

# Circle of Security™-Parenting



2017 Report of Nebraska Data

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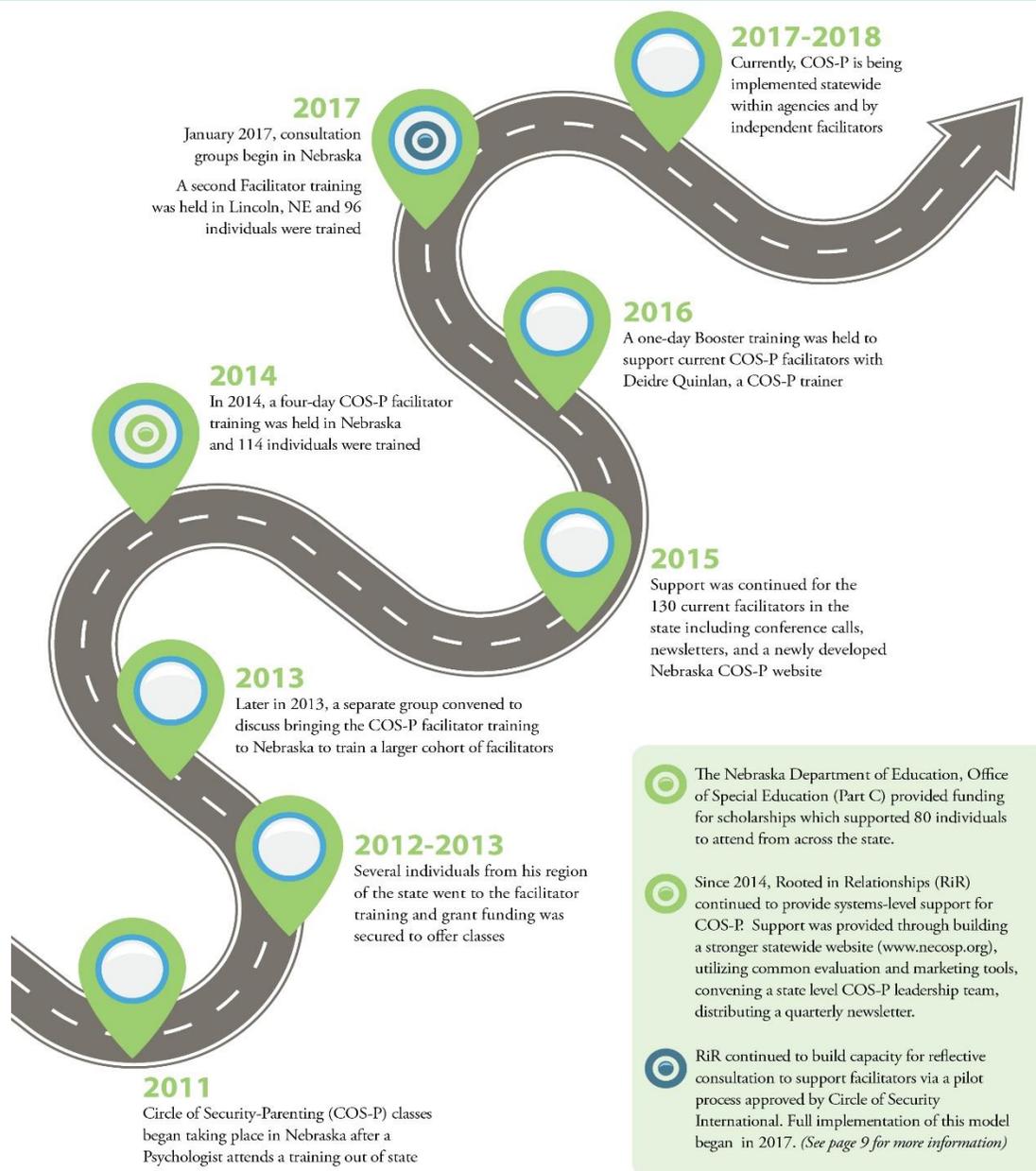
Interdisciplinary Center for Program Evaluation

*Collaborate. Evaluate. Improve.*



# Circle of Security™-Parenting in Nebraska History

Circle of Security™-Parenting (COS-P) is an 8-week parenting program based on years of research about how to build strong attachment relationships between parent and child. It is designed to help parents learn how to respond to their child's needs in a way that enhances the attachment between parent and child. It helps parents give their children a feeling of security and confidence so they can explore, learn, grow and build positive relationships; all essential skills for life-long success.





