



Created by the HOPE National Resource Center at Tufts Medical Center



Table of Contents

1. Introduction

2. Acknowledgments

3. Introduction on the HOPE Framework

- a. Sector Specific Four Building Blocks of HOPE
- b. HOPE One Pager
- c. English/Spanish Four Building Blocks of HOPE Overview
- d. HOPE Pocket Guide

4. HOPE Training Resources for Home Visitors

- a. Video resources
- b. Creating Moments of HOPE
- c. 10 Ways Providers can Promote Positive Childhood Experiences
- d. HOPE is Everywhere

5. Integrating HOPE with Sector Techniques

- a. Integrating HOPE and Motivational Interviewing
- b. Reframing with HOPE
- c. HOPEful Steps for Harm Reduction: Caregiver Mental Health
- d. HOPEful Steps for Harm Reduction: Caregiver Substance Misuse
- e. Using HOPE to Navigate Sensitive Topics



Table of Contents

6. **HOPE Resources for Supervisors**

- a. Grounding Supervision in HOPE
- b. Supervision/ Training Reflection: How do you...
- c. HOPE and Strengthening Families-informed Coaching Guide

7. **Tools for HOPEful Screeners & Assessments**

- a. HOPE Informed Screening and Assessments
- b. HOPEful Intakes

8. **HOPEful Tools to Engage Caregivers**

- a. HOPEful Observations
- b. Strength Map: Your Unique Strengths

9. **HOPE Resources for Caregivers**

- a. HOPE for New Parents
- b. HOPE Games

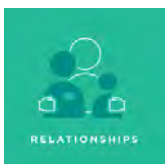
10. **HOPE References**

HOPE for Home Visiting Toolkit

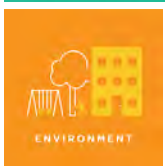
Introduction

Home visitors play a vital role in strengthening families and supporting children's healthy development. To help bring the framework of HOPE (Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences) into home visiting practice, we created this toolkit in partnership with HOPE Facilitators and Champions nationwide. Together, we explored how HOPE's ideas fit within the unique context of home visiting by listening to what was already working well, identifying what was missing, and developing new resources to fill those gaps. The materials you'll find here are designed for you to adapt and use in ways that best fit your program and the families you serve.

We know that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can have lasting impacts on health and development, but research also shows that Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) can foster healing, build resilience, and promote lifelong well-being. These positive experiences help buffer stress and give children and families the foundation to thrive. The HOPE National Resource Center organizes PCEs into four Building Blocks:



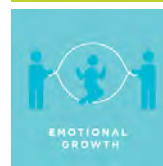
Positive Relationships



Safe and Stable Environments



Social and Civic Engagement



Emotional Growth

As a home visitor, you are in a powerful position to notice and nurture these positive experiences. Every visit is an opportunity to lift up a family's strengths, celebrate moments of connection, and support the conditions that allow children to flourish.

This toolkit offers evidence-based strategies, conversation guides, family handouts, and practical tools to help you weave HOPE into your everyday interactions. Our goal is to make it easier to bring HOPE to life in home visiting... so that every encounter helps families build on what is strong, not just what is challenging.



Acknowledgements

In an effort to create a comprehensive resource for those interested in implementing HOPE in Home Visiting, this toolkit was developed in collaboration with trained HOPE Facilitators from around the world.

We began by identifying key resources already available to providers, then worked together to recognize and address existing gaps. Through this process, we developed new, tailored materials designed to support home visitors as they integrate HOPE into their daily practice. Each of these resources is included in this toolkit for you to use, adapt, and share as needed.

The HOPE National Resource Team extends our heartfelt gratitude to the facilitators whose continued support, enthusiasm, and passion for promoting HOPE made this toolkit possible. A very special thank you to our Home Visiting Toolkit Team and intern Makenzie Lachat for their dedication to the development and review of this resource:

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While this toolkit is home to many great resources, there are more available on our website www.positiveexperiences.org.

For questions or concerns, please email: hope@tuftsmedicalcenter.org



Information on the HOPE Framework

Introduction Resources

HEALTHY OUTCOMES
FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

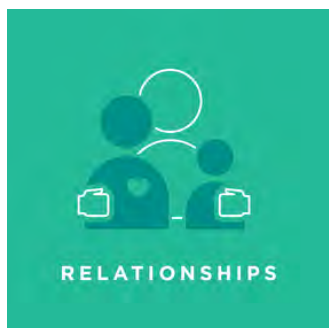
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The Four Building Blocks of HOPE

for home visitors

Research shows that positive childhood experiences (PCEs) help children grow into healthy, resilient adults. The HOPE framework centers around the Four Building Blocks of HOPE, key types of PCEs that all children need to thrive. This resource is designed to help home visitors increase access to the Building Blocks for the children they serve.

Relationships



Safe and supportive relationships within the family and with other children and adults

Being in nurturing, supportive relationships are critical for children to develop into healthy, resilient adults. Individuals that recall having these types of relationships during childhood experience significantly lower rates of depression and poor mental health during adulthood.

What kinds of relationships are we talking about?

- Foundational relationships with parents who respond to a child's needs and offer warm, responsive reactions.
- 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.

How can home visitors promote access to safe and supportive relationships?

- Ask caregivers about the types of positive relationships they may recall from childhood. Celebrate those with them! Encourage them to think about which components of those relationships they want to offer to their children.



