

The Regulative Dialogue

PART 1

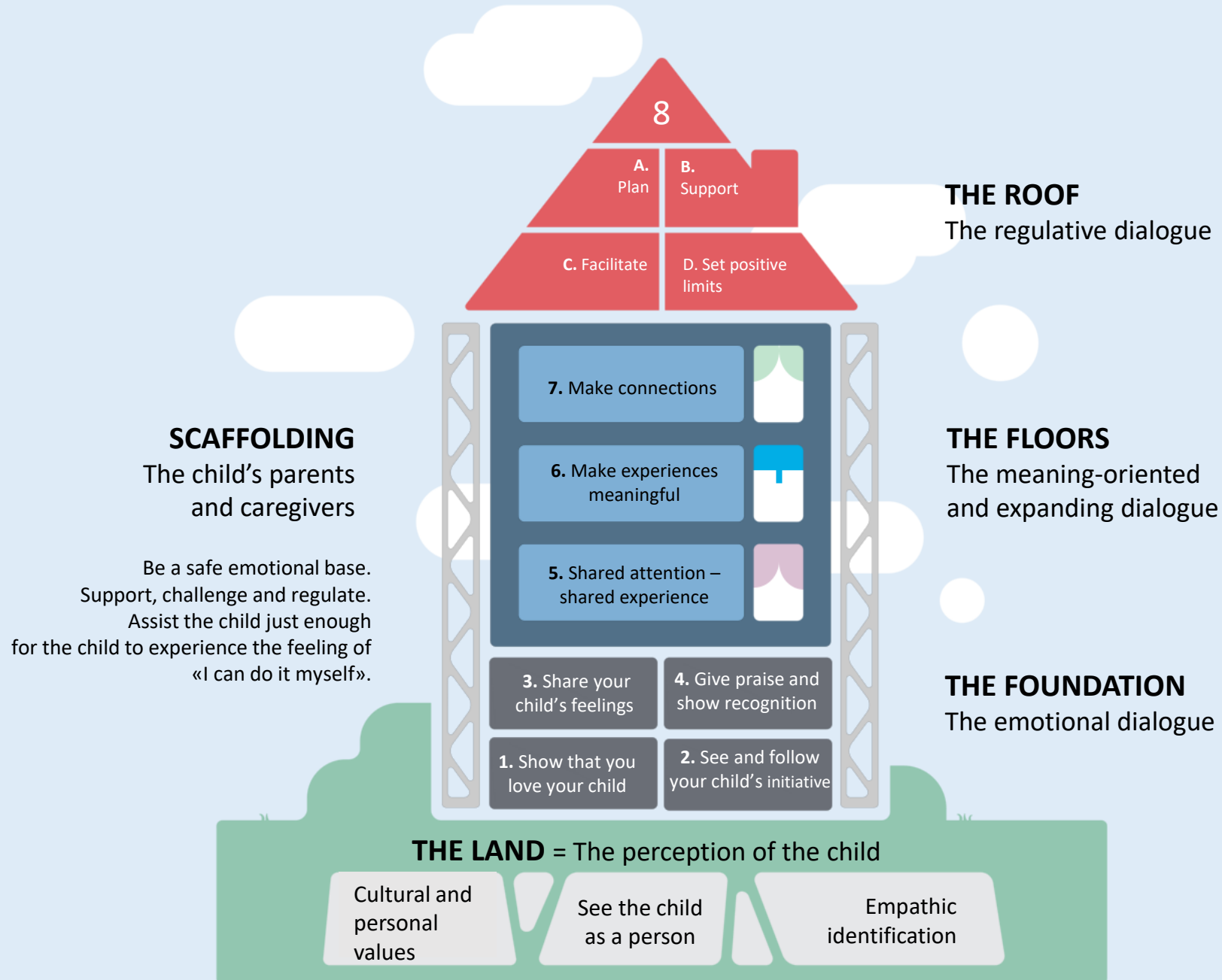
ICDP Sharing Community
20 October 2025



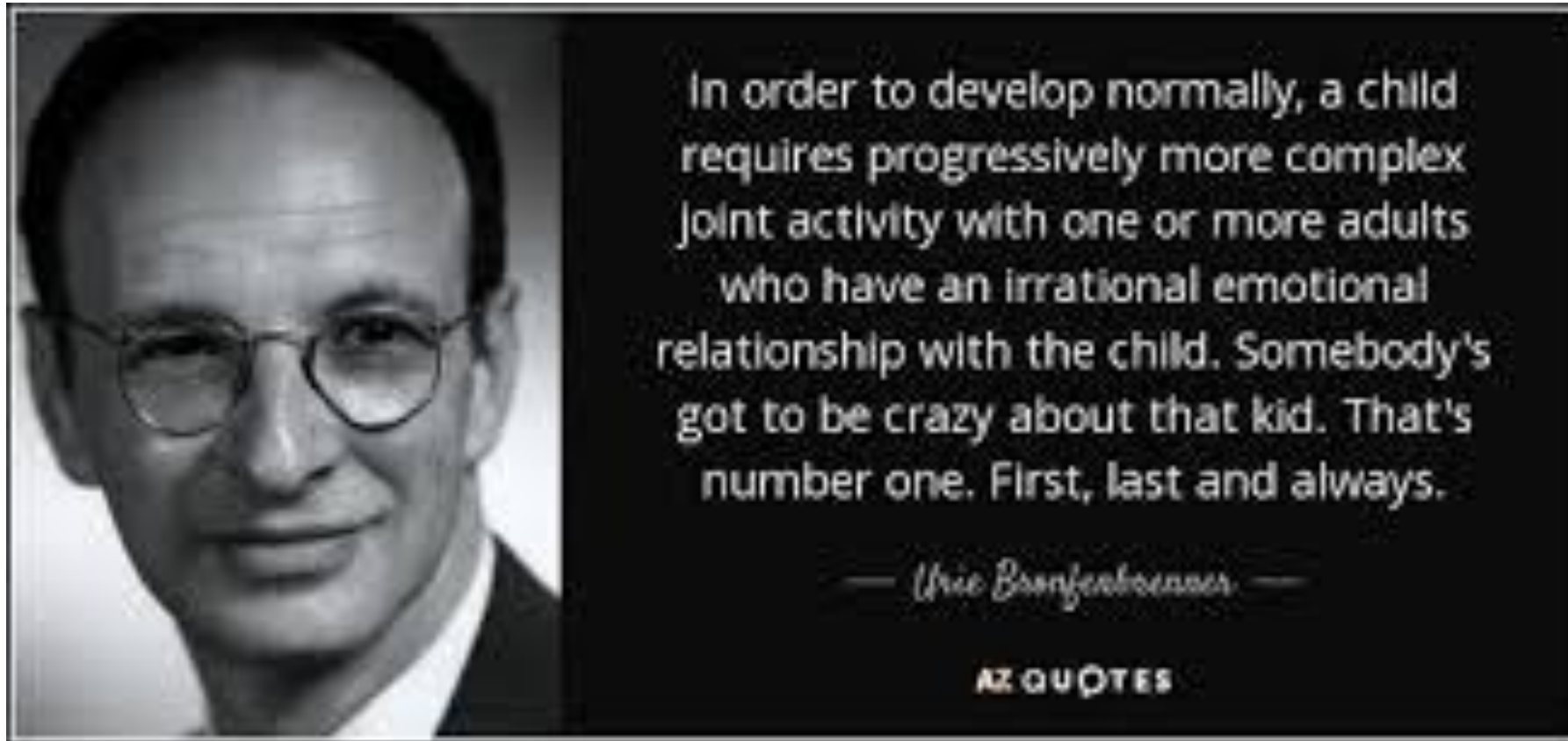
By Heidi Westborg Steel, ICDP Norway

THE ICDP HOUSE - THE CHILD IN INTERACTION WITH ADULTS

ENGLISH



«Somebody's got to be crazy about that kid»



