



Promoting the Building Blocks with Families Experiencing Caregiver Mental Health Challenges

Using HOPE principles to support emotional well-being, resilience, and connection.

Purpose of this Resource

This resource aims to support home visitors who work with families where a caregiver lives with a mental health diagnosis. A HOPE-informed approach focuses on connection, stability, and growth, not just symptoms. Many caregivers experiencing depression, anxiety, or other challenges continue to show love and commitment to their children. By noticing and encouraging positive moments, home visitors help families build confidence and hope for the future.

Supporting Families with HOPE: Key Ideas for Home Visitors





Home visitors play an important role in helping families feel supported and understood. When working with caregivers who experience mental health challenges, remember to:

- **See the person, not the diagnosis.** Look for what brings joy and connection.
- **Focus on small successes.** A calm moment, a smile, or a consistent routine shows strength.
- **Be reliable and kind.** Predictability builds trust and safety.
- **Encourage routines.** Simple patterns bring comfort for both caregiver and child.
- **Normalize seeking help.** Acknowledge courage when caregivers reach out for support.
- **Model HOPE.** Your steady presence can help reduce stress and build positive experiences.

Reflection Prompts - Use these questions to guide reflection or conversation.

- *What helps this caregiver feel calm or hopeful?*
- *How does the caregiver show love or effort with their child?*
- *What small signs of progress have you noticed?*
- *How can you stay compassionate and grounded in your work?*

Building the Four Blocks of HOPE

	Key Concept (examples)	What It Looks Like
	Focus on warmth and connection between caregiver and child.	A caregiver with depression smiles when their child shares a story. The home visitor notices the love in that moment and mentions it.
	Support routines that create calm and safety.	The home visitor helps the caregiver create a bedtime routine that brings peace.
	Foster partnership by listening and affirming the caregiver's insights.	The home visitor asks, "What helps you feel calm on hard days?" and builds on what the caregiver shares.
	Recognize and celebrate steps toward progress.	The caregiver shares that they reached out to a counselor. The home visitor celebrates this act of courage.

Pause for HOPE

At the end of each visit, take a short pause.

What moment today showed that this family is finding strength or connection?

Tips for Providers

For Home Visitors:

- Use gentle curiosity to begin conversations about the family's goals.
- Notice and name small steps of progress.
- Offer ideas and information simply and respectfully.
- Model calm and steadiness to help the family feel secure.

For Supervisors:

- Make time to talk about the emotional impact of this work.
- Reinforce that empathy and consistency build trust.
- Recognize staff strengths and persistence.



Supporting caregivers with mental health challenges requires patience and empathy. By focusing on relationships, safety, engagement, and growth, you can help families see that healing and connection are possible.