- Share information about parent-child attachment. Validate and reflect back when you see warm reactions between parent and child. Model appropriate interactions.
- Ask about other supportive adults in the children's lives and encourage regular and consistent connection with these individuals.

Environments



Safe, stable, and equitable environments where children can live, learn, and play.

Children who live, learn, and play in safe, stable, and equitable environments are less likely to experience poor mental and physical health as adults.

What do we mean by safe, stable, and equitable environments?

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

How can home visitors promote access to safe, stable, equitable environments?

- Conduct a habitability screening in the home. Consider a partnership with a local legal aid clinic to draft a template letter for remediations that families can offer to their property owners if rentals are not meeting health codes.
- Conduct a safety screening. Ask about guns in the home, access to medications, alcohol, and drugs, and other safety issues. Create a plan with the family to address any identified risks.



- Provide information on local subsidized preschools, Early Head Start, and Head Start programs.
- Help the family meet their basic needs. Know the community resources!

Engagement



Opportunities for social and civic engagement to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Children need to feel connected to their communities, loved, and appreciated. Involvement in social institutions and environments, awareness of cultural customs and traditions, and a sense that they matter and belong helps them develop into secure and resilient adults.

What are some examples of social and civic engagement?

- Being involved in projects, peer mentoring, or community service through one's school or religious organization.
- Participating in family and cultural traditions.
- Joining a music, art, or sports group.

How can home visitors promote access to social and civic engagement?

- Ask families what they do outside of school and work, and delight with them around those activities.
- Share information for Community Centers, after school activities, and mentoring programs in your community.
- Encourage families to volunteer together in their community.



Emotional Growth



Opportunities for emotional growth where children feel supported through difficult events and emotions.

Children need to have a lot of opportunities to develop their sense of self-awareness and social cognition, learn how to self-regulate emotions and behavior, and acquire skills needed to respond functionally and productively to challenges. Many of these skills arise during child-centered play.

Some children will pick up these skills naturally, but others may need adults to help them name and understand their own feelings. Either way, these skills are critical for children to be able to become resilient, emotionally healthy adults.

What do we mean by opportunities for social and emotional growth?

- Developing a sense of emotional and behavioral self-regulation.
- Having the ability to respond to challenges in a productive way.
- Developing key social and culturally-appropriate communication and interpersonal skills.

How can home visitors support social and emotional growth?

- Help children name their feelings as they arise and talk about what that feeling feels like in the child's body.
- Normalize disagreements in peer groups and model or role play about how to disagree respectfully and productively.
- Encourage social connection like you would encourage eating healthy foods or exercising.

HEALTHY OUTCOMES
FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

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The Four Building Blocks of HOPE

are composed of key positive childhood experiences (PCEs)—and the sources of those experiences and opportunities—that help children grow into healthy, resilient adults.



RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships within the family and with other children and adults through interpersonal activities.



ENVIRONMENT

Safe, equitable, stable environments for living, playing, learning at home and in school.



ENGAGEMENT

Social and civic engagement to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.

EMOTIONAL
GROWTH

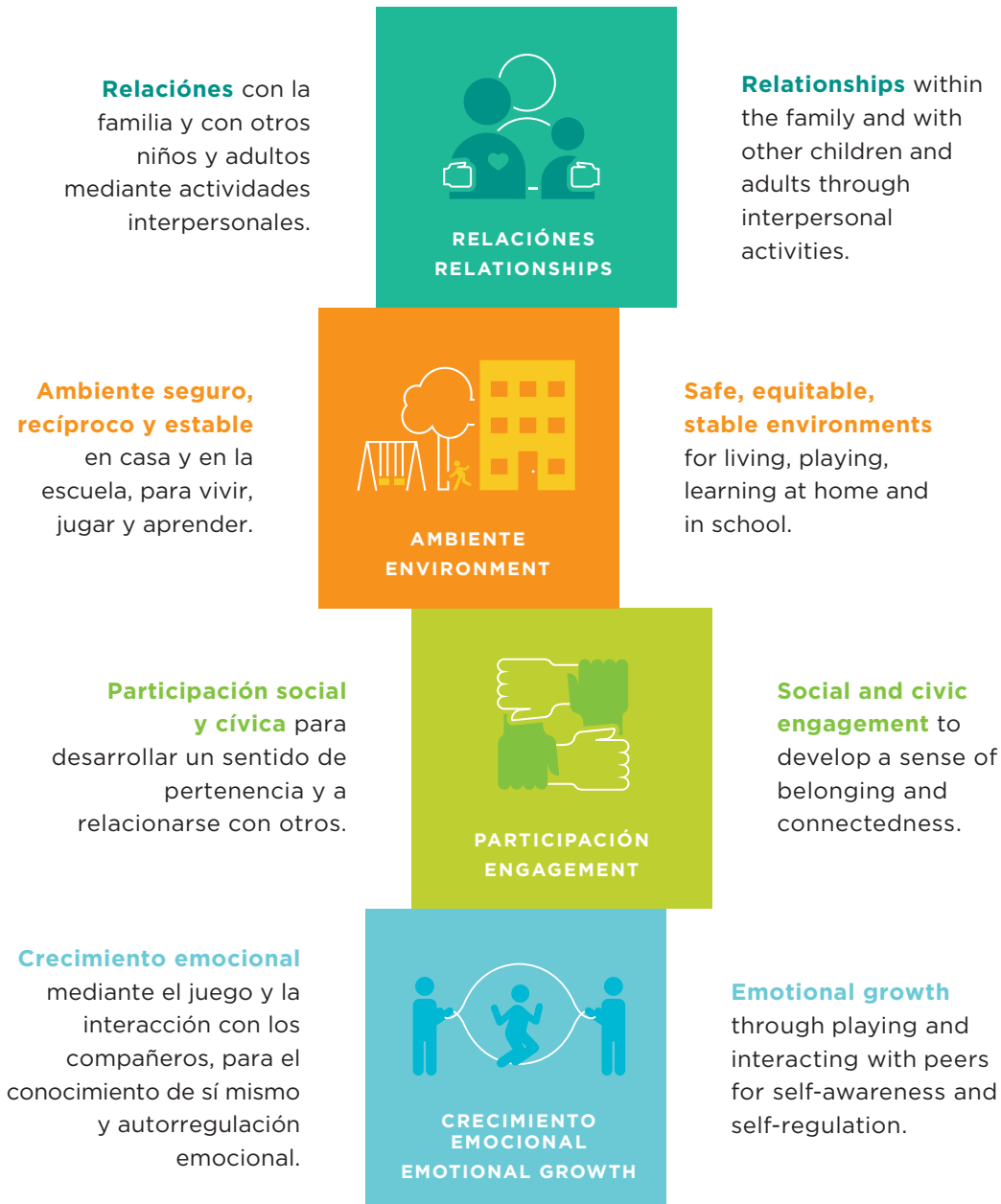
Emotional growth through playing and interacting with peers for self-awareness and self-regulation.

