

NEWBORN-1 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)

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?
- Being a new parent can be exhausting. How are you doing? How is your partner doing?
- What is helping you get through this big transition?
- How has the adjustment been for you? For baby’s older sibling(s)?
- Are there things that have been harder or easier than you expected?
- What helps your baby calm down after being upset?

Strengths-Based Positive Feedback

- Your baby looks so content and cozy in your arms.
- Your baby calmed down so nicely when you held and talked to him.
- Your baby already loves to look at your face, see how her eyes fix on you?

Positive Instructive Feedback

- It is so nice how you talked to your baby and anticipated his needs during the exam. It helped your baby stay calm. Early brain research shows that when you follow your baby’s lead and meet their needs, their brain wires up in the best possible way.
- It’s so lovely the way you are holding your baby and she is so content with you. You really can’t spoil your baby. By holding and comforting her, she knows she is safe and can count on you to be there.
- The way you keep including baby’s older sibling in the conversation is so thoughtful. Keeping {Sibling Name} in mind will help support their growing sibling relationship and let {Sibling Name} know they are still loved and important.

Supporting Reflective Capacity

- How are you feeling about your baby’s _____? (Insert parent’s concern brought up in the visit, e.g. fussiness, feeding issues)?
- What has been the most difficult part of the first week(s)?
- What has been the best part of this experience so far?
- Has anything surprised you?
- What do you think your baby thinks about this big new world around him?