

SUMMER 2017

From the Desk of Susan Atwell
Office of Children and Family Services-Unit Manager



Dear Healthy Families,
Thank you for all your hard work preparing for our upcoming national accreditation. I know we are all under a supreme amount of pressure to complete accreditation activities on top of our regular work! Hang in there, we will get through this together! If you have any questions or need some support, please reach out to the OCFS team. We will do our very best to help you with any questions and challenges you might have.

to all of you: **“Changing the World one Family at a Time.”** The idea springs from the wonderful work that you all do every day to make a difference! I am truly honored to work with such a great program.

Have a wonderful summer and keep up the great work. See you in September!

Sue

I want to thank those who stopped to see me at our table at the 22nd Annual NYS Child Abuse Prevention Conference. It was so great meeting new people and getting to know them better! I look forward to spending time with you at the Training Institute in September. It is shaping up to be an outstanding conference, and we will likely have time for networking activities, too. The theme for the training is dedicated



HEALTHY FAMILIES NEW YORK

the Link

Statewide Regional Training Days-From the Ground Up: Building Protective Factors, Engagement and Retention **Fatima Horne, PCANY**

Every relationship begins with a conversation—and this conversation relies on our ability to listen to parents share their qualities, abilities, experiences, the strengths they bring to their parenting role, and where they may be experiencing challenges. We recognize that a parent’s strengths are like seeds in the ground; some have already sprouted and begun to grow. It is through our relationships with parents that we have the unique opportunity to partner with them to nurture and support the increased growth of these sprouts. This is what helps build communities of happy, healthy, safe, and smart children. Thus, this was the focus of our Statewide Regional Training Days – From the Ground Up: Building Protective Factors, Engagement and Retention.



Supervisors at NYC training engaged in breakout session.

As we concentrate on building each family’s 5 Protective Factors, (see page 2) we see how similar it is to what has been our practice for decades: identifying family strengths and building upon those strengths to enhance parenting skills, problem solving abilities, and family functioning. Using the term protective factors and the accompanying research adds structure to our approach as we build upon family’s strengths while reducing risk; we thread this through all aspects of our work with families. It begins with the Parent Survey discussion and continues all the way through to graduation.

Cont'd



Office of Children and Family Services



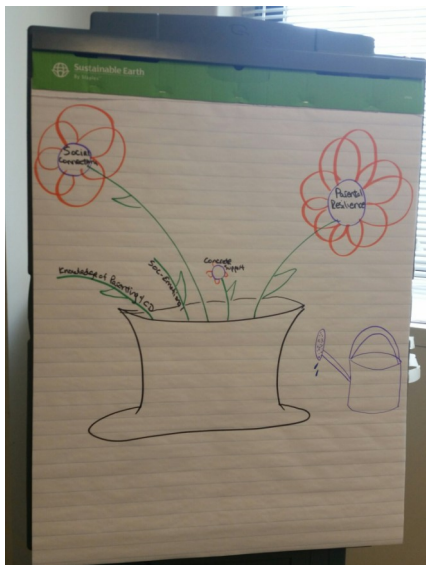
Prevent Child Abuse New York

There are threads that run from the Protective Factors (PFs) to every aspect of our work.

We:

- o *Identify* strengths and challenges related to PF's in the Parent Survey, and use these as a **benchmark for family progress**
- o *Document* the family's progress with addressing risk factors and building PF's in the **Home Visit Narrative**
- o *Build* PF's through the Family Goal Plan process and capture it on the **Family Goal Plan form**
- o *Factor* the families progress with building PF's into **level change and transition decisions**
- o *Support* all of these processes in supervision and *document* them in our **supervision notes**

All the above support and showcase what we do, how we do it, and why building and strengthening Protective Factors leads to family successes!



"Helping grow parent's protective factors."
~Flipchart from Statewide Training Day~



Using CHEERS, prenataly
Isabel daSilva, PCANY

We know that encouraging a positive parent-child bond will support that child's overall social, emotional, and physical being. Home visitors have developed many skills to engage families in ways that enhance this parent-child bond. We also know the importance of encouraging this bond prenataly. By identifying the components of CHEERS, a home visitor can explore with mothers and fathers the connection they have with their child. Home visitors use Reflective Strategies such as Accentuate the Positive (ATP) and Explore and Wonder to help enhance this bond with parents and their child. However, when the child is still growing inside the mother's womb and not visible to Mom or Dad, identifying the components of CHEERS offers a unique challenge. How can home visitors utilize Reflective Strategies during the prenatal stage of development?