Los Cuatro Pilares Fundamentales de HOPE

se componen de Experiencias Infantiles Positivas esenciales (PCE, por sus siglas en inglés)—y las fuentes de esas experiencias y oportunidades, que ayudan a los niños a convertirse en adultos sanos y resistentes.

The Four Building Blocks of HOPE

are composed of key Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)—and the sources of those experiences and opportunities—that help children grow into healthy, resilient adults.



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.



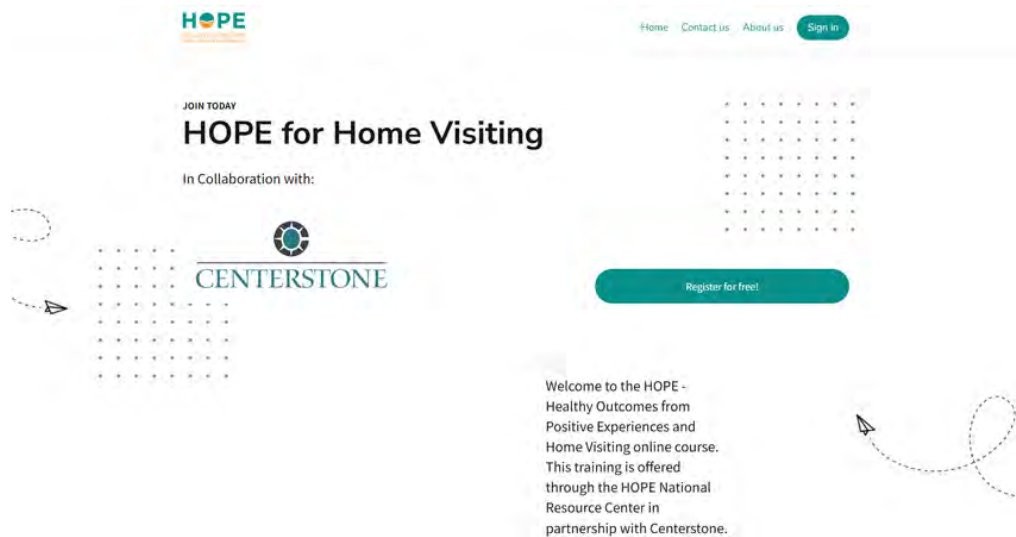
HOPE Training Resources

HOPE Tools for Practice for Home Visitors

HOPE Video Resources

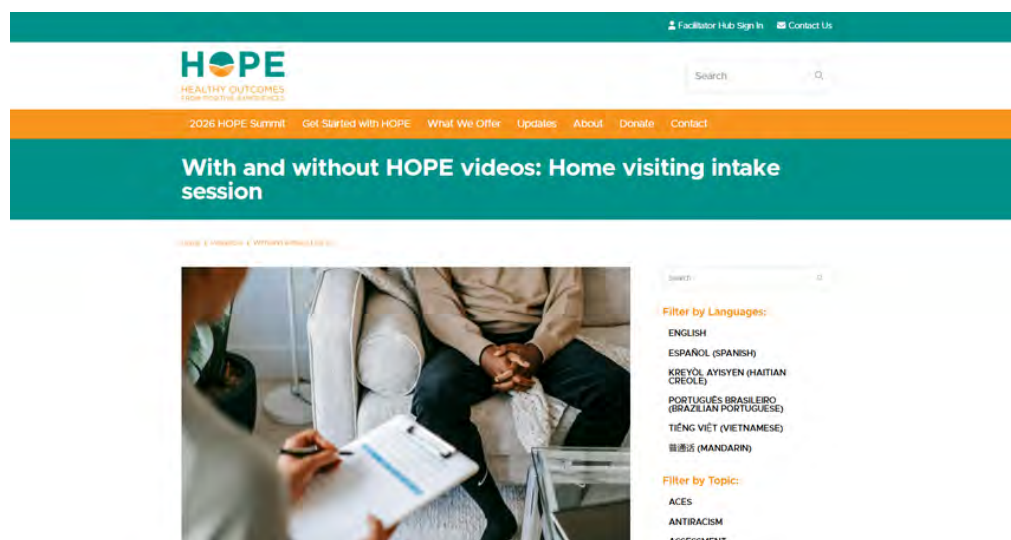
HOPE for Home Visiting Online Course

This training is offered through the HOPE National Resource Center in partnership with Centerstone. The training is intended for anyone who works in the field of home visiting or has had a home visitor. This training also offers continuing education credits.

