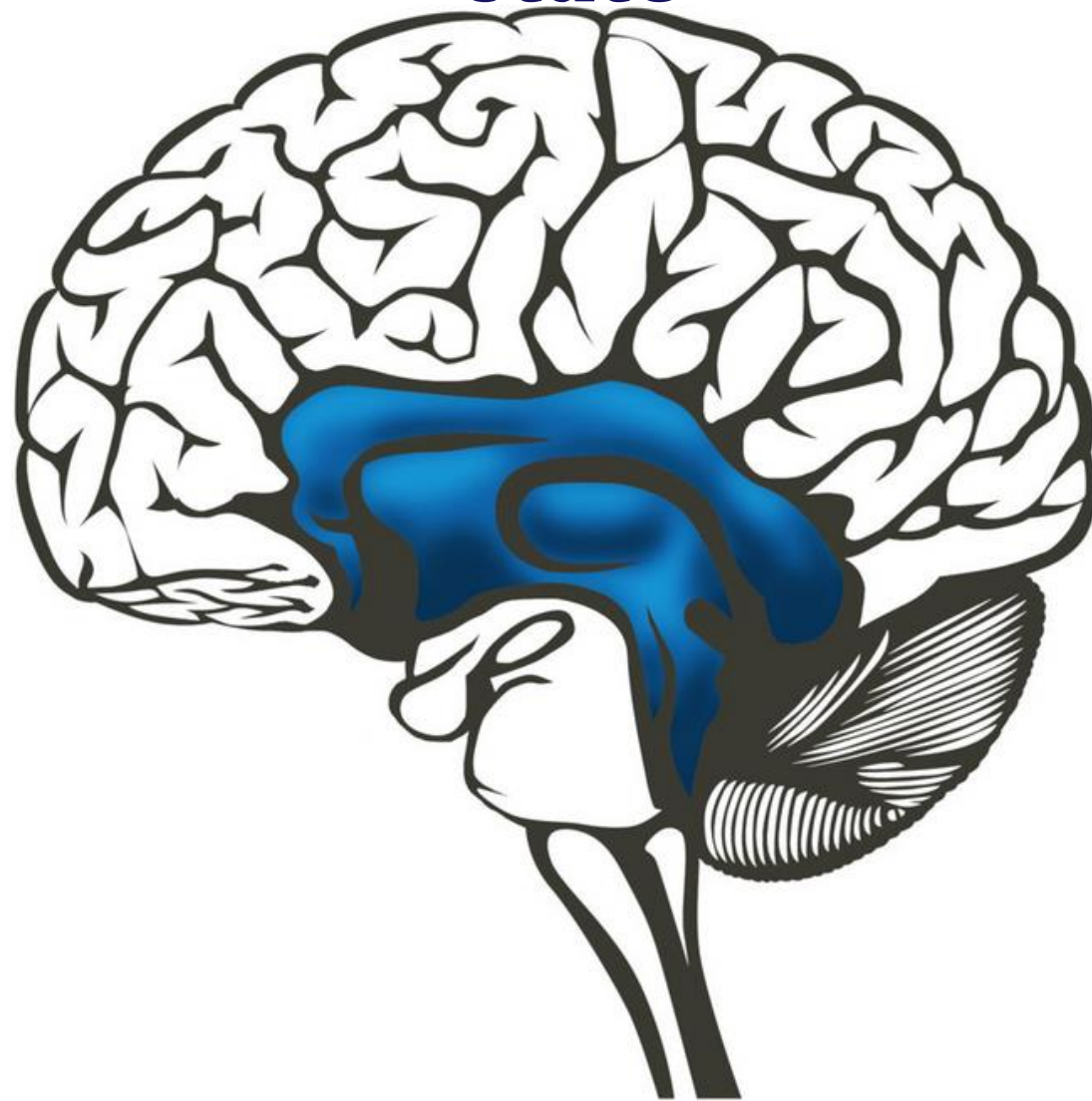
- Brain Stem
- Reactive without thinking
- Sense something that might hurt us, it triggers our **STRESS RESPONSE**
- The question that needs to be answered, "Am I Safe?"



# Brain



## Emotional State



- Amygdala
- Controls our emotions
- We don't feel loved or connected with other people
- Things don't go our way
- We don't get what we want
- The question that needs to be answered, "Am I Loved?"

# Brain

## Executive State



- Frontal Cortex
- Complex thinking
- Imagining
- Planning
- Problem solving
- Communicating
- Behaving safely
- The question that needs to be answered, “What can I learn from this?”

# Brain State Packet



## Survival State-

What are the actions? What question is being asked?

## Emotional State-

What are the actions? What question is being asked?

## Executive State-

What are the actions? What question is being asked?

# Creating Connections



- **Routines:** Routines provides consistency and a safe atmosphere where children are comfortable because they know what to expect.
- **Encouragement:** Accepting children for who they are. Being aware of what values children bring.
- **Jobs:** Allowing children to serve others. Jobs allow a child to contribute daily to success in their environment.