A strong bond between individuals is based not only on physical interactions; we also connect with others in the way we feel and think about them. When we think about Prenatal CHEERS, we recognize that it is not based only on behavioral observations. Instead, a prenatal home visit will include more conversations about the child and the relationship between that child and his or her mother, father, or other caregiver. In this way, the parent creates an image of their child in their mind. For example, let's say a pregnant mother learns from her home visitor that at 15 weeks her developing baby begins to respond to music. She plays different styles of music to see if her baby prefers one style to the other. This might be an example of "Expression" or perhaps even "Empathy." If a dad shares that his baby likes to push his hands when he touches Mom's belly, he is describing "Rhythm and Reciprocity." The home visitor might use an ATP by pointing out that when Mom and Dad respond to their baby in this way they are *already* bonding with their baby, and that bonding is helping to grow their baby's brain.



Below are some basic Healthy Families America guidelines regarding the prenatal documentation of CHEERS:

- *Not all components of CHEERS will be able to be documented at each visit.
- *Beginning at 24 weeks gestational age, at least 1 item needs to be documented
- * At 31 weeks gestational age, at least two items need to be documented.
- *Generally, the two "E"s are the easiest to document prenataly (expression and empathy).



Reflective Practice in Supervision and Parent Survey Work

Caroline Chant, PCANY

We have been hearing a lot about Reflective Practice in our Healthy Families New York network. Healthy Families America defines it as “the use of reflection to explore a person’s ability to be attuned to another’s emotions, to recognize and self-reflect when personal responses are triggered, to reflect on their interactions with others, and to process the ways their own

feelings, experiences, and thoughts may impact their relationship with another.” In my role as an FAW QA specialist, I have the opportunity to observe all levels of reflective work, both in FAW supervision and during the administration of the Parent Survey. This work includes the use of Reflective Strategies such as Accentuate the Positive, Motivational Interviewing strategies such as open-ended questions, and other communication tools such as wondering curiosity. In FAW supervision, reflective practice creates the opportunity for the FAW to reflect on what she learned about the family, how she was able to gather information and how she feels about their experiences. To help us see the benefits of reflective practice, the following offers an example of the same supervision conversation: one using non-reflective language and the other using reflective language with the reflective tool used in parentheses. We hope you will use this dialogue example to strengthen your own work. Let us know if you find ways to incorporate it into your team meetings or supervision sessions!

Non-Reflective Conversation:

Supervisor: “So let’s talk about your assessment, how did it go?”
FAW: “It went well. Mom and Dad had a lot to say.”
Supervisor: “Were you able to get the information you needed for scoring?”
FAW: “Yes”
Supervisor: “How is the relationship between Mom and Dad?”
FAW: “They seemed good together. Dad was not supposed to be at the visit, so it was a surprise that he was there.”
Supervisor: “Any of the ‘Big Three’ in this family?”
FAW: “Yes, Mom said she has had challenges with depression.”
Supervisor: “So let’s make sure you put that on the form as a current issue. What about their childhoods?”
FAW: “Mom shared that she had a very bad childhood and was abused both physically and sexually.”
Supervisor: “What about Dad?”
FAW: “Nothing for Dad; he said it was good.”
Supervisor: “Who do you think would be a good fit for this family?”
FAW: “I think Mary would be good.”
Supervisor: “OK, it looks like Mary has room, so we will get the ball rolling.”
Supervisor: “Anything else that stands out or you want to talk about?”
FAW: “No.”



Reflective Conversation

Supervisor: “I was wondering how your assessment went, what stood out for you?” (Open-ended question)
FAW: “It went well, Mom and Dad had a lot to say.”
Supervisor: “What kinds of things did they share?” (Open-ended question)
FAW: “They were really open about talking about their childhood and plans for when they become parents.”
Supervisor: “I’m wondering what kinds of things you learned about their childhood?” (Wondering curiosity, open-ended question)
FAW: “Mom shared that she had a very bad childhood and was abused both physically and sexually, and Dad said he had a good childhood.”
Supervisor: “What kinds of things did Dad share that made his childhood good?” (Open-ended question)
FAW: “Well, I don’t really know, he just said it was good.”
Supervisor: “I am wondering how in the future when someone offers a vague answer we might dive further into that?” (Wondering curiosity)
FAW: “I am thinking maybe I could ask for an example of what was good.”
Supervisor: “Sounds like a plan. As Mom was telling you all these things about her childhood, what were you feeling?”
FAW: “It was really hard for me to hear her story, but she seemed comfortable in sharing her experiences. I think she felt a little better after.”
Supervisor: “It sounds like she trusted you enough to share her story. I am wondering what you think you did to help her feel safe sharing with you?” (Reflection, open-ended question)
FAW: “I just listened. I did not say much, and I didn’t react to anything she was sharing.”
Supervisor: “It sounds like you were able to be neutral, and just be there to hear her story.” (Affirmation)
Supervisor: “I am wondering about the relationship between Mom and Dad?”
FAW: “They seemed good together, Dad was not supposed to be at the visit, so it was a surprise that he was there.”
Supervisor: “What kinds of things make you say they were good together?” (Open-ended question)
FAW: “Well, when we were having the conversation about relationship, they shared that they argue a little, but it is not a problem and they have never been violent with each other.”
Supervisor: “Sounds like you were able to get a lot of information about their relationship. You also said Dad was not supposed to be there, can you tell me a little more about that?” (Reflection, open-ended question)
FAW: “Well, like always, I let Mom know we look for both parents to be there. But, Mom said Dad couldn’t because of his work hours being so unpredictable, so I did not expect to see him.”
Supervisor: “So you did your thing where you find out about the dads right at the start, and look what happened this time, he ended up joining the visit!” (Accentuate the Positive)
FAW: “Yes, I was happy to see him there, he was really involved and seemed to enjoy talking about his life and plans for the baby.”
Supervisor: “You were able to engage him as well. So I see that as far as issues around domestic violence, mental health and substance abuse, you noted Mom had some challenges with depression.” (Summary)
FAW: “Yes, Mom is in counseling, and says it seems to help her when she is feeling down.”
Supervisor: “When we think about assigning them an FSW, who do you think might be a good fit?” (Open-ended question)
FAW: “I think Mary would be good.”
Supervisor: “What is it about Mary that makes you think she would work well with this family?” (Open-ended question)
FAW: “Well Mary is very hands on with activities and curricula, and Mom and Dad were excited by the idea of having someone come in who would help them learn how to play with their baby and help them learn.”
Supervisor: “We can continue to talk about that transition. Is there anything else you want to cover for today?”
FAW: “Not today.”
Supervisor: “What are your thoughts for next week, things in particular you want to make sure we follow up on?” (Open-ended question)
FAW: “It would be good to talk next week about some outreach activities coming up.”
Supervisor: “OK, if you’re sure it can wait until then, I’ve made a note of it.”