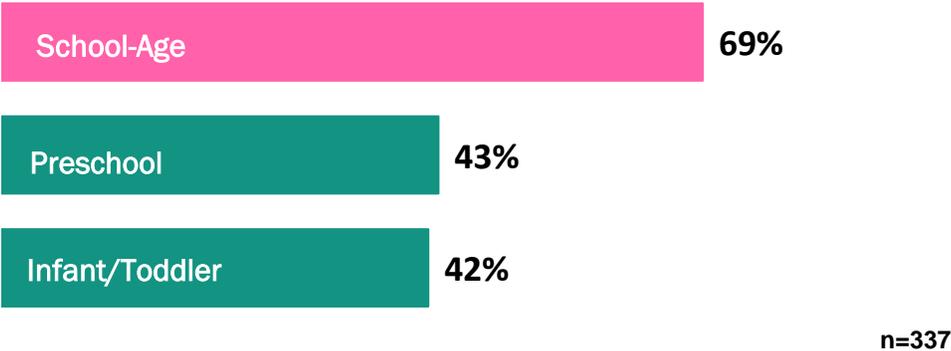
The evaluation results presented in this report are not representative of all COS-P classes that occurred in Nebraska. Classes that are funded via Nebraska Children and Families Foundation are required to submit evaluation data and other facilitators are encouraged to use the evaluation tools and submit their data to the statewide pool of data. Evaluation data was submitted for 58 COS-P class series that were completed in 15 counties.

### Who participated in COS-P classes?

A total of 358 participants completed the evaluation surveys from the 58 COS-P classes held across the state. Throughout the analyses, there will be different numbers of participants that completed each item. The majority (89%) of the participants in the COS-P sessions were parents. Other groups represented included: grandparents (5%), foster parents (2%), and other (5%). These participants were primarily female (74%) and were in the 19-30 (40%) and 31-50 (47%) age groups. The participants on average had three children with a range of having 0 to 11 children. The ages of most of the children were distributed across three age groups, infants and toddlers, preschool, or school age. Most of the children were school age. The majority (62%) of the children were eligible for Child Care Subsidy or Free and Reduced Lunch.

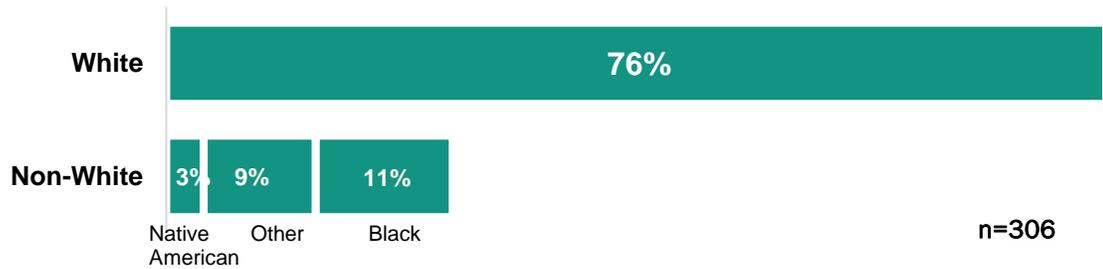
Both the race and the ethnicity of the participants were reported. Most of the participants were white (race); however, of this group, 28% noted their ethnicity was Hispanic. These results suggest that there has been good outreach to the Hispanic population as 9% of the state population is Hispanic.

#### Participants had children that spanned a wide-range of ages.



## The race of most participants was white.

Of this group, 28% of the participants indicated their ethnicity was Hispanic.



