Strengthening Connections with Families through Live Video Visits (LVV)

Facilitated Discussion Series

Collective Strategies

Session 1: Strong Relationships, Strong Foundations

• **Positive** mindset:

- o believe that every family has strengths; sometimes you have to look for them!
- o keep LVVs positive; ask families something positive that has happened for them this week
- o LVVs are here to stay accept them!
- o compliment families/positive feedback, "I love how X." or "That looked so natural."

• Family engagement strategies:

- o ask parent/caregiver questions to keep them engaged
- o ask families what they want to work on during the session (family led)
- o ask open-ended, reflective questions
- o increase family's confidence to implement strategies by practicing strategies/activities with them

Relationships-based strategies:

- o hold space for families let them know you're thinking about them
- o active listening, "This is what I heard you say, is that correct?"

Session 2: Connect with Care: Joint planning and checking in build parent capacity and supports family centered care

• Considerations when **building relationships to build capacity**:

- Genuine/authentic interactions when supporting families families know the difference
- Know that building relationships takes time!
- Make parents feel like their input is welcomed, important and valued, and build upon their ideas
- Be open to other's perspectives, experiences, values and family culture
- Talk it out: ask about what is working, what is not and together develop a plan by asking open ended questions, repeating back what has been shared to be sure you understand fully
- Perspective families may be uncomfortable with a Zoom camera, so parents may want to get out of the screen view
- Build trust first

Considerations when Engaging and Supporting Families in Family Centered Care::

- Sometime pushing the caregivers "closes the door"
- We may have to "give to get", share our stories as appropriate
- If parents are not comfortable, they may not always be honest when checking in or talking about how the joint plan has been going
- Use resources of Social Emotional Consultant at CFCs if you need support and in supporting families
- Use laughter, be joyful but never laugh at child/family's expense
- o As we have grown more comfortable, we are seeing the big picture
- Treat parents as partners

Joint Planning/Checking In

- o Checking in and joint planning are different, but intertwine
- o Check-ins are more "free-flowing" with experience
- Talk about ideas to get the "big picture"
- Follow up with families about what was talked about in a prior session (ie. return to work/childcare, siblings etc.) -- this way they know you care and really listened; helps to build the relationship

Being Present:

- Be mindful avoid distractions while interacting with families
- Try not to overwhelm families or yourselves
- Read families' non-verbal cues/communication
- Pause & slow down allow you and parent to process
- Listen without judgment and if you do make judgments (bc we all do),
 acknowledge those judgments and examine where they are coming from

• Other comment:

o Talking with peers here is our "water cooler" moment

Session 3: Intention and Attuned Interactions

• Relationship Build through Attuned interactions:

- Family views are integral piece of the puzzle (they feel seen/felt/heard)
- o Unique with each family as each relationship is unique
- Doesn't matter if in-person or LVV, we need to connect with the family
- Using the phrase "this is what I heard...." to rephrase and confirm what parent said (actively listen)
- Reflect with parent on what they say

• Intentional Interactions to support coaching relationship:

- o Repeat/mirror what you heard parent say LVV has helped with hybrid approach
- Knowing when to disclose and how much to disclose when sharing our stories with the family to support the relationship

- Pausing before we respond
- Reflection is important (both with the family and self reflection)

• Being Flexible, Responsive and Purposeful in our interactions

- Sometime meeting parent where they are at is difficult but necessary
- Sometimes we may go off topic and then circle back
- Build on what parent states and then expand and shift as needed
- o Remembering that each family is unique and different

Session 4: Building Family Capacity Through Collaborative Interactions

- **Collaborative problem solving strategies** (instead of offering suggestions, work together to help families solve their own problems):
 - o "let's watch together"
 - o think aloud: "I wonder if X, what do you think about that?" "I wonder what will happen if we do X."
 - o it's okay to not have all the answers; garner the expertise of both families & professionals (it's not one-sided)
 - o "pick each other's brain"
 - o vocalize observations: "I noticed X, what did you see?"
 - o align support/help with what parents want/need
 - o **flexibility**; be willing to shift with caregiver as needed
 - o giving answers/strategies is not the same as problem solving
 - o be patient and intentional when engaging in collaborative problem solving
 - o involving families in this process can build their confidence & competence (teaches them that they have answers and ideas)

Active listening

- o rephrase what parent said, "So what I think I'm hearing you say is..."
- o listen for opportunities to learn about family priorities and address them (don't overlook them!)
- o acknowledge & validate caregivers: "It sounds like you're doing X." or "I can understand why you might think that."

• Be responsive:

- o when parent shares a problem/priority/situation, respond by asking questions to learn more (see below)
- Ask specific questions to learn more about the situation (instead of giving suggestions)
 - o Tell me more about X.
 - o What happens when X.
 - o What have you tried?
 - o What worked/didn't work?
 - o silence can be a powerful tool –pause & wait for a response

• Be positive (to build their confidence):

- o "Wow, did you see that?"
- o Compliment the parent/"massage the ego"

Session 5: Communicate to Connect

• General communication strategies:

- detailed, specific communication
- model, observe & provide specific feedback
- o address frequent mismatches and realign; "pendulum swings"
- consider eye contact and position of computer monitor

Beginning of partnership:

- sharing my style at the beginning of the partnership
- start with phone calls, so families can hear my voice

O Wrap up:

- consider buffer time to allow for questions, concerns, etc. to come up
- questions to engage the family
- summarize session
- revisit the IFSP

Checking in at the start of the session:

- use joint planning "What would you like to focus on for today's session?"
- revisit the IFSP

Continuous check-ins –

- "Is this working for you?"
- "Am I meeting your needs?"
- ask questions to make sure families understand "Do you need more examples?"

Ask families about their preferences:

- logistics: devices, etc.
- comfort comfort level of family, where do they want LVVs to happen, etc.
- learning & interaction style "What kind of learner are you?" "What's your preferred method of communication?" "I tend to be direct, is that okay with you?"

Varied communication:

- change style based on what each family needs
- sometimes need extra energy, less energy:
 - extra energy it takes to best support each family's unique needs
- hold back sometimes, say more sometimes
- direct vs. indirect

- non-verbal communication eye contact, head nod, etc.; sometimes families need more of this
- build in pause time

Other comments:

■ Harder to "read the room" when on Zoom

Ah-ha moments/big take-aways:

- o LVVs are here to stay accept them!
- o Talking with peers here is our "water cooler" moment
- o "I made friends through the camera."
- "This has been a cool experience."
- o "I learned specific questions to help families engage in open conversations."
- o "The strategies I can take to the new me. You can always keep learning."
- o "I'm reflective, but realized there is room for growth. This gave me a new avenue for new questions."
- o "This evolved my LVVs to another level."
- "Wonderful strategies for how to better serve my families."