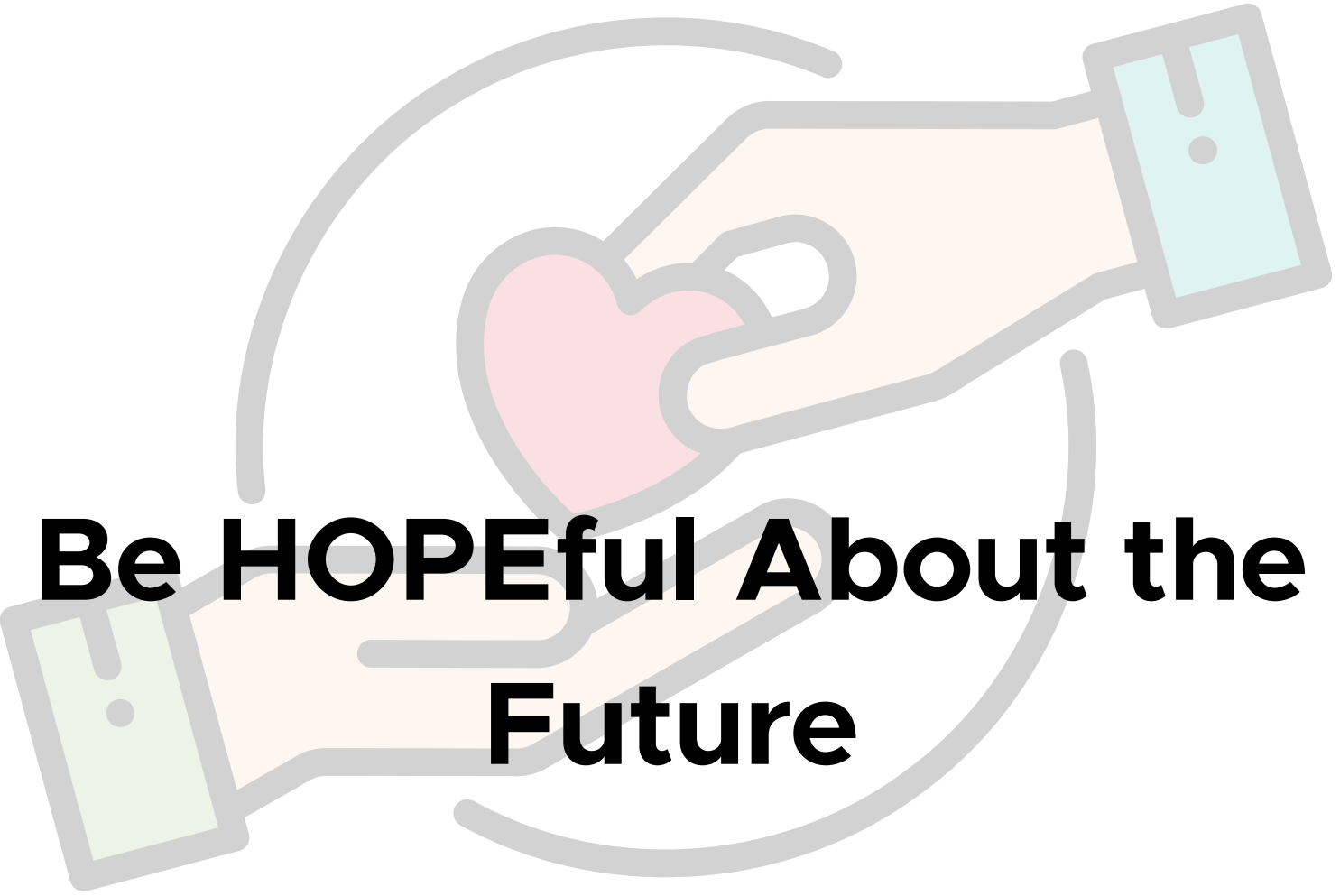


An illustration of two hands, one light orange and one light green, holding a pink heart. The hands are positioned as if they are gently cradling the heart. The background is a light gray with a large, faint circular outline.

Be HOPEful About the Future

A binder created to guide providers through identifying and documenting Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

Developed by the HOPE National Resource Center in collaboration with HOPE Facilitator Dr. Javeria Brierley



Introduction

The HOPE Binder is a practical, physical or digital tool that guides health professionals to intentionally look for, document, and act on Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) during patient encounters.

Promoting positive experiences alongside clinical needs transforms practice into a platform for building resilience, guides treatment planning, and fosters meaningful patient engagement. In this way, we help our practice by making our care plans and encounters more efficient, easier to approach, achievable, and hopeful.

Furthermore, this binder promotes PCEs in a few ways. Such as becoming a visual reminder to keep PCEs at the forefront of clinical encounters, creating a shared language for all team members to document with, bridging clinical work with community based supports, by leading conversations that help to follow the family across settings outside the office.

Goals

- Keep a strengths-based focus in the center of care.
- Promote consistent use of the four Building Blocks of HOPE among providers.

