

6-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 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
- Baby tolerates exam better in the safety of the parent’s arms or lap
- 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

- What changes have you noticed in your baby since I saw you last?
- How does he react to new people or strangers?
- How has it been for you as your baby gets more active and vocal about her ideas and feelings?
- How is your baby doing with eating and exploring new tastes, textures?
- How has sleep been in your family lately (for you and for baby)?
- What part of your day do you find the hardest/most enjoyable?

Strengths-Based Positive Feedback

- Your baby is so interactive with you during our visit, listen to those wonderful back and forth babbling conversations you are having!
- Your baby is so curious and interested in what is going on today. She’s just taking everything in from the safety of your arms!
- It sounds like the rituals and routines you have worked hard to establish around bedtime help your baby settle nicely into sleep.
- You do such a nice job staying with her when she is upset and welcoming her to you when she gets distressed.

Positive Instructive Feedback

- It sounds like your family has worked hard to find flexible routines that work best for him. These routines are important to help him feel his world is a predictable place filled with people he can count on.
- It’s really nice the way you let her explore things with her mouth even though she’s getting good at using her fingers. She is taking in a lot through all of her senses right now and needs to use everything she has to explore her world.
- I noticed how much fun you were having with her when you were getting her undressed for the exam. When babies feel our delight in them, their development flourishes.
- He was really upset there but you stayed with him and comforted him. That helps him learn that he can count on you to help him through difficult feelings and that it’s okay to express bad feelings.
- Taking her for a walk each day is such a nice routine. Not only does it build predictability and routine, but it expands her world a bit. Babies love new experiences and to feel part of the bigger, outside world.

Supporting Reflective Capacity

- What is it like for you seeing your baby become so expressive? With so many big ideas?
- How is it for you seeing him being more active and mobile?
- How would you describe your baby’s temperament? Does it remind you of anyone you know? Someone in your family? How is her temperament similar to your first baby’s (or other siblings, twin, etc.)?
- What do you think your baby is needing right now?
- What do you think your baby thinks of this new world of solid food?