Building Strong Foundations
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NMAIMH competencies addressed
Systems Expertise
  ● Service delivery systems
Thinking
  ● Analyzing information

Using the Circle of Security™ is a way to look at enhanced attachment and can lay the foundation upon which strong parent-child relationships are built. The NM Home Visiting Logic Model can help create a coherent roadmap that informs and guides our work with families which is grounded in research that tells us “positive early experiences lay a foundation for healthy development.” These ideas help us to build cohesive narratives with each family and provide guidance as to the “why and how” of home visiting.

Each parent can come to understand and think about their relationship with their baby— which is at the heart of “being with,” For example, during a home visit we can wonder aloud with parents, “What is happening,” “What would you like to see happen,” and “Why is this happening?” We can help parents explore how to understand their baby’s development so that:

“New Mexico families are supported to raise children who are healthy, happy and successful”

This vision captures the essence of what can happen when babies experience strong attachment and when babies are supported by parents who in turn, are supported by home visitors. Through this parallel process we can begin to use observation, self-awareness and flexible response to support strong attachment (Parlakian & Seibel, 2002).

During a home visit, we carefully note what is working well for each family and we document these observations. We then walk the path of self-awareness which is the ability to explore our thoughts and further explore our emotions more in depth during reflective practice. Finally, we can use a flexible response to approaching others in a way that reflects their individual needs and strengths. This leads to a greater flexibility in our response that comes up during observation and less of our biases and assumptions. These three skills, observation, self-awareness and flexible responses are
key factors to the “how” of home visiting. Parents who are bigger, wiser, stronger and kinder learn to understand that positive parent-child interactions create positive attachment.

How do we reflect these observations in the data? A family shares information (data) with us through responding to screenings, through parent-child interactions and through conversations. For example, when a family expresses a goal that they want to accomplish, we ask ourselves the question, “How is this goal related to one or more outcomes articulated in the Home Visiting Logic Model?”

A parent may say: “I want my baby to be smart,” and we can help parents explore how this goal connects to the outcome, “Children are physically and mentally healthy and ready for school,” and begin to narrow down a focus and activities linked to the outcome. Another parent may express the goal of helping their baby to sleep through the night and we can help parents associate this goal with the outcome of “Children are nurtured by their parents and caregivers.”

The Logic Model provides a framework along with the tools needed to make observations and to be reflective and flexible. By acting upon this information, we can link all this data to tell the story of each family with the child at its center. The New Mexico Home Visiting Logic Model is in essence, a web of relationships weaves a vision that indeed all “New Mexico families are supported to raise children who are healthy, happy and successful.”

Talking points for supervisors: Ask staff members to think about a family they work with.

- Describe the strengths you see in this family.
- Describe the family’s goals in participating in home visiting. How can you link family goals to the Logic Model?
- How do you support goals during a home visit?

References/Additional Resources

NM Home Visiting Program Logic Model http://cyfd.org/docs/hv_logic_model.pdf