

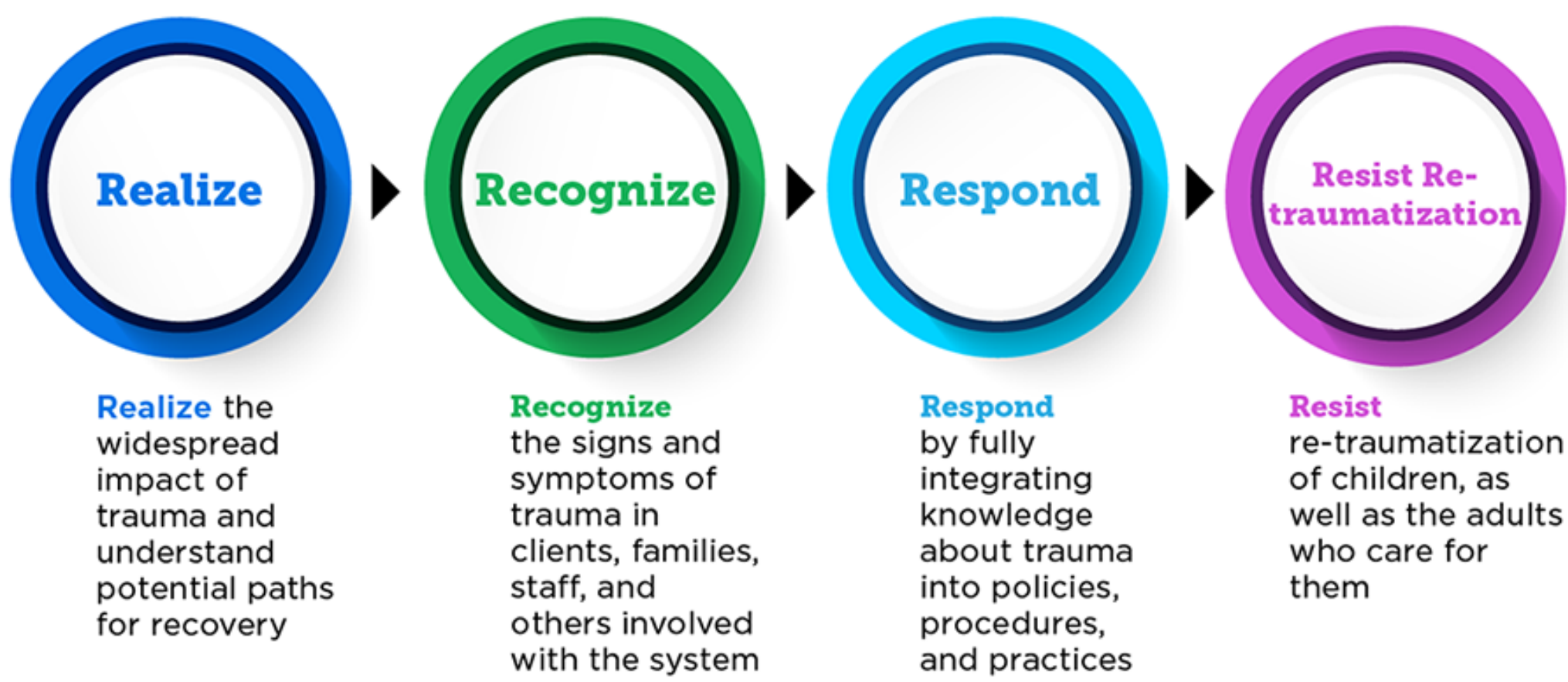
Self- and co-regulation: promoting parents' regulation skills using psycho-education and a body-oriented approach

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Trauma-informed care (TIC)