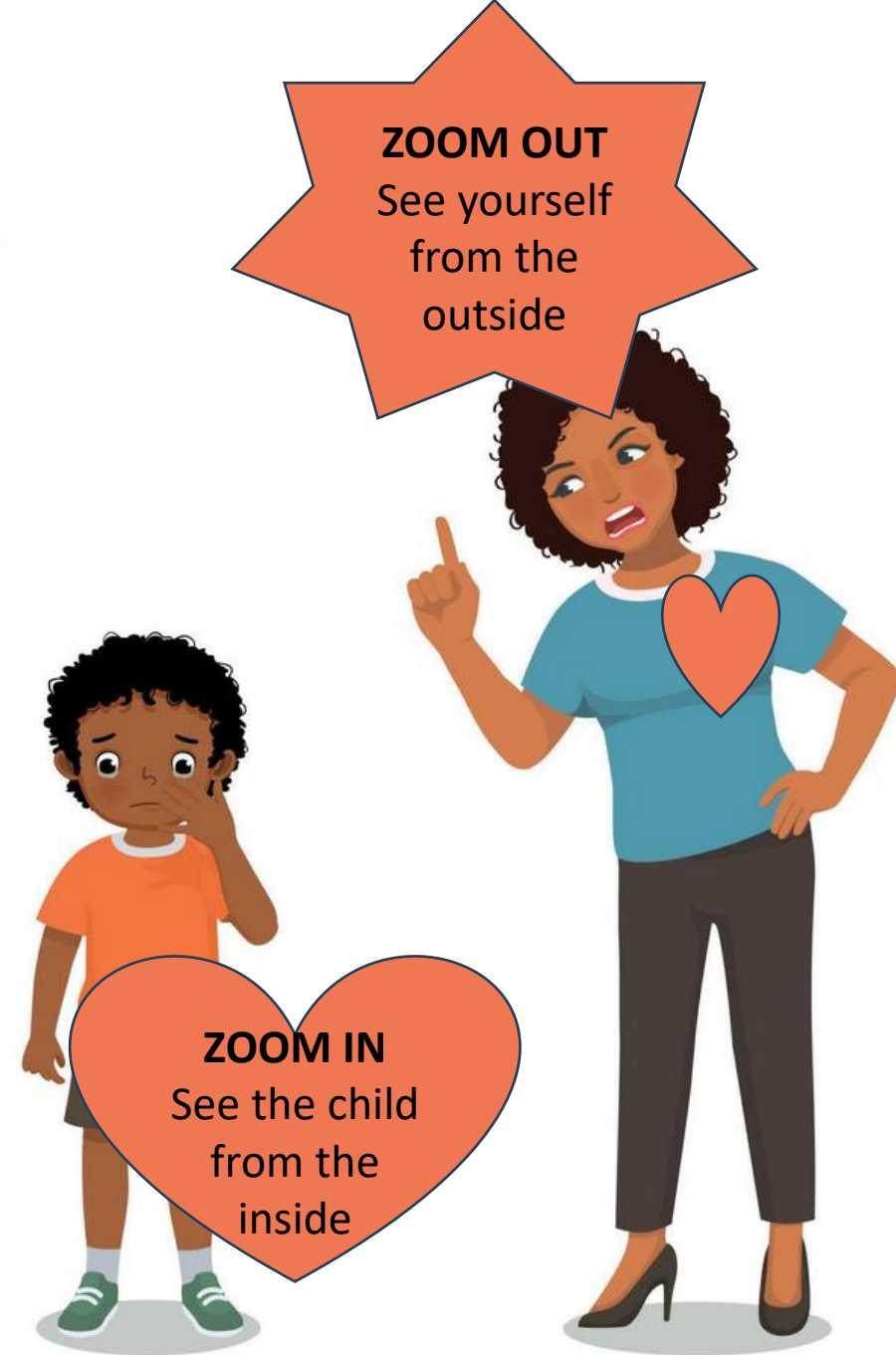
(Urie Bronfenbrenner)

Think of last time
you were angry
at a child



Mentalizing

- **Understand** the feelings, intentions, needs and thoughts behind other people's behaviour.
- **See** the feelings, needs, thoughts, intentions behind our own behaviour.
- Read the others from inside and ourselves from the outside.
- Have empathy both with ourselves and the other persons.





HOW regulate?

Think of a person in
your childhood that
regulated you in a
good manner.

What did they do?



Why do we need the regulative dialogue?

1. Blue Cross in Lesotho in 2003 – substance abuse
2. Community project in Oslo in 2024/5
3. Own children
4. Urban children today – unbalanced?



WHY do we regulate?

