

Building Parent Strengths: Applying Trauma-Informed Skills and Reflective Practices in Home Visiting Work

Learning Guide for Ongoing Professional Development

Note to Learner: This guide is for Early Impact Virginia’s classroom training Building Parent Strengths: Applying Trauma-Informed Skills and Reflective Practices in Home Visiting Work. The activities in the guide will help you transfer your learning into daily practice.

This 6-hour classroom training uses the most current information in Neuroscience, Epigenetics, ACE and Resiliency (NEAR) to teach home visitors how to use reflective practices and trauma informed approaches with parents in ways that will enhance goal setting and build parental resiliency. Home visitors and their supervisors will learn to recognize how their own life experiences influence their work with families and the impact that this work has on them physically and emotionally while also teaching effective strategies for professional self-care.

Ongoing: View the Professional Development Program and each EIV training module as an investment in skills and knowledge to help improve home visitor effectiveness.

Before the training:

- Learner and supervisor review course objectives and home visitor competencies
- Learner rates knowledge of learning objectives

During the training, the learner:

- Completes activities
- Reflects on own response
- Identifies questions and concerns
- Completes post-training evaluation

After the training:

- Learner:
 - Rates knowledge of learning objectives
 - Completes post-training activities, as required
 - Develops an action plan for applying skills and knowledge in daily practice
 - Meets with supervisor to:
 - Review pre- and post-training activities
 - Discuss reflections, questions, and concerns
 - Develop an action plan for applying skills and knowledge in daily practice
 - Assess personal learning goals, transfer of learning, and action plan
 - Participates in supervisor-led follow-up activities, as appropriate

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Virginia Home Visitor Competencies Addressed:

- 3.4.a. Understands and communicates the ways in which the following stressors impact family members and affect the ability to parent: abuse and neglect, family conflict and violence, substance use and abuse, mental health disorders, homelessness, transience, poverty, employment, underemployment, and unemployment, physical health issues, family separation, and other experiences of trauma.
- 3.4.b. Uses a trauma-sensitive and trauma-informed approach when working with all families.
- 3.4.c. Remains up-to-date on research relative to family well-being in order to provide quality, evidence based services.
- 4.6.e. Increases parent’s knowledge and awareness of the signs of depression, trauma, domestic violence, substance use, and mental illness.
- 4.6.f. Increases parent’s awareness and ability to identify protective factors/strengths to overcome challenges.
- 4.6.g. Increases parent’s awareness and ability to address the risks and stressors in the family.
- 6.1.i. Understands the complexity of relationships and the ways in which traumatic experiences may shape an individual’s, or a family’s, expectations and interactions with others, including home visitors and other care providers.

Before the Training

Home Visitors Rates Knowledge (Scale of 0 to 5, 0 = no knowledge, 5 = significant knowledge)

Learning Objective	Before the Training	After the Training
Define “trauma” and discuss key trauma events experienced by youth and families prior to age 18.		
Identify how trauma may affect people differently based on their ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or immigration status.		
Discuss key effects of trauma events that children and parents are at risk to develop.		
Demonstrate skill in teaching a parent about the effects trauma can have on children and adults.		
Define “resilience” and give examples of resilience skills that parents can build to reduce and prevent adverse childhood experiences from happening to their child.		
Discuss how reflective listening can support parents when talking about trauma and ACEs.		
Demonstrate skill in actively teaching attachment, self-regulation, and executive functioning skills to parents.		
Develop a self-care plan and self-regulation strategies to protect oneself from the potential ill effects of working with families who have experienced or are experiencing trauma.		

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Home Visitor sets personal learning goals for training participation:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

After the Training

Reflections on what I learned:

Questions and concerns I identified:

Post-Training Activities:

Action Plan: (Each learner’s plan will be unique. To get you started, some ideas are listed below.) As a result of this training, I will...

- Practice reflective listening in interactions with colleagues, my supervisor, and/or my own family members.
- Identify clients who may be at risk because of past trauma.
- Provide families with resources about resilience and protective factors.
- Practice using the NEAR core elements (Preparing, Asking, Listening, Affirming and Remembering) with my supervisor and colleagues.
- Use the *Partnering with Parents* booklet with my families.
- Watch for signs that I might be experiencing vicarious trauma.
- Identify strategies for connecting with colleagues, my family and friends, and my community to reduce my stress level.

My Action Plan

Action	Target Date	Date Completed