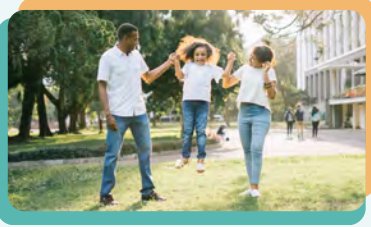


Home Visiting Intake Simulations

These simulation videos present two different intake sessions between a home visitor and a parent. One video shows the home visitor using the HOPE framework when speaking to the client. The other video presents a similar conversation, but the home visitor does not use HOPE.



Creating moments of HOPE



The HOPE framework helps professionals and organizations actively promote positive childhood experiences (PCEs) for the children, families, and communities they serve. HOPE begins with recognizing, celebrating, and promoting moments of individual and family strengths.

HOPE can be integrated into existing models like trauma-informed care and layered into the work you are already doing. This handout outlines ways to create moments of HOPE.

During each encounter with a child or family

Create a moment of HOPE with each encounter with a child or family. What has gone well since the last time you saw each other? What is something they are proud of? Celebrate the successes with them, big and small.

During intake and assessments

Each of us has a unique mix of strengths and challenges. Create a moment of HOPE by focusing first on strengths. Consider asking open-ended questions on one or all of the [Four Building Blocks of HOPE](#): relationships, environments, engagement, and emotional growth.

When sharing referrals or community resources

Make sure your connection to a family is individualized to their specific strengths, challenges, and culture. Offer a moment of HOPE to families by connecting referrals and community resources relating to the Building Blocks they need. Including PCEs into your conversations about resources reminds families of their important role in supporting their children!

When creating or revising policies

Does your policy promote access to one of the Four Building Blocks of HOPE? Does it block access? Does it intentionally recognize the positive? Are there certain groups of individuals who are disproportionately affected by your policy? Review how your everyday policies can promote better access to Building Blocks for all children. Take a look at our [HOPE-Informed checklist for decision making](#) and [HOPE as an Anti-racism framework in action](#) guides.

Within your internal organizational culture

Spreading HOPE goes beyond what happens with families and children. It starts with a culture of HOPE inside your organization. Not sure where to begin? Start with our [HOPE-informed supervision and leadership](#) document.



HEALTHY OUTCOMES
FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

10 Ways for Providers to Promote Positive Childhood Experiences



Many of us are concerned about increased stress for our children and families, especially during COVID-19. We aren't powerless, though, and the unique circumstances of our current environment actually allow for new ways to engage and connect with children. Using HOPE (Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences) as a guide, here are 10 suggestions to promote Positive Childhood Experiences now:

1. Think about **social connection and physical distance**, not social distance. The new way of the world ironically allows for increased connections with friends and loved ones far away. Encourage families to take advantage of the extra time at home by having virtual story-time with Grandma, trivia night with cousins, or Zoom holiday dinners.
2. **Talk with the children.** Like us, children may be fearful or simply missing their routines. Connect with them when you see them. Ask them about their concerns. Their answers will guide you on how to talk with them. Reassure them that life will return to some semblance of normal at some point.
3. **Encourage families to reach out for support** when they need it! Everyone needs help sometimes. Encourage caregivers that modeling the ability to ask for help is a skill they want their children to have!
4. **Encourage kids to reach out to support.** Encourage the children you see to touch base with their friends, and check-in on how they're feeling. This increases the opportunities for children to practice empathy and listening skills.
5. **Share information** that you DO have. Uncertainty is stressful. Let children and parents know what the most up-to-do recommendations are so they can play safely.
6. **Offer resources on self-regulation and self-care.** It's true that families are stressed. Now is a perfect time to incorporate self-care into the daily routine. Share resources on meditation, mindfulness, and/or yoga. Encourage families to make a plan for self-care!
7. **Be silly.** Laughter truly is the best medicine. Interacting with a provider can be stressful for families. Make a commitment to having at least one moment of silliness or levity in each interaction.



8. **Comment on the positive.** What we pay attention to grows. Call out the positives you see in the families you're serving. Lift them up and celebrate what's going well.
9. **Engage with your community,** in whatever ways are possible. Your local, state, and federal government are mobilizing support. Decision-makers need to hear from all of us about strengthening social safety nets. Helping others gives us (and older children and teens) a sense of purpose that can help counter stress.
10. **Encourage families to prioritize positive moments.** It can be hard for adults to allow themselves to play when they are stressed. Encourage regular family time that may include going for walks, playing games, or cooking together. Many families are growing closer as we face this crisis together. Help your families create happy memories, even now.