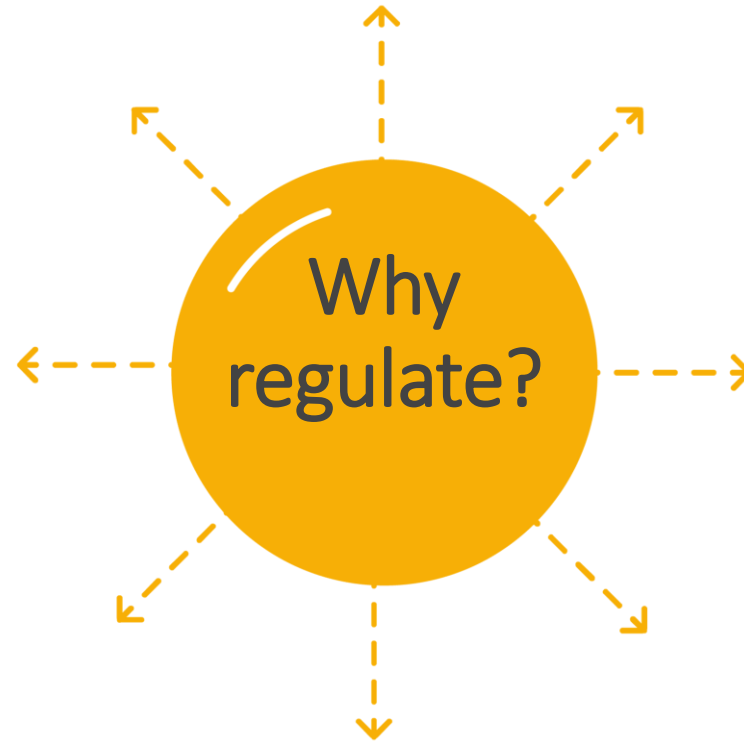


Foundation for self-control and responsibly

Understand acceptable norms in society

Support moral development

Activates the brain's ability to impulse control and reflection.



Help regulate until they can regulate them selves

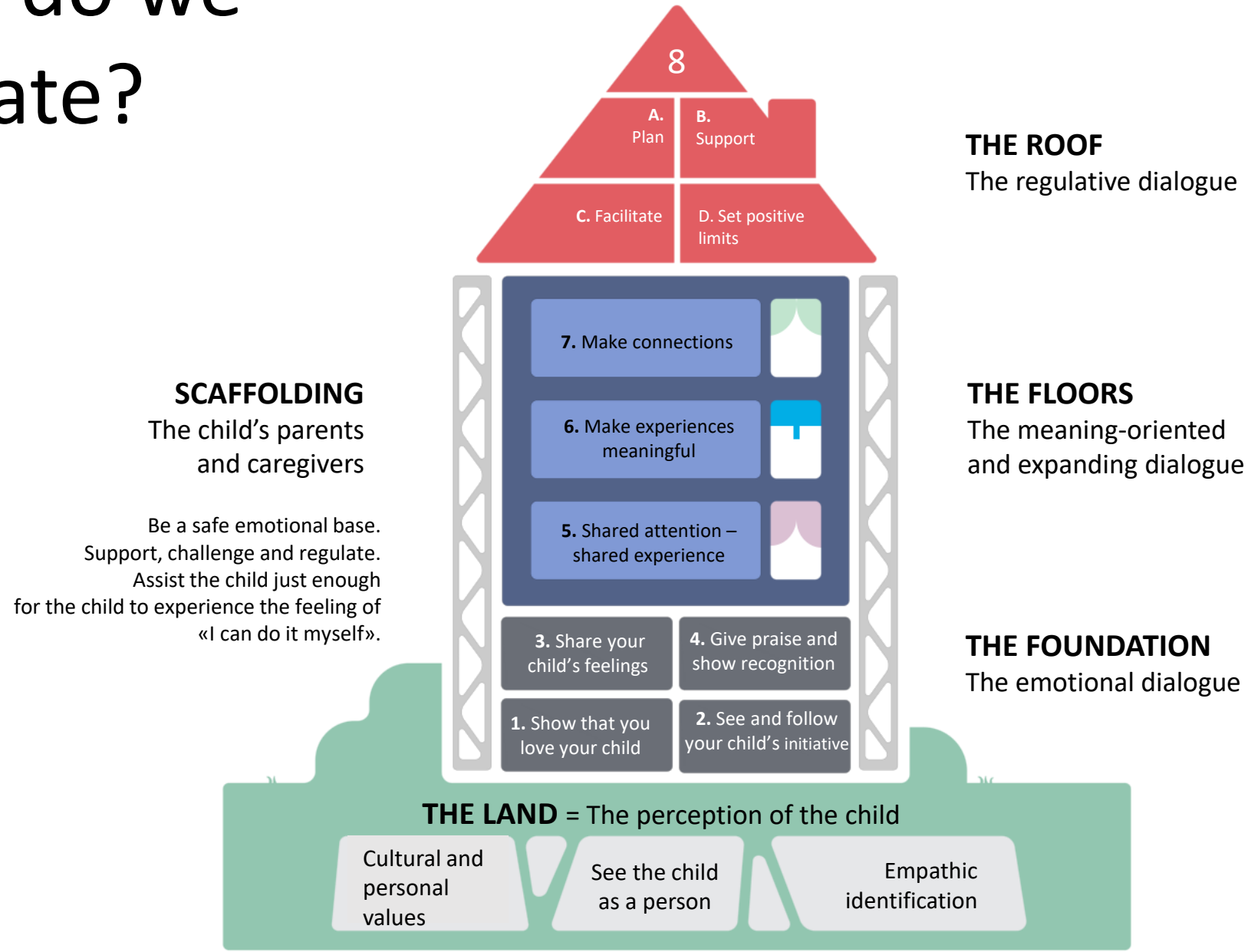
Understand to balance your self – with adapting to society

Become stronger to deal with injustice and disagreements later

We need optimal frustration to develop.