## Why did individuals participate in COS-P?

Participants joined a COS-P class for a variety of reasons. Primarily, participants were interested in better understanding their child's needs, improving their parenting skills or improving their relationships with their children. As one participant stated, "I needed to get tools to be a better parent." Some parents sought out the class to support them in addressing their child's challenging behaviors ("I wanted to learn a better way to react or deal with difficult situations." Many found out about the classes from other parents or professionals (e.g., social services, child care, therapists) and came based on those recommendations and some joined due to a requirement by the court. As one person reported, the class was, "court mandated, but I am glad that I did. There were great concepts that helped remind and reinforce my positive parenting behaviors." Several professionals participated as part of a work training.

Facilitators reported that a variety of different supports were made available to increase participant access to COS-P. Many of the sessions included child care (36%), food (76%) and incentives (60%), which were primarily gift cards. Only two programs provided transportation for the participants.

## How did participants evaluate their COS-P experience?

Participants were asked about parenting stress, their relationships with their children, and confidence in their parenting skills in a retrospective pre-post survey. A total of 358 individuals completed the survey. The results of the data were analyzed in two different ways. First, a

statistical analysis (a paired t-test) was completed to determine if there was a significant change in participants' perception by the end of the COS-P series across the program identified outcomes. There were significant positive differences found between overall scores at the beginning of the group (M=3.05 SD=.768) and scores at the groups' conclusion [(M=4.34; SD=.446);  $t(334)=-28.890$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $d=1.58$ , two-tailed test]. These results suggest a strong meaningful effect size.



**"I wanted to have the opportunity to learn another viewpoint on parenting. I'm really glad that I did."**

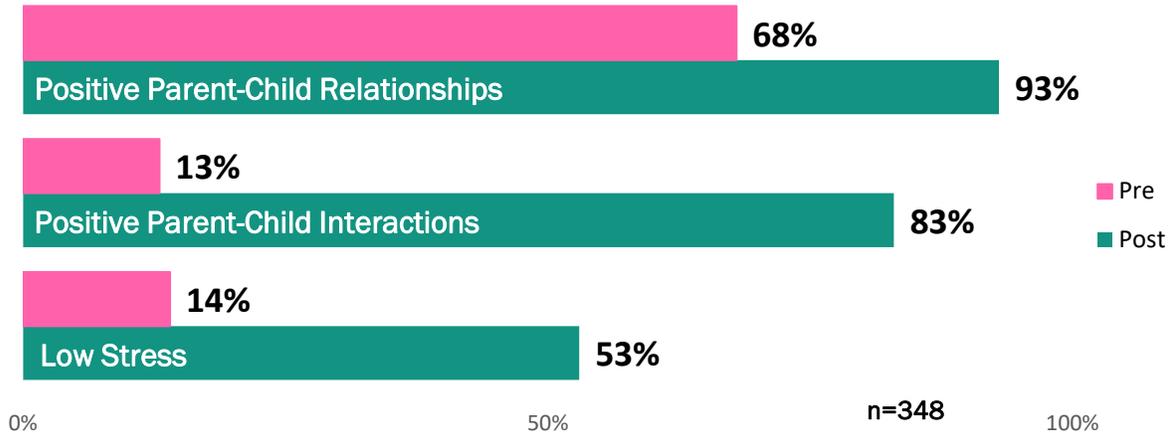
**...A Parent**

The second analysis examined the percentage of participants who rated their skills positively in three outcomes areas (a rating of agreed or strongly agreed), after the COS-P class series. The results found very high percentages of participants met the program goal of rating their own parenting skills and their relationship with their children very positively by the final session. Slightly over half (53%) of the parents reported low stress related to their parenting at the end of the COS-P sessions; an increase from the pre-assessment, where only 14% reported low stress related to their parenting. These results suggest a decrease in parenting-related stress after participation in COS-P. Many of the parents (67%) began the training with strong relationships with their children with almost all (93%) noting a positive relationship with their child at the conclusion. The most gains were made in the areas of positive parent-child interactions.