To learn more about HOPE, read all blog posts, and more, visit positiveexperience.org or email HOPE@tuftsmedicalcenter.org.



HOPE is Everywhere:

Blooming in Everyday Moments

This resource was created for home visitors to identify and affirm aspects of families' lives through the HOPE framework to foster well-being, even in the face of adversity. Even when risk factors are visible, families continue to show resilience. Home visitors can help families recognize their strengths and resources by naming them out loud.





Relationship

Safe and supportive relationships within the family and with other children and adults.

- **Attachment and trust** - Secure relationships with caregivers help children feel safe and valued.
- **Supportive connections** - Positive ties with peers, teachers, mentors, and community members expand a child's network of care.
- **Consistency** - Reliable, ongoing relationships provide stability in times of uncertainty.
- **Modeling and guidance** - Adults demonstrate coping strategies, empathy, and problem solving, which children learn through observation.
- **Belonging** - Relationships foster a sense of inclusion and identity, reinforcing that children are part of a caring community.

Guidance and Examples

What to look for:

- Caregivers share joy in playful or silly moments.
- The child has adults who respond warmly and help them name feelings.
- The child has opportunities to play with other children at home, childcare, or in the community.

Ways to Reflect on Strengths:

- "I noticed how your baby looked right at you when you talked; she clearly feels safe with you."
- It is clear how much your kids rely on you. That bond is a real strength in this family."
- "Even with everything going on, your relationship with your child shines through."



Environment

Safe, equitable, and stable environments where children can live, learn, and play.

- **Safety** - Children thrive when their surroundings protect them from harm and provide stability.
- **Equity** - Environments should ensure fairness and access to resources, regardless of background or circumstance.
- **Stability** - Consistent routines and reliable living conditions help children feel secure.
- **Opportunities to live, learn, and play** - Environments should nurture growth by offering spaces for education, recreation, and healthy development.

Guidance and Examples

What to look for:

- Resources are available to help reduce environmental stressors.
- Families are supported with resources that promote a healthy environment: Safe living spaces, nutritious food, and access to healthcare.
- Families are connected with schools that promote learning, belonging, and positive relationships.

Ways to Reflect on Strengths:

- “You have created a cozy sleeping space for your baby; that shows how much thought you have put into keeping her safe.”
- I see how carefully you have arranged things here. That takes effort, especially with so much on your plate.”
- “You have made this space feel like home for your kids.”



Engagement

Opportunities for social and civic engagement to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness

- **Community participation** - Involvement in local activities, events, and organizations that build connection.
- **Cultural expression** - Opportunities to celebrate traditions, language, and identity.
- **Civic involvement** - Experiences that allow children and families to contribute to decisions and feel heard.
- **Sense of belonging** - Feeling included and recognized as part of a larger community.
- **Agency and voice** - Encouraging children and families to express opinions, make choices, and influence outcomes.

Guidance and Examples

What to look for:

- Children take part in family cultural traditions, foods, and celebrations that help them feel included.
- Encouraging a child to help with household tasks to feel like a valued member of the family.
- Encouraging connections with at least one adult or activity outside of the home.

Ways to Reflect on Strengths:

- “I love how you talk to your baby while you change him; that is building his brain.”
- “You have kept bedtime routines going even during stressful times. That consistency matters so much.”
- “I notice you making sure she gets to school; that is an important protective factor.”



Emotional Growth

Opportunities for emotional growth where children feel supported through difficult events and emotions.

- **Self-awareness** - Developing the ability to recognize one's own feelings and needs.
- **Self-regulation** - Learning strategies to manage stress, frustration, or disappointment constructively.
- **Resilience** - Building the capacity to recover from setbacks and adapt to challenges.
- **Empathy** - Understanding and responding to the emotions of others, fostering compassion, and connection.
- **Confidence** - Gaining a sense of competence and belief in one's ability to handle difficulties.

Guidance and Examples

What to look for:

- Consistent and nurturing routines.
- Children have opportunities to share their voices and express themselves.
- Positive encouragement is regularly offered.

Ways to Reflect on Strengths:

- "You gave him a choice about the toy; that supports his confidence."
- "The way you comforted her when she was upset helps her learn about feelings."
- "You have set clear limits with love; that is a real strength."

HOPE[®]

Integrating HOPE with Sector Techniques

Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences in Motivational Interviewing

To help home visitors use the Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE) framework alongside Motivational Interviewing (MI) to build trust, identify strengths, and support families in creating nurturing, stable environments for children.



Spirit of Motivational Interviewing:

- **Partnership** - Work with families as equals and working collaboratively with the individual as the expert on their own life.
- **Acceptance** – Deep respect and autonomy for autonomy, strength, and choices
- **Compassion** – Prioritization of caregiver and child well-being.
- **Evocation** - Draw out family ideas and motivation for change.

Integration Strategies:

1. **Start with Strengths – Use HOPE to identify existing positive experiences before addressing challenges.**
 - a. Example: “Tell me about times your child felt safe and supported.”
2. **Affirm and Reflect – Reinforce HOPE themes during MI reflections.**
 - a. Example: “Creating that calm bedtime routine shows how much you value your child’s sense of safety.”
3. **Elicit Change Talk Through HOPE – Link desired changes to increasing positive experiences.**
 - a. Example: “How would adding more family playtime help your child feel connected?”
4. **Collaborative Goal Setting – Frame small, achievable goals around enhancing positive experiences.**
 - a. Example: “What’s one small step you’d like to take to make your routines more predictable?”