WARM WELCOMES



Resources to support the articles referenced with the above toolbox icon in the 2017 Summer Link can be found on the Healthy Families New York website in the HFNY Network section:
<http://healthyfamiliesnewyork.org/Staff/login.htm>

- Statewide Training Day Packet 2017
- HFA CHEERS Helpful Prompts (Prenatal)
- For Supervisors: When to use each of the Reflective Strategies



EDITOR

Erika Leveillee
Prevent Child Abuse New York

MANAGING EDITOR

Ellen Butowsky
Prevent Child Abuse New York

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Bernadette Johnson
NYS Office of Children & Family Services
HEALTHY FAMILIES NEW YORK UNIT MANAGER
Susan Atwell

NYS Office of Children & Family Services

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Timothy Hathaway
Prevent Child Abuse New York

The Link is published twice a year as a joint venture of Prevent Child Abuse New York and the New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

SUBMISSIONS

ebutowsky@preventchildabuseny.org
PCANY
33 Elk St., 2nd Floor, Albany, NY 12207
518-445-1273 / 1-800-CHILDREN
NYS OCFS
Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS)
52 Washington St. 335N, Rensselaer, NY 12144
518-402-6770

GOVERNOR

Andrew M. Cuomo

ACTING COMMISSIONER

Sheila J. Poole

Margaret Gullick~CHSR



I joined the HFNY evaluation and research team at the Center for Human Services Research this past January. I am currently working to update, streamline, and clarify our reports to make them more useful to all HFNY team members, and to advance research using these data. Though I grew up in New York, I've spent the past 15 years out of state and have just recently moved back to the area. Before moving to the capital region, I worked as a postdoctoral research associate at Northwestern University and the University of Texas at Austin. My work there focused on examining how

children's educational outcomes are impacted and predicted by individual differences in their brains, socio-economic status, and skill. I received my B.A. in psychology from Wesleyan University and my Ph.D. in cognitive neuroscience from Dartmouth College. In my off-hours, I volunteer as an adult literacy tutor. I love to cook, read, hang out with my cats, and travel (especially to anywhere warm!)

Lisa Galatio~PCANY

I joined the PCANY staff development team after working with Healthy Families Steuben for 22 years. I love the Healthy Families model and have always been so proud to be part of a program that has such a positive impact on families. I am fortunate that I was able to make a change, yet stay connected to the program I love. I am re-energized! Those who have been here for a while will understand when I say I've turned the beach ball and am looking at Healthy Families in a new way. I look forward to meeting more people from across the state, experiencing each program's uniqueness, and moving forward together. I live in the Southern Tier of New York (shout out to Hornell!) with my husband, Dan. I have a son, Jack, who is in college. I am grateful for many things, but my greatest joy is spending time with family and friends.



Erin Berical~CHSR

As a new member of the Center for Human Services Research, I am excited that my work allows me to interact with the Training and Staff Development team. We will create additional tools that examine the impact of trainings on HFNY program staff. I have been supporting children and families for a majority of my 15-year career, and for the last several years have worked on research and evaluation projects in the fields of professional development and early childhood. It's exciting to bring my evaluation experience to HFNY, and learn about the ways the program affects the lives of individuals all across the state.

