

VISIT COACHING ELEMENTS

VISIT PLAN MEETING

- Ensure that the parent takes ownership of their family time
- Draw their children's needs out of the parent: "Imagine your child running into the visit right now, what does she/he want from you?"
- Validate the parent's concerns and help the parent plan how to "put the umbrella up" to keep their worries from getting in the way of giving their full attention to their child
- Ensure that the parent has a mental video of what they want their visit to be, including how to cope with possible difficulties

PRE-VISIT COACHING

- Help the parent put up the umbrella over their visit to keep out whatever is bothering them—Be optimistic!
- Remind the parent of each child's needs to be met during the visit, including using rehearsal (ready to stand in their child's shoes)—Encourage self-confidence!
- Preparing for the visit activities (safety inventory, getting ready for play)

COACHING DURING THE VISIT

- Support the parent in being responsive to each child's individual needs by
 - * modeling
 - * help to greet their child warmly
 - * recognizing when the parent responds to the child's cues
 - * recognizing when the child gets security and comfort from the parent
 - assist "just you, just me" time with each child & managing children's competing needs
 - * help with saying goodbye
- Avoid directing parenting (don't tell)
- Encourage the parent to look behind the child's actions (especially those the parent does not like or understand) to identify the child's need driving the behavior. Ask during the visit, "What is your child telling you with [the behavior]?"
- Support the parent in keeping the umbrella up so the parent's issues do not get in the way of being responsive to their children's needs by reminding and praise
- Support co-parenting if more than one adult is visiting the child
- Show optimism that the parent can make their children happy
- Appreciate the family's culture and unique ways of meeting their children's needs—recognize the pleasures of parenting for the parent

POST-VISIT DEBRIEFING

- Help the parent assess their responsiveness to each of their children's needs in the visit (standing in their child's shoes)
- Help the parent assess the effectiveness of their umbrella in the visit
- Without being judgmental, help the parent appreciate how they could more effectively meet their child's needs
- Ask the parent whether there are new or changed needs from observing their child (possibly to be added to the next visit and visit notes)
- Debrief co-parenting during the visit (if relevant)
- Help the parent with their reactions so their feelings don't get in the way of returning for the next visit
- Help the parent send an email/leave voice mail for caseworker if casework issues came up during the visit
- Support the parent to cope with their concerns that they kept out of the visit

PARTNERING

- Encourage communication between parent and foster parent/kin about child's needs through regular Shared Parenting meetings.
- Encourage regular meetings of parent-caseworker-visit coach to review child's needs and how parent is meeting them and ensure parent understanding of the importance of both visits that meet the child's needs and lifestyle changes that will address the child's unmet safety needs that brought them into care