Quick-Reference Checklist for Home Visits

Before the visit

- ☐ Review previous strengths and goals
- ☐ Prepare at least 1 HOPE-oriented prompt
- ☐ Plan for a warm, supportive opening

During the visit

Strengths-Based Foundation

- ☐ Begin by asking about recent positives
- ☐ Affirm caregiver efforts and progress

Use HOPE Building Blocks

- ☐ Explore at least one HOPE building block
- ☐ Reflect back how these strengths support child development

MI Techniques

- ☐ Use open-ended questions
- ☐ Reflect and summarize
- ☐ Elicit change talk when appropriate

Goal Setting

- ☐ Ask the caregiver what matters most right now
- ☐ Co-create one small, realistic, HOPE-aligned goal
- ☐ Confirm confidence and next steps

After the visit

- ☐ Document strengths that emerged
- ☐ Note successful MI strategies
- ☐ Track progress on HOPE-related goals

Reframing with HOPE

Reframing is more than “putting a positive spin” on something, it’s a professional skill that helps us see families through a strengths-based, trauma-informed lens. The HOPE (Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences) framework reminds us that children thrive when families experience positive relationships, safe environments, meaningful engagement, and opportunities for emotional growth. Reframing helps us identify and build on these strengths, even when families are navigating stress or adversity. When we change the way we describe a situation, we also change how we think, respond, and partner with families.



How Reframing Supports HOPE Informed Practice

✧ Reframing protects relationships

- Families quickly sense judgment. Labels such as “chaotic,” “unmotivated,” or “overwhelmed” can unintentionally create distance.
- Reframing shifts the focus toward effort, care, and intention, which helps maintain trust and strengthens the partnership between home visitor and caregiver.
- This aligns with the HOPE building block of positive relationships, where families feel respected, valued, and understood.

✧ Reframing helps us identify Positive Childhood Experiences

- Even when families face challenges, they are often already creating moments that support their child’s development.
- Reframing helps us recognize these moments and build on them.



- Example: Instead of: “Parents rely on video games instead of toys.” Reframed: “Parents are engaging their child with activities they know the child enjoys. This shared interest creates opportunities for connection and can be expanded to include other types of play that support development.”
 - This reframing recognizes an existing moment of engagement between parent and child, which supports the HOPE building block of engagement through play and learning. It identifies a positive interaction that can be built upon rather than framing the situation as a deficit.

✧ Reframing guides supportive next steps

- Deficit-based language stops at the problem.
- Reframing helps us connect what we see to opportunities for support and skill-building, which is central to the HOPE building blocks of engagement and emotional growth.
- Example: Instead of: “The home is chaotic.” Reframed: “The family is managing many responsibilities; we can explore routines that support greater predictability for everyone.”
 - The focus becomes partnership and problem-solving, not criticism

✧ Reframing shapes respectful documentation

- Home visiting notes may be read by caregivers, supervisors, educators, or other professionals.
- Strengths-based documentation ensures families are represented with dignity and respect, while also highlighting the capacities that can support a child’s positive development.
- This practice reinforces the HOPE principle that families already possess important protective factors.

✧ Reframing strengthens reflective practice

- How we talk about families reflects how we think about them.
- Practicing reframing encourages us to stay curious, compassionate, and aware of our own assumptions. This reflective mindset helps home visitors remain aligned with the core goal of home visiting: empowering families and building on their strengths.

How to Practice Reframing:

Reframing begins with noticing your initial interpretation and intentionally shifting it toward strengths, intention, and possibility

Consider asking yourself:

- What strength, effort, or intention might exist beneath this situation?
- What stressors or unmet needs might be influencing this behavior?
- How might this caregiver's actions reflect care for their child?

When reframing:

- Look for evidence of effort, awareness, persistence, or love
- Replace judgmental labels with neutral, descriptive language
- Focus on what the caregiver is doing, not what they are failing to do
- Use collaborative language such as “we can explore...” or “we can build on...”

Reframing does not ignore challenges. Instead, it allows us to view those challenges through a compassionate, solution-focused lens that supports dignity, connection, and growth.

Reflection Questions for Home Visitors

Reflective practice strengthens our ability to apply reframing consistently.

Consider:

1. What was my first interpretation of a challenging moment today?
2. What strengths might I have overlooked?
3. What assumptions did I bring into this visit?
4. Did I notice any moments of resilience, warmth, or commitment from the caregiver?
5. How might this behavior make sense when viewed through stress, trauma, culture, or capacity?
6. If a parent read my notes, would they feel respected and understood?
7. How can the strengths I observed guide my next steps with this family?



Examples of HOPE-Informed Reframing

Clutter / limited seating

- Reframed: “The family is managing many belongings right now; we can explore ways to create comfortable spaces for play and connection.”

Parent rarely leaves the house

- Reframed: “Parent is creating a home-based environment for their child and may be open to ideas for indoor activities that support movement and learning.”

Parent is very self-critical

- Reframed: “Parent shows strong self-awareness and is reflecting thoughtfully on how their actions affect their children.”

Home feels busy and chaotic

- Reframed: “Parent is caring for several children and managing many responsibilities; we can partner on strategies that support smoother routines.”

