



Promoting the Building Blocks with Families Experiencing Parental Substance Misuse

Using HOPE principles to support family strength, connection, and healing.

Purpose of this Resource

This resource supports home visitors as they partner with families when a parent or caregiver is experiencing substance use. A HOPE-informed approach lifts up family strengths, caring relationships, and steps toward recovery. Many caregivers facing substance use challenges continue to show deep love for their children and want to make positive changes. By recognizing their efforts and celebrating small successes, home visitors help families feel supported, capable, and hopeful about the future.

Supporting Families with HOPE: Key Ideas for Home Visitors

Families affected by substance use often carry both love and stress. Home visitors can help by creating safe and caring relationships that focus on progress and possibility.





- **See the whole picture.** Substance use is only one part of their story. Notice what brings joy and connection.
- **Focus on progress.** Small steps, like attending a meeting or keeping routines, matter.
- **Be dependable.** Consistency builds safety and trust.
- **Encourage stability.** Predictable routines help both caregiver and child feel secure.
- **Acknowledge courage.** Seeking help or sharing struggles shows strength.
- **Model HOPE.** Your calm and compassionate presence can remind families that change is possible.

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

- *What is going well for this family right now?*
- *How does the caregiver show love for their child?*
- *What helps this caregiver feel calm, safe, or supported?*
- *What does progress look like for this family today?*



Building the Four Blocks of HOPE

	Key Concept (examples)	What it Looks Like
 <p>RELATIONSHIPS</p>	Building trust and connection between the home visitor and caregiver, and between the caregiver and child, is essential.	The home visitor greets the caregiver warmly, asks about their week, and involves the child in conversation.
 <p>ENVIRONMENT</p>	Supporting the family in creating calm, safe spaces at home, honoring their experiences, and partnering with them on what safety means.	The home visitor asks, "What is important to your family around physical and emotional safety?" Then, they ask, "What supports do you need to meet these goals?"
 <p>ENGAGEMENT</p>	Noticing and celebrating progress in connecting with others.	The caregiver shares that they went to one support meeting this week. The home visitor celebrates that effort.
 <p>EMOTIONAL GROWTH</p>	Jointly creating strategies for the caregiver to utilize when needed.	The caregiver and home visitor talk about a place the caregiver can use to cool down when feeling stressed.

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

What small sign of strength, love, or courage did you notice today?

Tips for Providers

For Home Visitors:

- Listen for effort and progress.
- Begin with strengths before discussing challenges.
- Use simple, hopeful language such as "You are working hard for your family."
- Stay calm and consistent. Trust grows when families feel safe.

For Supervisors:

- Create safe spaces to talk about difficult visits.
- Model curiosity and compassion.
- Begin with what is working before offering ideas.
- Remind staff that their calm and caring presence matters.

Every family has strengths, even during hard times. By focusing on safety, and connection, you can help families affected by substance use find stability and healing, one step at a time.