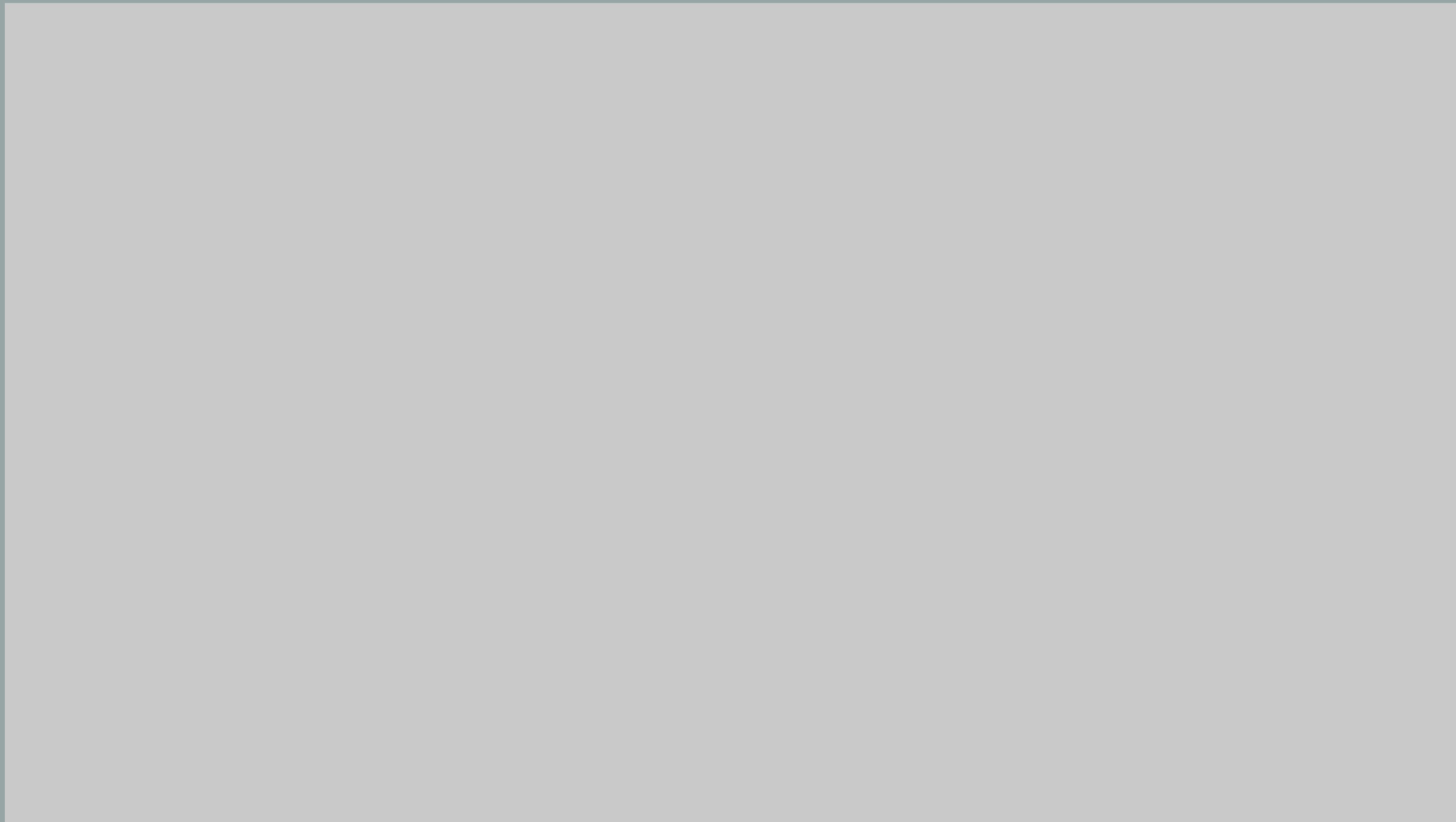


# Creating Compassionate Environments



- **Empathy:** Teaches emotional regulation and helps children to be responsible for their actions.
- **Choices:** Enhances decision-making and helps children be motivated and focused.
- **Family:** Referring to relationships as “family” teaches and models respectful relationships and a healthy family structure.

# Our Support Builds Resilience



# Thank You For Your Time!



*Please scan here  
to complete survey.*



# Resources

Ph.D. Bailey, Becky; (2021) Conscious Discipline; Building Resilient Classrooms; Published by Loving Guidance, LLC.

Zero To Three; (2018) The Growing Brain: From Birth to 5 Years Old; [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

## Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yarZRgMWVmo&list=PLDn156GZDSn2JSXaBnt69hxDZ3v1RuhW0&index=6>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OT2R8pTpcoo&list=PLDn156GZDSn2JSXaBnt69hxDZ3v1RuhW0&index=7>

[https://youtu.be/bQoJqDi8490?si=oU\\_KuVn8IsUHgTfl](https://youtu.be/bQoJqDi8490?si=oU_KuVn8IsUHgTfl)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPJQME400TE&list=PLDn156GZDSn2JSXaBnt69hxDZ3v1RuhW0&index=9>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOIOrACAj6o&list=PLDn156GZDSn2JSXaBnt69hxDZ3v1RuhW0&index=13>