Parent engages mostly during the visit

- Reframed: “Parent shows strong engagement during visits and may benefit from ideas for bringing those interactions into everyday routines.”

TV is on most of the time

- Reframed: “The TV provides background engagement for the family; we can explore ways to add moments of focused interaction during daily routines.”

Parent focuses heavily on academics

- Reframed: “Parent is highly motivated to support their child’s learning and may be open to exploring how play also builds academic skills.”

Parent is on their phone during visits

- Reframed: “Parent is managing important responsibilities and may benefit from support in creating brief, focused moments of interaction with their child.”



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
 RELATIONSHIPS	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.
 ENVIRONMENT	Support routines that create calm and safety.	The home visitor helps the caregiver create a bedtime routine that brings peace.
 ENGAGEMENT	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.
 EMOTIONAL GROWTH	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.



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
	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.
	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?"
	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.
	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.

HOPE-Informed Recommendations for Challenging Conversations



There are many conversations you might need to have with families that can be hard to engage in- conversations about suspected child abuse, co-sleeping, or even low engagement in services. We're going to walk through a three-step process that includes preparing the family or individual for the challenging conversation, actually engaging in the conversation, and then closing out the process.

Preparing for the conversation

- Let the family know, clearly and directly, what you will be discussing
- Share your goal for the conversation; ask if they have goals
- Find a private space to talk
- Create room for breaks as needed

Engaging in the conversation

- Briefly review the power of the brain to change
- Review the science of positive childhood experiences (PCEs) and the power to offset health outcomes
- Ensure you maintain a safe space to talk
- Engage in the conversation; remember, clear is kind

After the conversation

- Recap what you heard and your understanding of next steps
- Review PCEs that you have seen in the family
- Celebrate with the parent the work they are already doing to create resilience and health for their children
- Ask the parent if they are interested in brainstorming more ways to create PCEs for their children
- Close with a positive, *HOPE-Informed* messaging



HOPE-Informed Example of a Challenging Conversation



During the last several visits, you notice your client has placed her swaddled baby on a pillow with a bottle propped up on a towel when it's time to feed him. She has two other children under four in the home, and she uses this time to tidy the house, get some food, or play with her other children.

Preparing for the conversation. You might say something like:

I'd love to talk about how you're feeding the baby. I know you have a lot on your plate right now. My goal is to help figure out how we can get you some more support around the house so you can do all of the things on your list while still being able to have that skin-to-skin connection during feeding time. Would that be something you'd be up for talking about?

I know it's just about time for the baby to be fed again. I can get the older kids started on a puzzle and then meet you on the couch for the feeding, if that works for you.

Engaging in the conversation: You might say something like:

It's really inspiring to watch how important it is for you to stay connected to your older kids as they adjust to having a new baby in the house. I can see how hard you're working to help them feel connected and engaged in the family. I also see you hustling to make sure they have a safe and clean space to play. All of those things, your attention to your relationship with them, the way you keep them engaged, the focus on ensuring a safe environment at home, they all help those kids be healthier well into adulthood! It's amazing! AND...the baby wants those things from you too! I see how quickly he soothes when you pick him up and pat his back. That relationship is growing so quickly. Can we brainstorm together about how we can help you have that important 1:1 time with him during more of his feeds?

After the conversation: You might say something like:

It sounds like we have a plan that you're going to try over the next week. For at least two of the baby's feedings, you'll hold him, skin-to-skin, while you put on music for the older kids to have a little dance party or play a game like "I spy". The relationships you are deepening with each of your kids will help them grow into more resilient youth and adults! I'm always up for brainstorming more ways to create access to those key types of positive childhood experiences that help kids thrive, too. Maybe we can focus on other ideas next visit.

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HOPE Resources for Supervisors



HOPE-Informed Supervision Guide for Home Visiting Professionals

Promoting reflective, supportive, and strength-based supervision practices

Purpose of This Guide

This guide provides a framework for **HOPE-informed supervision**, an approach that helps home visiting professionals reflect, grow, and sustain their own well-being while recognizing and building upon the strengths of the families they serve. Supervision is both a reflective and restorative space where professional support meets hope, curiosity, and compassion.

The Importance of HOPEful Supervisions

HOPEful supervision reflects the **Four Building Blocks of HOPE (Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences)**:



Relationships

Builds trust and empathy between supervisor and staff.



Safe Environments

Creates space for open reflection and emotional safety.



Engagement

Encourages curiosity, learning, and collaboration rather than correction.



Growth

Nurtures confidence, purpose, and awareness of strengths.

When supervision is grounded in HOPE, home visitors feel seen, valued, and capable. That positivity extends to the families they support.



Sample Supervision Structure

1. **Check-In (5–10 min):** Begin with a personal and professional well-being check-in.
2. **Celebrations (5 min):** Highlight successes or positive moments from recent visits.
3. **Case Reflection (15 min):** Discuss challenges using a strength-based and solution-focused lens.
4. **Skill Building (10 min):** Share a short learning topic or strategy.
5. **Next Steps (5 min):** Identify follow-ups, resources, and supports.

Tip: End each meeting with a “pause for HOPE”: an intentional focus on one of the Building Blocks. This can be a reflection of how they show up personally or how a family has showcased one or more of them.

