

THE USE OF THE TCI IN CONNECTION WITH HIGH RISK FAMILIES

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What is Verein Ananas?

- Private institution in Austria
- Has a contract with the child protective service
- When parents are suspected to maltreat or neglect their children the government gives us the order to find out if we can work with these parents to become more sensitive towards their children
- We have the possibility to work with the families for 2 years (or longer if necessary) and can decide intensity and setting.

Who is working with the families?

- Usually a psychologist, psychotherapist or a pedagogue works with the family in their home – once or two times a week
- Our concept is similar to the one of Selma Fraiberg – “Therapy at the kitchen-table”
- We have just started to use the TCI for diagnosis as well as counselling
- I´ll show you a TCI dyad: father and Michelle. It was taken about 4 months after starting to work with the family

The TCI dyad: The Actors

- Michelle is 51 m old
- Her parents are very young (24 years). Both parents have no job and live on welfare
- Michelle is the first child of the couple, there are younger twins (8m)

The TCI dyad: Why we were called

- About a year ago the child protective service was informed by the kindergarten: Michelle had bite marks on her legs and bruises. When asked she said “Papa”.
- Both parents denied to maltreat their children but were eager to get help.
- They appreciated to work on their parenting skills

The TCI dyad: What happened

- On the video you see something that is typical for high risk families:
- The TCI requires that parents frustrate their children after a sequence of joint play.
- Most of maltreating parents can't frustrate their children - though they usually frustrate them all the time, but not when you ask them to do so

The TCI dyad: What happened

- You will hear me cough two times (and the father saying that he can't frustrate his daughter because she is playing so nicely)
- But then – as soon as he starts frustrating – he can't stop it anymore. Having “green light” he is unable to repair breaches and doesn't take notice of the sign (cough) to stop the frustration.

The TCI dyad: The Video

- We usually take two videos: father and child and mother and child.
- We look at them with both parents.
- The main questions are:
 - How do they think the other ones feels?
 - How do they think the child feels?
- The aim is to help the parents to mentalize the child's feelings and their own importance for relationship.