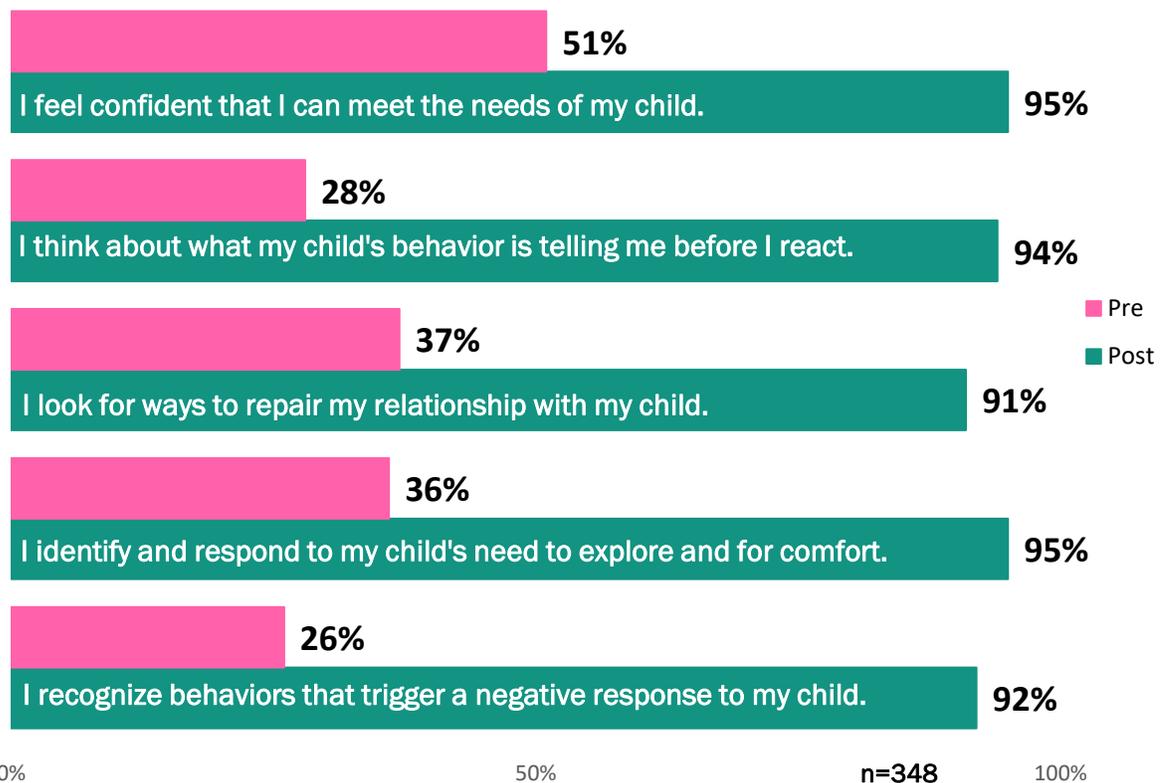
Most of the participants met the program goal in adopting positive parent-child interactions and had positive parent-child relationships.

*Parenting stress was lowered by the end of the COS-P session.*



**Positive Parent-Child Interaction Items: Parents make gains across all areas.**

*The most gains were made using the child's behavior to understand their needs and recognizing the triggers for a negative response to their child.*

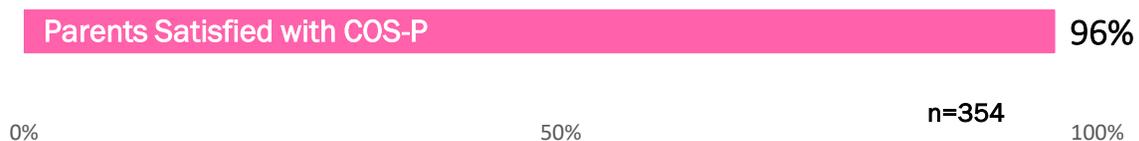


## What did participants tell us about their experience?

A total of 354 of the 358 participants completed the satisfaction survey. Participants were very positive about their COS-P experience, using descriptors such as “very informative”, “well designed program”, and “very helpful.” Many commented on the benefits of participating in the class, specifically how it helped them to gain parenting skills, improve their confidence, or enhance the relationship with their children. For many it provided peer support and they felt less isolated.

