

Unlocking

The 4 S's of emotional support



Safe  **I will protect the children I serve from harm and avoid becoming a source of threat or fear.**

What it means to feel safe...

- No fear
- No harm
- No threats
- Not frightened or guarded
- Not being controlled by someone else
- "Ok" to be vulnerable
- "Ok" with what is going on
- Know what to do
- Know what is expected
- Know what is happening or going to happen
- Understand the meaning of gestures, words, looks, & tone of voice (and lack thereof)
- No "internal alarms" are "going off"

How I create a "safe harbor"

- I validate emotions
- I reduce sensory input
- I invite calm by being calm
- I offer individualized choices
- I slow down to give time for processing ideas and emotions
- I slow down so I can notice what my posture, tone, and pace are "saying"
- I notice what a child's emotions are trying to communicate
- I limit what I say when children are in distress
- I reframe what appears to be a "want" into something that is a "need"
- I pause to create space to think, feel, and understand the perspective of others