

4-MONTH

PROMOTING FIRST RELATIONSHIPS Connecting Strategies

Way of Being

Before the Visit, Reflect and Wonder

“What might the baby be experiencing at this age?”

“What might the parent be experiencing?”

Observations

Notice and Describe for Families

- Baby cues of hunger, satiety, sleepiness, engagement and disengagement. This help parents to see these cues more readily at home and to learn and respond to their baby’s needs.
- Parent responds sensitively to cues and follows their baby’s lead
- Parent soothes and comforts their baby (alleviation of distress)
- Baby’s response to being laid down on the exam table (e.g. scared, stressed) and then how the baby checks their parents face to make sure they are safe and becomes comforted
- Baby visually explores the room or engages with you from the comfort and safety of the parent’s arms
- Reciprocal babbling
- Shared delight

PFR Strategies—Examples

Based on your observations and following the family’s lead, use the below strategies during your visits.

Joining Questions

- How has it been going for you and your baby?
- What are you enjoying most about this age?
- What new things is your baby doing?
- Are there things that have been harder or easier than you expected?
- Does your baby seem interested in what you’re eating yet?
- How has the transition back to work been going for you?
For your baby?

Strengths-Based Positive Feedback

- Your baby loves watching your face. You’re really the center of her world.
- I see that your baby really lights up when you’re talking with him.
- Your baby is so expressive. I can tell that she loves to talk to you and loves to hear your voice.

Positive Instructive Feedback

- Your baby settled right down as soon as she was back in your arms. She feels so calm and comforted by your words, which help her as she learns how to manage upset feelings and eventually calm herself.
- It’s so great how you hold your baby that way so that she’s part of our conversation. Watching our faces and listening to us is one of the ways babies explore their new worlds. They really want to experience new things and be a part of the conversation, this helps them learn about their world and stimulates their brain.
- In watching your back and forth interactions while you were getting your baby dressed after our exam, I could see how much you genuinely enjoy him! Having fun together and delighting in him during daily routines helps him feel secure and loved.
- I saw how nicely you noticed and supported his desire to stop nursing at the end of the visit. By following his signals for when he wants more food or comfort or when he is done, you help your baby feel understood and cared for.

Supporting Reflective Capacity

- What thoughts do you have about your baby starting solid food?
- What do you think your baby is thinking when she sees people around her eating?
- How are you feeling about how fast your baby is changing and growing?
- When your baby coos and makes those little sounds, what do you think he’s trying to tell you?
- Are you feeling like you’re getting enough support?