HOW do we regulate?



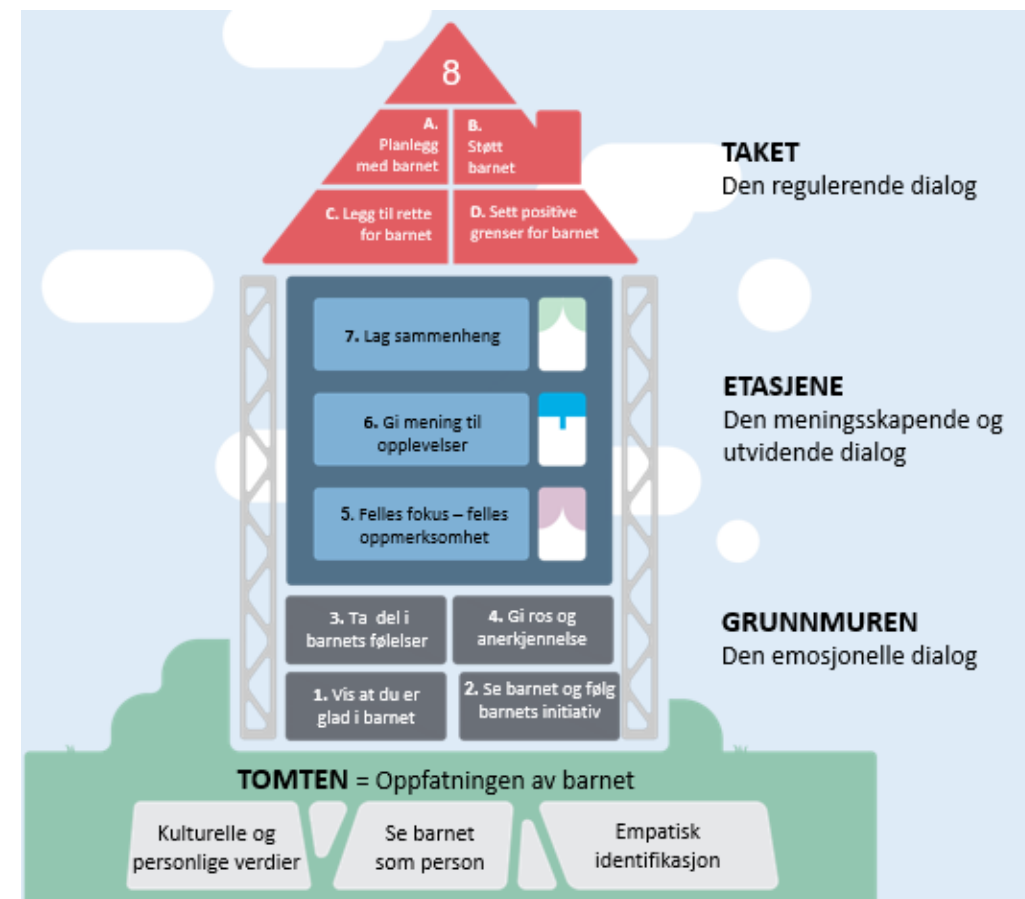
SUMMARIZED THE REGULATIVE DIALOGUE

Support the child's moral understanding and development of self-control

Theme	What	How	Why
8A	Plan	Help the child to see what happens next, make the world predictable	The child needs preparations and capacity to plan, get an overview and see the consequences – control impulses
8B	Support	Give enough, but not too much support	The child gains control and mastery, and by gradual support he/she can master new challenges
8C	Facilitate	Arrange the surroundings in order to help the child to get control over own behavior	Sometimes the situation needs to be changed in order for the child to manage. Structure, routines and predictability help the child to control impulses.
8D	Set positive limits	By explanations and dialogue, make the child understand the limits and social norms	By understanding the limits, the child builds his/her inner control and inner moral and altruism. Builds the child's capacity for mentalizing.

EXAMPLES
from your ICDP work

Setting limits



Film fra RBUP: [4 om følelser](#) - se spesielt Zemir Popovac

For contact:
heidi.westborg.steel@icdp.no

www.icdp.no