- ✓ *We invite you and your team to make this binder your own, you can use this tool as a guide.*
- ✓ *We encourage you to also find local examples, resources and questions.*
- ✓ *What makes sense for you and your team matters!*



Implementation Tips

- **Assign a staff person(s) as a 'HOPE Champion or Facilitator'**

- Keep the binder updated with local resources that support positive experiences.
 - This person can also remind the team during meetings to integrate the HOPE framework into daily practice.
- This person can be administrative staff, a social worker or a collaboration of both.

** In addition to personal knowledge of the community, findhelp.org offers local resources to find help.*

- **Building a Strengths-Based Team Culture**

- Encourage all team members to notice and name the strengths they observe during patient interactions... such as resilience, social support, the four building blocks or meaningful routines.
 - These strengths can be shared during team huddles, staff meetings, or case presentations to promote a culture of positivity.

- **Take the time to notice and document positive experiences and strengths because it's a powerful clinical tool.**

- When we keep track of what's going well in our patients' lives, their sources of strength, meaning, and connection, we are delivering care that is more personalized, effective, and human.
 - Save time by building trust and continuity and strengthening relationships with families under your care.
 - Pointing out strengths add continuity to the care the patient or family receive, analogous to the list of problems.



Setting up your HOPE binder

Choose the Format

- **Physical:** A 3-ring binder with tab dividers for each HOPE building block
- **Digital:** A shared folder or EMR “favorites” list with the same structure. Or an EMR template

Tab Organization

- **Tab 1:** PCEs Overview : Quick overview, definitions, and prompts
- **Tab 2:** Relationships: Questions and tips for identifying supportive relationships
- **Tab 3:** Environments: Observations about safe, stable, equitable space
- **Tab 4:** Engagement: Opportunities for participation, learning, and connection
- **Tab 5:** Emotional Growth: Evidence of coping skills, self and co-regulation, and emotional literacy

Inside Each Section

- **Conversation Prompts** — Quick questions to uncover strengths
- **Observation Checklist** — What to look for during visits
- **Documentation Tips** — How to record PCEs/strengths in the EMR
- **Example Notes** — Strengths-based language providers can copy/adapt
- **Referral & Resource Ideas** — Allow this to be a place where you add in your own formal and informal resources within your community that promote access to the Building Blocks.

Quick Access Tools in the Front Pocket

- HOPE one-page overview
- PCE screening questions
- Smart phrase/auto-text list for EMR documentation
- Local resource directory for strengthening PCEs

Workflow Tip:

The binder should live where providers chart or conduct visits so it's visible during daily work. For digital versions, make sure the link is in an EMR favorites menu or clinic desktop shortcut.

The HOPE Binder - Building Block Sections



Tab 1: Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

Definition: Everyday moments, relationships, and opportunities that help children thrive. Access to PCEs can be promoted by a systematic approach to the Four Building Blocks of HOPE: Relationships, Environment, Engagement and Emotional Growth.

Examples of PCEs:

- Feeling safe at home, school, and in the community.
- Having at least one supportive, stable caregiver.
- Engaging in enjoyable community activities.
- Having friends, mentors, or role models.
- Opportunities to learn, explore, and express creativity.

PCEs Questions for Providers:

- “What’s something your child enjoys doing most days?”
- “Who is an important person in your child’s life?”
- “What routines make your child feel secure?”
- What activities make your child feel excited and engaged?
- What helps your child calm down after a stressful moment?

EMR Tip:

Create a dedicated field or note heading for Positive Childhood Experiences or the Four Building Blocks of HOPE and add at least one PCE to promote per visit. Refer to our Well Child Visit Guidance for examples of PCE and HOPE related questions.



Tab 2: Relationship Building Block

Goal: Identify and support nurturing, supportive, and consistent relationships within the family and with other children and adults.



Look For:

- Foundational relationships with parents who respond to a child's needs and offer warm, responsive reactions.
- Stable caregiving arrangements.
- Positive sibling relationships.
- Presence of extended family involvement.
- Mentors, coaches, or teachers who know the child well.
- Adults outside of the family who take a genuine interest in a child and support their growth and development.
- Healthy, close, and positive relationships with peers.

Prompts/Questions:

- “Who does your child turn to when they need help or comfort?”
- “Tell me about a time your child spent with a friend or family member that was really special.”
- “Who is someone outside of your family that really cares about you?”

Documentation Examples:

- “Child has a strong connection with older sibling; they read together nightly, supporting literacy and emotional closeness.”
- “Mentor meets with youth weekly, providing consistent guidance and encouragement.”
- “Family holds Sunday dinners where all members share highlights from the week, promoting open communication.”

Resource Ideas (add your own informal and formal resources!)

- Family literacy programs - Public library family reading nights, reading buddies, or book-lending programs.



- Mentorship initiatives - school-based mentoring programs, community youth mentoring networks.
- Parenting support groups - In-person or online groups offering peer support and parenting strategies.
- Parent-Child Activity Classes – Music, art, cooking, or movement classes that encourage shared experiences.
- Faith or Cultural Community Groups – Churches, mosques, temples, tribal or cultural centers offering family events and intergenerational activities.
- School-Based Family Engagement Programs – family-school partnership activities, and open classroom days.
- Youth Clubs and Teams – Scouts, sports leagues, debate teams, theater groups
- Extended Family Engagement Events – Family reunions, heritage celebrations, or regular family meal initiatives.
- Community Volunteer Opportunities – Service projects where parents and children can contribute together.
- Peer Support for Adolescents – Teen peer mentoring, youth leadership councils.

