

Sarah Carlblom's background and training is in child development, parent child attachment, trauma, and play therapy modalities.

- 1999 BS Business and Communications; minor in French: Calvin College (Grand Rapids, MI)
- 2004 Masters in Professional Counseling: Ottawa University (Phoenix, AZ)
- 2005 Licensed with the Board of Behavioral Health Examiners (LPC-13113)
- 2005 National Board of Certified Counselors
- Work experience: 2003-2009 Christian Family Care Agency (a forerunner and leader in the field of Child Development, Parent Child Attachment, & Trauma-informed care). 2009 Family Christian Counseling Center (private practice).
- Extensive training and consultation with International leaders in the field: Dr. Bruce Perry (neurosequential model), Dr. Karyn Purvis (Institute of Child Development), Holly VanGoulden (Child development), Anna Gomez (trauma & EMDR), Dr. Bessel Van Der Kolk (brain & body connection), and many continuing education courses on a variety of topics relating to the development and functioning of children and families.

In 2009, Sarah made the decision to become a stay-at-home mom to invest in her family. During this time, Sarah maintained her license and her passion has led her to become involved in various volunteer opportunities, coming alongside children and families in need.

Personal Biography

Sarah grew up in rural Minnesota (near Rochester) and feels a strong connection to her practical farming roots. Sarah is no stranger to the grit and hardwork of country living. Sarah met Ryan Carlblom at Calvin College and they married after graduating. Prior to moving to Phoenix, Sarah and Ryan lived in Grand Rapids, MI and Pella, IA. They have two children Elias (2009) and Ahnika (2012). Both Elias and Ahnika attend PCS. The Carlblom family brings a little country to the city through their Airbnb, The Urban Green House, where they raise chickens, tend gardens, and steward creation by leaving a minimal footprint.

The Carlbloms came to PCS in 2016 for their foster son, but believed they could not afford to send Elias and Ahnika to PCS. They invited Elias, a 2nd grader at the time, to pray with them. One night before bed, Elias called out, "mom, can you come here? God showed me something in my Bible. I think He is showing I me that PCS is the right school for me." Elias began to recite Psalm 119:105 "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." In faith, the Carlbloms enrolled Elias. When Sarah picked Elias up on the first day, he burst into the car saying, "Mom, I know this is the school God had for me! Do you know what we get to say everyday at the beginning of class? Remember that verse... Thy word is a light...? The pledge to the Bible is 'Thy word is a light unto my feet and a lamp upon my path. I will hide God's word in my heart so that I might not sin against God.' We get to say that at the beginning of each day!"

Philosophical Biography

Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” This verse is a cornerstone in the Carlblom’s parenting and in Sarah’s desire to invest in our community.

The lens of God’s Word:

God has given Sarah a passion to come alongside parents and children together, in raising up the next generation to be a generation that hides God’s Word in their hearts and lives transformed because of it. God’s Word is an integral part of the work that she does with children and families. She opens and closes each session with prayer for God’s wisdom, insight, and leading- for his will to be done here on earth, as it is already accomplished in heaven. As God leads and brings His word to mind, Sarah uses it in her work with children.

Partnership with Parents:

Partnership with parents is foundational to Sarah’s work with children. She ascribes to attachment theory, which upholds the relationship between parents and children as foundational to brain development. Researchers in this field are making discoveries about how the brain develops optimally in response to the attunement of the parent and child. Science is confirming that we were created to be in a relationship and that the first relationship (between parent and child) sets the template for healthy brain development and future relationships - a fact that Christians already know by way of God’s word. Sarah views her role joining with parents to support children. Parents are always an integral part of her work with children. Sarah’s goal is to facilitate and strengthen connections between parents and children so that children can align with parents, come under the authority of their parent’s guidance, trust their parents, and experience the joy and delight of their parents over them. She believes that it is her role to walk in step with parents, supporting and reinforcing them in their God-given role, and helping them to implement the changes that both parent and child seek. Seeing a counselor for one hour a week or one hour a month is like going on a diet for that amount of time. There is no benefit at all. In order for change to occur, we need to practice the change daily. In order for change to be effective in working with children, Sarah needs the day-in and day-out partnership of parents.

Work at PCS:

In the school setting, it is not always possible to meet with students and parents together (though parents are always welcome). To mediate this, Sarah’s initial meeting is always with the parents individually. Through this meeting, she comes to understand the child, the dynamics at play in the home and at school, and she and the parents work together to devise a plan of action. Following each session with a child, Sarah writes detailed notes and shares them with the parents so that the parents know what was discussed and how they can reinforce the work at home. Sarah also periodically checks in with the parents over the phone or in person.

Sarah uses God’s word, education, drawings, songs, and experiences to allow children to express themselves and help shift thinking and behavior to be more constructive.