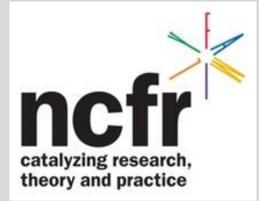




Survey of CFLEs, Family Professionals, and Early Childhood Professionals on the Practice of Family Life Education with Early Head Start Home Visiting

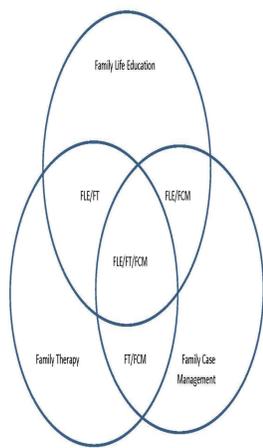


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Introduction

Programs have diverse interpretations of Early Head Start (EHS) home visiting purposes, resulting in lack of a consistent evidence based model (Petkus, 2015). Research on home visiting has blossomed, but some question the effectiveness of existing approaches and minimal results (Gomby et al., 1999). More recently, researchers have focused on the quantity and quality of home visits (Raikes et al., 2006; Roggman et al., 2008) to suggest the essential components that promote positive family outcomes. We suggest that alignment with the strengths-based family life education (FLE) methodology (prevention, education, collaboration) and/or Certified Family Life Educators (CFLE) as home visitors, would bring more consistency to this important component to EHS services. We sought to identify perspectives about this model from the perspectives of CFLEs, Family Scientists, and Early Childhood Professionals.

FLE Model



- Family Life Education**
- ◊ Joint problem solving
 - ◊ Collaborative planning
 - ◊ Parent demonstration of learned skills
 - ◊ Family systems theory, sibling involvement
 - ◊ Adverting later problems, through empowering and self-sustainability
 - ◊ Parent education, focus on attachment
 - ◊ Parent meetings
- Family Therapy**
- ◊ Mental Health Specialist consulting
 - ◊ Special needs consulting
 - ◊ Referrals
 - ◊ Edinburgh, ASQ
- Family Case Management**
- ◊ Meetings with LMSV, Special needs consultant, etc.
 - ◊ Individualized Family Service Plan

Myers et al. (2011) & Petkus (2015)

Method

We designed a questionnaire that contained 23-items including demographic (see Table 1) and six open-ended questions (e.g., To what extent does FLE prepare EHS home visitors?). The survey was electronically administered. Qualitative data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Sandelowski, 2000) and “analyst triangulation” (Patton, 2002, p. 560). The authors coded the data separately then met as a group to discuss and finalize the major coding themes.

Results

We collected data from 123 participants. Eighty-two participants agreed that FLE could be a model for EHS home visiting, while 72 participants thought training in FLE prepares an individual to be a home visitor. Despite this agreement, participants were almost split with 59 participants stating yes that CFLE could be an educational requirement. One percent disagreed and 17% expressed uncertainty that FLE could be a model for EHS home visiting. About one fourth of participants said that training in FLE prepares an individual to be a home visitor while 2% said that it does not.

Participants

Gender Identity: Female (94.3%), Male (7%)

Highest Level of Education: Associate’s degree (1.6%), Bachelor’s degree (29.3%), Master’s degree (30.9%), Doctoral degree (35.8%), Other (2.4%)

Age: Mean age 46.51, Standard deviation 14.68, Range 22 – 81)

Family Life Education and Early Head Start

Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE): Yes (73.2%), No (26.8%)

Familiar with CFLE: Yes (78.8%), No (21.2%)

Familiar with EHS home visits: Yes (77%), No (23%)



Findings

Theme (Benefits)	Thematic Elements	Representative Quote
FLE Model is Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ FLE content areas are beneficial ◊ Content and practice of FLE would benefit families ◊ Better or equivalent to other approaches 	“...well-trained professionals who understand and know how to work with families. A CFLE has a broad based training in several areas of family education, so they can guide parents and provide good tips and counsels for the families.”
FLE is relevant educational training for home visiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ FLE provides relevant training for home visiting ◊ Family degree plus CFLE is ideal ◊ Content areas and other hallmarks of FLE ◊ FLE with emphasis on human development 	“My family life education training prepared me to help families learn within their homes and to help them improve their parenting skills, through home-based visits.”
FLE is a step to professionalization of EHS home visiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ FLE would provide consistency in training and approach ◊ Professionalization and standardization ◊ Current lack of national credentials for EHS home visitors ◊ FLE aligns with aspects of EHS ◊ Multidimensional approach of FLE 	“FLE is an ecological approach, and as such, fits well with HS’s focus on improving the system of the family to help the child. Additionally, unlike parent education only, a FLE can help families with all family life issues.”

Conclusion

This project is the first step to explore evidence in regards to the proposed integration of FLE and EHS home visiting. These findings will help stakeholders start to seriously explore this approach as well as prompt future research on how to further develop and refine this FLE model.

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Note: Additional findings from this study will be presented at SRCD in Austin, TX.