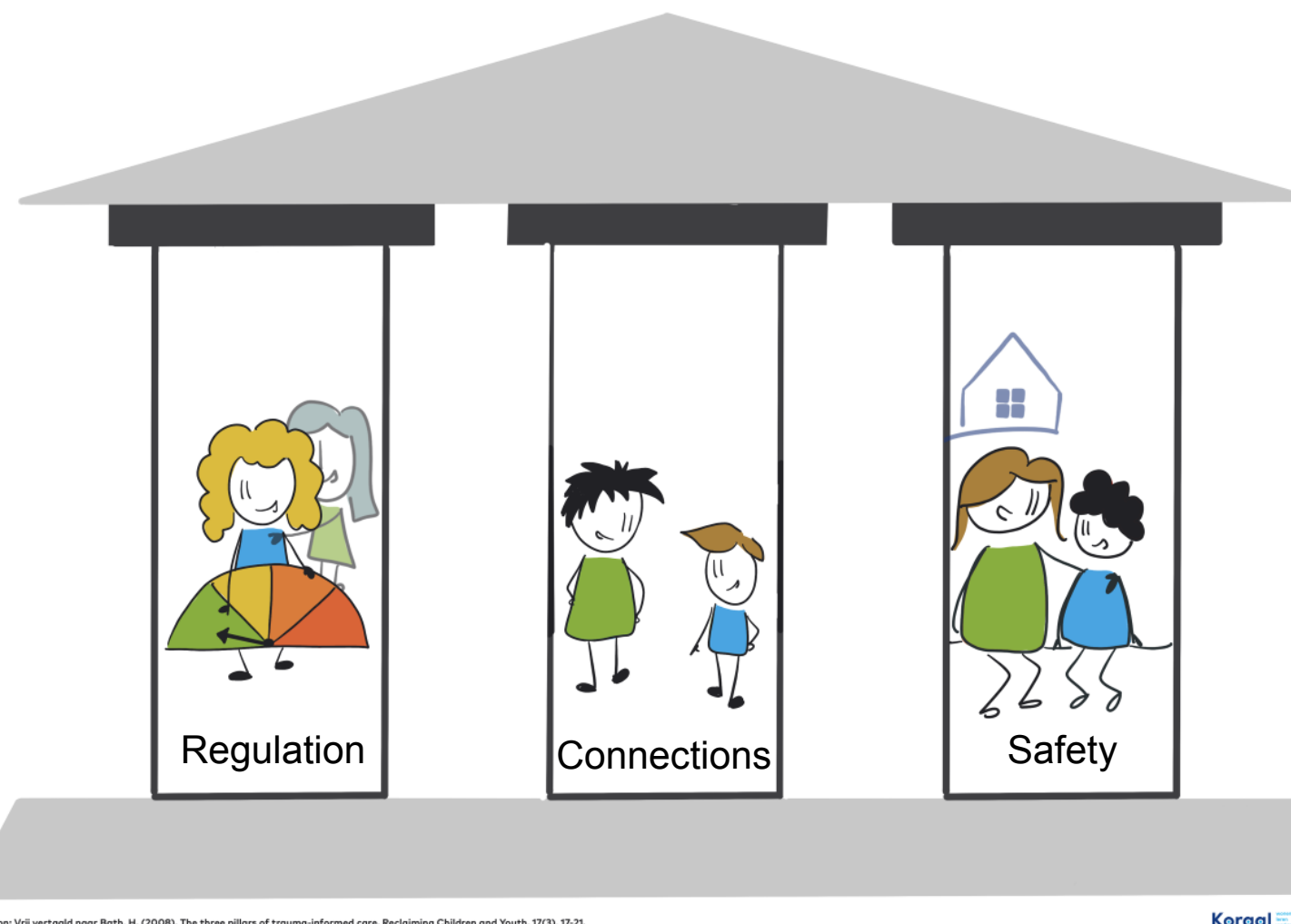
Trauma-informed care originated from the increasing awareness of the serious lifelong impact that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can have on our bodies and brains. The framework of TIC implies that all people within an organization:

The Four Rs of Trauma-Informed Care



This figure is adapted from: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). SAMHSA's concept of trauma and Guidance for a trauma-informed approach. HHS publication no. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Trauma-informed organizations are characterized by **Safety**, **Connections** and **Regulation** to create an environment in which healing and resilience are fostered¹.



Regulating Together!

Regulation difficulties can play an underlying role in the development of internalizing and externalizing problems². On the other hand, well-developed regulation skills can be a protective factor in overcoming adversities³.

Regulating Together! is a pilot program for parents, consisting of 12 group training sessions. Parents and (co-)trainers, together, work on the following three goals:

1. Creating greater **(interoceptive) awareness** of bodily sensations and automatic stress responses;
2. Strengthening parents' **self-regulation** skills so they can pass them on to their children through **co-regulation**;
3. Bringing together parents with similar experiences to encourage experience sharing and to increase feelings of understanding and **social support**.

Each training sessions is composed of:

- Psycho-education
- (Mindfulness) exercises
- Sharing experiences
- Transfer exercises & text messages

Methods

Up until now **47** parents with increased vulnerabilities have completed the training, of whom **41** mothers, **5** fathers and **1** grandmother. Parents had an average of 2 children.

Age range: 19 - 61
Mean age: 34



Age range: 0 - 19
Mean age youngest: 5



Measures

Week 0	Week 4	Week 7	Week 8	Week 12
MAIA-2				MAIA-2
ARM-R				ARM-R
		ACEs and PACEs questionnaire		
	Evaluation questions		Evaluation questions	
Semi-structured interview (N=5)				Semi-structured interview (N=5)

74% of the parents (N=19) reported to have experienced 1 or more ACEs and **58%** 4 or more ACEs.

