

Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect with Parent-Child Interactions in the Virtual Environment

Nurturing and Attachment

- Listen for parental warm tone of voice.
- Listen for parental responsiveness.
- Look and listen for “serve and return” behaviors.
- Look for parent’s ability to be playful and provide opportunities for playfulness.

Parental Resilience

- Observe if parent seeks or is open to help when experiencing added stress.
- Listen for and encourage parental expressions of hope that things will get better.
- Look and listen for the parent to recover quickly from irritation and anger.
- Note and encourage the parent to share difficult emotions, offer support, and observe if parent accepts support

Social Connections

- Look/listen to see if parent has adapted to current ways to seek out connections.
- Ask if parent uses the phone, talks to neighbors, and/or uses video chats to connect with friends and family.
- Look to see if parent has maintained, created, or accepted connections with community groups, such as teachers, PTA, Girl/Boy Scouts, childcare providers, and faith-based organizations.
- Ask if the parent is helping family, friends, or neighbors who need additional assistance, or if she is accepting help.

Knowledge of Child Development

- Look for the parent’s ability to have developmentally-appropriate expectations, even under added stress.
- Encourage and provide opportunities to interact that are developmentally appropriate.
- Facilitate positive interactions that are age appropriate.
- When parent is having difficulty, express to the parent that the child’s behavior is developmentally appropriate, and suggest alternate approaches.

Concrete Supports for Parents

- Check in with parents on a regular basis regarding basic needs, by phone, text or video chat.
- Note that the situation is constantly evolving and needs can change quickly.
- Know the current supports available in the community.
- Be culturally sensitive when offering support or resource referrals.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

- Facilitate parent-child interactive activities where the child can practice taking turns, self-regulation of behavior, and following developmentally-appropriate rules.
- Observe child for evidence of behaviors that indicate a sense of security and predictability in the household.
- Support developmentally-appropriate expression of emotions.