Tab 3: Environment Building Block

Goal: Recognize safe, stable, equitable spaces where children live, learn, and play.



Look For:

- Safe home environment. Stable housing.
- A nurturing home where a child is emotionally secure.
- Supportive school climate.
- A stable school environment where children feel valued and receive high-quality education.
- Access to parks, community spaces. A community environment to play and interact with other children safely and equitably.
- A safe, stable environment secure in meeting a child's basic needs, including adequate food, shelter, and health care.

**Prompts/Questions:**

- “Where does your child feel most comfortable and safe?”
- “What’s your child’s favorite place to spend time outside the home?”
- “Describe a place you love to go and have fun”

Documentation Examples:

- “Family has stable housing in a neighborhood with a trusted community center.”
- “Home includes a designated study space with adequate lighting and quiet, supporting school success.”
- “Child has regular access to nearby park and participates in supervised outdoor play daily.”
- “Family receives support from a community food pantry, ensuring consistent access to healthy meals.”

Resource Ideas (add your own informal and formal resources):

- Housing assistance programs
- Neighborhood safety initiatives (safe walking/biking routes, community watch)
- Safe play spaces directory
- Trauma-informed school initiatives
- Home safety programs (childproofing, smoke detectors, hazard removal)
- School improvement projects (anti-bullying programs, inclusive classrooms)
- Parks and recreation access (safe playground access)
- Access to nutritious food (school meal programs, food banks, community gardens)
- Transportation assistance (bus passes, ride programs for appointments)
- Environmental health services
- Community centers offering youth-friendly spaces
- Technology and internet access programs for learning
- Emergency preparedness programs for families



Tab 4: Engagement Building Block

Goal: Encourage participation in meaningful social activities and civic engagements that promote learning, connection, and belonging that the family finds relevant to them.



Look For:

- Involvement in school clubs, sports, arts, music.
- Volunteer work or helping roles in the community.
- Participating in family and cultural traditions.
- Being involved in projects, peer mentoring, or community service through one's school or religious organization.

Prompts/Questions:

- “What activities light your child up with excitement?”
- “Is your child part of any group, team, or program?”
- “What is your favorite sport or activity?”

Documentation Examples

- “Attends after-school art club twice a week, providing creative outlet and peer friendships.”
- “Youth participates in local soccer league, developing teamwork skills and friendships.”
- “Child attends weekly art club, fostering creativity and connection with peers.”
- “Family volunteers together at community garden, building civic engagement and environmental awareness.”
- “Teen is active in school leadership council, contributing to decision-making and feeling valued.”
- “Child regularly attends cultural dance group, strengthening community ties and cultural identity.”

**Resource Ideas (add your own informal and formal resources):**

- Local recreation centers
- Cultural arts programs
- Youth volunteer organizations
- After-school clubs (arts, language, debate, robotics)
- Youth leadership programs (youth councils, advocacy training)
- Sports teams and recreational leagues
- STEM Programs, Mathletes, etc.
- Volunteering and service-learning programs
- Cultural and heritage festivals
- Community arts projects (murals, theater productions)
- Environmental action groups for youth (clean-ups, garden projects)
- Faith-based groups
- Peer mentoring or buddy programs
- Summer camps
- Local government youth advisory boards
- Intergenerational programs linking youth and older adults

Tab 5: Emotional Growth Building Block

Goal: Encourage participation in meaningful social activities and civic engagements that promote learning, connection, and belonging that the family finds relevant to them.

**Look for:**

- Child's ability to name and express feelings.
- Positive coping strategies.
- Caregiver support for emotional needs.
- Families having the ability to respond to challenges in a productive way.
- Developing key social and culturally-appropriate communication and interpersonal skills.

**Prompts/Questions:**

- “What helps your child feel calm after a hard day?”
- “How does your child handle frustration?”
- “Who can you talk to about your feelings?”
- “How do you take care of yourself when you’re not feeling your best?”
-

Documentation Example:

- “Uses breathing exercises before bedtime to relax; taught by parent as part of nightly routine.”
- “School counselor meets with youth biweekly, supporting stress management and emotional regulation.”
- “Family practices nightly ‘gratitude moments,’ helping children reframe challenges positively.”
- “Teen has developed breathing exercises to manage anxiety before presentations.”
- “Child was supported by parent through recent bereavement, with open conversations about feelings.”

Resource Ideas (add your own informal and formal resource ideas):

- Mindfulness apps for families.
- Social-emotional learning programs.
- School counseling services.
- Trauma-informed therapy programs for children
- Peer support circles (youth-led or facilitated)
- Parent–child communication workshops
- Art, music, or drama therapy programs
- Bereavement support groups for children and families
- Resilience skills training (problem-solving, emotion regulation)
- Conflict resolution and peer mediation programs in schools
- Youth journaling or creative writing workshops
- Family-based therapy programs to address shared stressors