

Pocket Guide: Applying the Four Building Blocks of HOPE in Home Visiting



Why Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE)?

Research shows that positive childhood experiences (PCEs) help children grow into healthy, resilient adults. The HOPE framework focuses on four key building blocks that make up experiences that support well-being for both children and caregivers.

This pocket guide is designed to give home visitors quick, practical prompts to reinforce HOPE during visits and on-the-go.

Safe & Supportive Relationships:

*Within the Family and
with Other Children and Adults*



Impact

- Having nurturing, supportive relationships helps children develop resilience and long-term mental well-being. Adults who recall these relationships in childhood have lower rates of depression and poor mental health.

The Importance of Relationships in your Role

- Many caregivers may have limited experiences with safe, trusting relationships. By showing up consistently, listening, and learning about what matters to them, you model what healthy relationships look like and strengthen caregiver-child connections.

Tips for Home Visitors

- Take time to connect during each visit.
- Learn about the family's values, culture, and strengths.
- Name positive interactions that you observe.
- Remember something from each visit and follow up next time.

Try Asking:

- What is important to you and your family?
- What relationships do you want your child to grow up seeing?
- Growing up, who made you feel supported?

Safe, Stable, and Equitable Environments:

Where Children can Live, Learn, and Play



Impact

- Children who grow up in safe, stable, and equitable environments are less likely to experience poor physical and mental health later in life.

The Importance of Environments in your Role

- As a home visitor, you are uniquely positioned to see and acknowledge what families are already doing well.
 - Highlight the nurturing spaces, routines, and efforts to meet basic needs.

Tips for Home Visitors

- Start by identifying strengths in the home
- Explain the “why” when you are administering screeners & assessments to reduce fear or mistrust
- Know local resources and check in regularly on eligibility requirements and availability
- Be honest if you are unsure about a resource
 - And always follow up
- For many families, calling a resource to ask for help can be scary.
 - *Consider role playing with them or even call together.*

Opportunities for Social and Civic Engagement

To Develop a Sense of Belonging and Connectedness



Impact

- Feeling connected, valued, and included helps children and caregivers develop a strong sense of belonging and resilience

The Importance of Engagement in your Role

- Some caregivers may be in survival mode and need support identifying opportunities for connection, both in the community and at-home.

Tips for Home Visitors

- Be curious about what the family enjoys in and out of the home
- Praise existing engagement, no matter how small.
- Share community opportunities such as:
 - Library events
 - YMCA events
 - Local playgroups
 - Community organizations
 - Volunteer opportunities
- Encourage intentional engagement at home:
 - Family game nights
 - Cooking and sharing meals
 - Daily check-ins to recap on the day

Opportunities for Emotional Growth so Children Feel Supported through Difficult Events and Emotions



Impact

- Children need repeated opportunities to build emotional awareness, regulation, and problem-solving skill. This is often done through play and everyday activities/interactions.

The Importance of Engagement in your Role

- As a home visitor you support child and caregiver emotional skill development. Just remember, you are a guide, not a therapist, make referrals as needed.

Tips for Home Visitors

- Encourage play and guide caregivers in child-led interactions
- Help caregivers and children name their own emotions
- Reinforce that emotions provide important information
- Support co-regulation and self compassion
- Make referrals when emotional needs are beyond your role

Note

- Social connections and emotional growth are closely linked... building one often strengthens the other.