As one parent learned, “making an emotional connection with my children is the key to great parenting.” Another parent pointed out, “I never looked at life this way or bringing myself down to my child’s level and now understanding what it is my child is trying to tell me by his actions. Couldn’t have asked for a better teacher.” Most importantly, they described how their relationships improved, “It wasn’t what I expected, it was so much more! Will help with every relationship.” Not only was it beneficial to parents, one service provider commented, “I would recommend it to anyone who works with kids.” Several recommended this group to others, including new and adoptive parents. Overall, the participants rated the group format and their facilitator very positively (96%).

**Nearly all of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the group format was helpful and the COS-P facilitator did a good job facilitating the group.**



**“I found that there are people out there in the same situation as I, and I am not alone or the only parent.”**

**...A Parent**

## What did COS-P facilitators tell us about their experience?

The experiences of the facilitators are based on information from 34 or 41% of the sessions that were completed due to facilitator surveys not being completed for all classes. Facilitators confirmed many of the benefits that the participants described. One predominant theme was the parents' discovery of "parents learning the value of looking at their history and its effect on their parenting." Additionally, they saw parents growing in their ability to share and communicate with other parents in the sessions. Not only did participants gain understanding of the concepts discussed, many also changed their language and behaviors. One facilitator reported, "COS-P helped (a father) understand and manage his anger issues better than any anger management class he's ever had. He is sharing it with friends."

Facilitators were asked to describe any challenges or suggestions for improving COS-P classes. Overall, there were limited challenges reported but some note were:

- Managing the class size (too small or too large)
- Large age range of children
- Parent Engagement due to numerous factors (court ordered, families having difficulty accessing concrete supports, other family issues)
- Attendance
- Difficulty of role expectation when child exhibiting problem behavior.

**"I could take the feedback and apply it within a week.... that was helpful.**

**...A COS-P facilitator**

## **What did Facilitators tell us about Reflective Consultation?**

All COS-P facilitators were provided the opportunity to participate in reflective consultation via video conference. Of those that participated in consultation, half of the facilitators (50%) participated in weekly sessions and 40% participated in sessions one to two times per month. High percentages of the facilitators rated the consultation as helpful (88%). Similar percentages (86%) found the frequency of the reflective consultation to be adequate. RiR supported three consultants to offer six different reflective consultation opportunities in 2017. Each series of reflective consultation sessions lasted for eight weeks and consultation was provided weekly. COS-P facilitators provided feedback on both the helpfulness of the reflective consultation sessions and the resulting benefits to themselves. Survey items were rated on a four-point Likert scale with one indicating "not at all" and four indicating "all of the time." The overall rating of the sessions was 3.83, with 86% (ranged from 71% to 100% per survey item) of the total responses across survey items rated as "all the time." These results suggest that facilitators found the strategies used by the consultant were timely, allowed all facilitators to participate in the discussion, and were sensitive to the facilitator's needs. As one facilitator noted, "It helps to talk out the classes, sometimes we hear some pretty heavy stuff. It just helps to have someone else to talk to that understands." The benefits of the sessions were also positively rated. COS-P facilitators noted that overall the consultation sessions improved their facilitation of COS-P sessions, helped them to identify their strengths and what areas that they continued to struggle in, and provided them with an increased understanding of the content and process of COS-P overall. Many reported it was a safe place to share and learn. One facilitator commented, "She (consultant) helped me to understand this parent (one I was struggling with) and look at things from a different view point.....I grew stronger with my understanding of her (the parent)." Others reported that reflective consultation helped them to "share ideas and struggles," hear how "others handle situations," "reminded me about the fidelity to the model," "helped me listen to my own shark music," and "get feedback on my own reactions or ways I handle certain situations in class."

## Conclusions

- Circle of Security™-Parenting was effectively implemented across communities with parents demonstrating significant increases in parenting skills, improved relationships with their children and decreased parenting stress.
- Parents recommended Circle of Security™-Parenting to other parents, reporting that the structure of the class and the facilitators were highly effective.
- Parents reported that Circle of Security™-Parenting benefited them by helping them to gain parenting skills, improve their confidence, and/or enhance the relationship with their children.
- Circle of Security™-Parenting facilitators reported that reflective consultation support was very helpful.



“The class put most everything I already knew about parenting into a circle to simplify how the parent/child interaction is perceived.”

....A Parent

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