Results from interviews

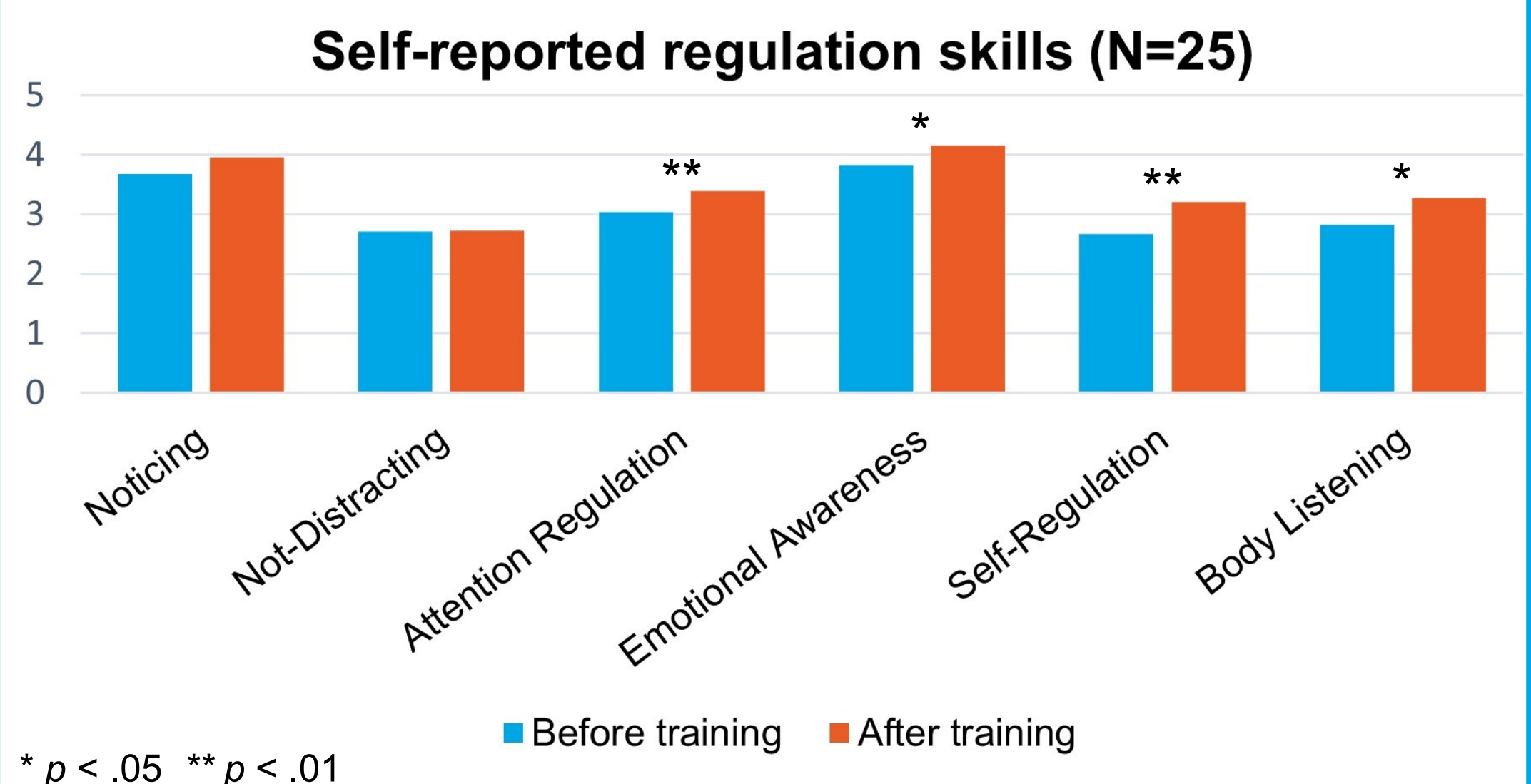
Together. The training sessions were perceived as a "safe place" where personal experiences could be shared among others with similar experiences.

(Interoceptive) awareness. Parents became more aware of inner bodily sensations, personal stress triggers, ways in which stress manifests itself, and manners to self-regulate.

Parent-child interactions. Parents reported being able to stay calmer, show more empathy and avoid automatic stress responses such as raising their voice, in the interactions with their children.

Results from MAIA-2 questionnaire

Statistical analyses showed that parents scored significantly higher on regulation skills after the training sessions [$t(22) = -4.59, p < .001$].



References

1. Bath, H. (2015). The three pillars of traumawise care: Healing in the other 23 hours. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 23(4), 5-11.
2. Cloitre, M., et al. (2019). Emotion regulation mediates the relationship between ACEs and physical and mental health. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 11(1), 82-89.
3. Polizzi, C. P., & Lynn, S. J. (2021). Regulating emotionality to manage adversity: A systematic review of the relation between emotion regulation and psychological resilience. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 45, 577-597.



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