Community of Practice:
A Collaborative Observation-Guided Approach to Improving Home Visiting Practices

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Why a **Community of Practice**?

- Implementation of evidence-based programs  
  (Azzi-Lessing, 2011)

- Increased focus on parent and child **engagement**  
  (Nievar et al, 2010; Roggman et al., 2015)

- Effective practices across HV models
  - Infrequently meet with other home visitors
  - Rarely get to observe each others’ practices
  - Benefit from sharing ideas and observing practices
  - Weak programs may benefit from strong programs
Community of Practice (CoP)

Group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly

• Community of active practitioners
• Sharing tips and best practices
• Providing support
• Formal or informal

Home Visiting CoP in Utah

Participants:
Utah MIECHV funded programs
2 PAT, 1 NFP, 1 HFA → PAT

N= 18 HV
High turnover
CoP focus: Research-based practices

- Home Visiting Rating Scales
  - Relationship with families
  - Responsiveness to family strengths
  - Facilitation of parent-child interaction
  - Nonintrusiveness/collaboration
  - Engagement

(HOVRS-A+: Roggman et al. 2010)
HOVRS Scores (Pre CoP)
UT MIECHV with Other Samples

Excellent
Good
Adequate
Needs Training

n=18, 83, 54

- UT MIECHV
- Sample 2
- Sample 3
CoP Design

4 Quarterly meetings
  #1: Practices and group structure introduced
  #2: Focus on practice: Planning with parents
  #3: Focus on practice: Facilitating parent-child interaction
  #4: Focus on practice: Strengths-based parenting feedback
  + 2 meetings by conference call (didn’t work)

Meeting structure
  **Large group**: practice presentation & discussion
  **Videos**: view positive practice videos (strengths only feedback)
    (Practice videos due before meetings 2,3,4)
  **Small groups**: discuss specific practice experiences and ideas
  **Large group**: report and reflect on practices and ideas (best practice tips)
CoP Practice Example: Planning with Parents

Why plan with parents?

• Responsiveness—uses family strengths
• Individualization – engagement, cultural competence
• Sustainable impacts – planful parenting
• Applicable to other life areas—executive function skills
# How HOVRS measures planning

## 1. To plan activities and topics of the home visit with the parent, the home visitor

1 = shows no evidence of planning for this home visit or future home visits  
3 = shows evidence of planning but no evidence of parent input.  
5 = shows evidence of planning with parent input.  
7 = shows evidence of planning with parent input and evidence of parent deciding activity, materials, or who provides them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needs training</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>7 (7)</td>
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## 2. To prepare for the home visit using parent-selected activities, the home visitor

1 = does not have necessary materials for the visit.  
3 = is prepared for activities of the home visit (e.g., has necessary materials).  
5 = brings or does activities selected by parents.  
7 = emphasizes parent-selected activities and organizes home visit around them.

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CoP Practice Example: Planning with Parents

- Video preview
  - Ground rules
    - Preview video—anything the Home Visitor would like to say about the video or what we should look for?
    - While watching video, note what you “See”
    - CoP members can add thing(s) they “Like”
      - no adding, no changing, no criticism
    - The starring home visitor may go first
    - After “Like” everyone fill in other notes on SLAC form
CoP Practice Example: Planning with Parents

• Small groups (3)
  – Group discussion on planning
    • How do you get parent input for home visits?
    • How do you prepare for planning?
    • How do you use parent strengths in planning?
    • How do you begin if parents have poor planning skills?

• Large group sharing and reflection

• Assignment
  – Practice: Engaging parent and child together
    • Video record 5 min of observation-feedback
    • Send in videos by ____
Case study: HV #7

• Pre-test to post-test
  – Responsiveness from good (5) to excellent (7)
  – Facilitating parent-child interaction from a little better than adequate (4) to almost excellent (6)
  – Self-assessment similar to observer ratings
  – Self-goals (skill, steps/resources, challenges, helpers, first steps):
    • Give feedback on child’s reactions to parent behavior
    • Help families incorporate activities into daily routine
Case study: HV #17

• Pre-test to post-test
  – Responsiveness from a little better than adequate (4) to almost excellent (6)
  – Facilitation from less than adequate (2) to good (5) to better than good (6)
  – Self-assessment similar to observer ratings
  – Goals (skill, steps/resources, challenges, helpers, first steps):
    • Get families more involved in planning
    • Share videos with families on visits

  – Video
Qualitative Feedback

What did you learn?
• How to learn from video
• Importance of parent-child interaction on home visits
• Value of good open-ended questions
• To slow down in a home visit, say less but make it count
• Learned that I can learn a lot from other home visitors
• “I’m not alone”

What did you like?
• Videos, many videos, watching videos, reviewing videos, feedback on videos, discussing videos,
• Lots of ways to do the same practice, lots of ideas, brainstorming
• Positive encouraging atmosphere
• Sharing ideas across programs
• Food
Considerations

**Strengths**
- Sharing of effective practices
- Sharing across programs
- Increased comfort with video
- Positive qualitative feedback
- Evidence of improvements in practice

**Concerns**
- Attrition of home visitors
- Quarterly training: frequent enough?
- More evidence for CoP
- Video platforms
For additional information:

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