Effective transition in Home Visiting
Katherine Chávez, B.S. IMH®II
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NMAIMH competencies addressed
Working with Others
- Supporting other/mentoring

Direct Service Skills
- Life Skills

In the home visiting field, folk’s share that one of the many gratifying parts of the work is when a family completes the program and is better prepared to move forward. Reminiscing with families about their child’s development, reflecting on their journey, and the celebration of their process is part of the gratification. Others share the challenging part of the work is not having the opportunity to say good-bye and not knowing the outcome of the family’s story, therefore, we are left with some unanswered questions. However the family departs from the program, we know transition is not a single event or document, but rather a process.

There are many types of transitions within home visiting. Some of these transitions could be the transfer to another home visitor, the transfer to another program, the transfer from more to less visits, and hopefully the transfer (age-out) out of the home visiting program. Whatever the transition, we can support families by providing a smooth transition by planning ahead for what comes next:

- A transition plan would outline transition goals and services for the family. Is the transition plan based on the family’s needs, strengths, abilities, priorities, desires and interests?
- When do you start talking to families about transition? It is important to begin the transition planning process early to allow time for planning and accessing the support services needed in the future.
Best practice is to review and revise the transition plan on a regular basis with the family. A plan that incorporates current steps and activities promotes an effective transition for the child and family.

What are possible referral sources you might offer to the family? Coordinate with community providers to support parents learning about services and support family involvement in transition. A warm hand-off provides a sense of continuum and less stress.

If a family decides not to move forward, you can provide written information on how to contact providers if the family changes their mind.

It isn't enough to simply be aware that families need guidance to transition successfully but in providing them with concrete action steps gives the advantage to be better prepared for their parenting journey. A transition process is a change or moving forward from one step to the next, either in action or state of being.

Questions to encourage discussion and reflection…

- When do you start talking to families about transition?
- How do you prepare yourself and families to transition out of home visiting?
- How able are you to move forward when you have big feelings around transition?
- How can you support families before, during and after the transition?
- How are you preparing family for change in service delivery?
- If a dependency has developed, how does the home visitor deal with the family’s dependence on them as a transition out of the program approaches?

References/Additional Resources