

Strengthening Connections with Families through Live Video Visits (LVV)

Facilitated Discussion Series

Collective Strategies

Session 1: Strong Relationships, Strong Foundations

- **Positive mindset:**
 - believe that every family has strengths; sometimes you have to look for them!
 - keep LVVs positive; ask families something positive that has happened for them this week
 - LVVs are here to stay – accept them!
 - compliment families/positive feedback, “I love how X.” or “That looked so natural.”
- **Family engagement strategies:**
 - ask parent/caregiver questions to keep them engaged
 - ask families what they want to work on during the session (family led)
 - ask open-ended, reflective questions
 - increase family’s confidence to implement strategies by practicing strategies/activities with them
- **Relationships-based strategies:**
 - hold space for families – let them know you’re thinking about them
 - 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
 - As we have grown more comfortable, we are seeing the big picture
 - Treat parents as partners
- **Joint Planning/Checking In**
 - Checking in and joint planning are different, but intertwine
 - 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:**
 - 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)
 - 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:**
 - 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
 - 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):
 - “let’s watch together”
 - think aloud: “I wonder if X, what do you think about that?” “I wonder what will happen if we do X.”
 - it’s okay to not have all the answers; garner the expertise of both families & professionals (it’s not one-sided)
 - “pick each other’s brain”
 - vocalize observations: “I noticed X, what did you see?”
 - **align support/help** with what parents want/need
 - **flexibility**; be willing to shift with caregiver as needed
 - giving answers/strategies is not the same as problem solving
 - be patient and intentional when engaging in collaborative problem solving
 - involving families in this process can build their confidence & competence (teaches them that they have answers and ideas)
- **Active listening**
 - rephrase what parent said, “So what I think I’m hearing you say is...”
 - listen for opportunities to learn about family priorities and address them (don’t overlook them!)
 - acknowledge & validate caregivers: “It sounds like you’re doing X.” or “I can understand why you might think that.”
- **Be responsive:**
 - 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)
 - Tell me more about X.
 - What happens when X.
 - What have you tried?
 - What worked/didn’t work?
 - **silence** can be a powerful tool –pause & wait for a response

- **Be positive (to build their confidence):**
 - “Wow, did you see that?”
 - Compliment the parent/“massage the ego”

Session 5: Communicate to Connect

- **General communication strategies:**
 - detailed, specific communication
 - model, observe & provide specific feedback
 - 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
 - **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 LVs 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:

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