Sample Prompts for Reflection

- *What positive moments stood out during your visits this week?*
- *How have families shown resilience or strength?*
- *What experiences have renewed your sense of purpose?*
- *What supports have been most helpful to you recently?*
- *How can we build on what is already working for this family?*

Tips for Providers

For Supervisors:

- Lead with empathy: listen for strengths before challenges.
- Create a consistent, judgment-free space.
- Acknowledge and celebrate small wins.
- Model curiosity and hopefulness in problem-solving.

For Home Visitors:

- Bring both successes and struggles to supervision.
- Reflect on how positive experiences shape your work.
- Recognize your own professional growth.
- Communicate openly about what support you need.

***When supervision is HOPEful, practitioners feel supported;
when practitioners feel supported, families thrive.***

HOPE-Informed supervision and leadership handout



This handout walks you through assessing how HOPE-Informed is your supervision and leadership style at your organization. You can also pair this document with the [HOPE-Informed Checklist for Decision-Making](#) to ensure that policies and decisions that you create as an organizational leader are HOPE-Informed.

As you work towards incorporating the HOPE framework into your supervision and leadership style, ask yourself in what ways your supervision and leadership style does the following:

HOPE-Informed component

Examples

Explicitly highlights or seeks staff strengths	• Begin supervision sessions by noting or asking about something the staffer has done well or is proud of since the last time you spoke • Create a bulletin board with staff photos and personal strengths or skills • Give “shout outs” during staff meetings where people can publicly thank or celebrate their co-workers for support or success
Encourages staff to acknowledge child and family strengths, even in the face of challenges	• Incorporate “what is going well” into every case conference • Encourage staff to document protective factors or strengths with each client contact
Creates formalized feedback loops with the community that staff are serving	• Create satisfaction surveys for families to complete • Update your website to include a “feedback box” section • Host community forums to learn about local needs, trends, and receive feedback regarding your services
Takes time in team meetings to talk with staff about how services and programs are going	• Include time during each staff meeting to discuss how services support one or more of the Four Building Blocks of HOPE • Make access to the Four Building Blocks a priority when planning or updating any program or service



Seeks out existing (or of new) strengths-based assessment tools, intake forms, and screeners	• Evaluate current forms to determine if they include for strengths and have strengths-based language • Create a committee to update forms to reflect HOPE-informed values
Publicly celebrates staff and program success in promoting access to the Four Building Blocks	• Ask during supervision sessions how intervention is increasing access to one or more of the Four Building Blocks of HOPE • Create a visual somewhere in the office with actual Building Blocks where staff can add a block when families have made new connections to resources
Makes family voice a priority when developing treatment plans and next steps, instead of being staff-driven	• Supervision allows for staff to think about how their treatment planning honors the family's experience, preferences, and priorities
Facilitates the Four Building Blocks of HOPE within the team and names specific examples of how you promote each Building Block	• Facilitates the Four Building Blocks of HOPE within your team and name some specific examples of how you promote each Building Block

Equally as important, you will want to reduce the amount of time you:

- Focus only on challenges and problems during one-on-one supervision time and staff meetings
- Create an “us versus them” mentality when talking about families served
- Prevent staff and the community from providing feedback on organizational leadership

As you work through this checklist, be gentle with yourself. Most of us do some of the things on both lists some of the time. The overall goal is to increase the depth and frequency of the HOPE-informed practices and reduce the frequency of the non-HOPE-informed practices. This is a marathon, not a sprint. Real culture shift takes time and focus.

If you're stuck, we are here to help! Reach out to the HOPE National Resource Center team at HOPE@tuftsmedicalcenter.org.

A HOPE and Strengthening Families-informed Coaching Guide



We know that everyone needs access to key types of experiences for optimal health and well-being. Finding ways to ensure that systems-impacted families have access to both the Four Building Blocks of HOPE and the Strengthening Families Protective Factors will create opportunities for families to break intergenerational cycles of systems-involvement and increases the likelihood that children, youth, and families will thrive.

Even when an agency has made a commitment to HOPE, Strengthening Families, and/or strengths-based practice more generally, it may be challenging to consistently apply the approach. This guide is designed to help supervisors coach staff towards more consistent use of a lens that actively seeks out opportunities to promote access to PCEs and protective factors with children, youth, and families.



The worksheet should be used as a part of regular supervision sessions. The worksheet can stand alone, or its content can be incorporated within existing agency supervision tools. It can be used to guide discussion with caseworkers about specific families on their caseload and also provides ideas around focusing on protective factors and positive experiences to reach case plan goals

General Coaching Activities

Ask the staff member to answer the following questions based on the specific family or youth on their caseload:

1. What protective factors are already in place for this family and/or youth? What positive experiences does the child or youth have consistent access to?
2. How can these strengths be used to help address the issues that brought this family or young person to the attention of the child welfare or juvenile justice system?
3. What challenges is the staff member experiencing in building Protective Factors and increasing access to the Building Blocks with families or youth?

4. How can the Building Blocks and Protective Factors be built or supported as part of the case plan?

Actions the family/youth will take:

Actions the worker will take:

Services or resources that will be engaged:

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Tools for HOPEful Screenings & Assessments

HEALTHY OUTCOMES
FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

TuftsMedicine

HOPE-Informed screenings and assessments guide



Screenings and assessments can be helpful tools in understanding what is going on for families, but they often highlight deficits and risks. This resource provides simple guidance to direct service professionals around delivering these tools in a HOPE-Informed way, from preparing the family for the screener or assessment through delivery and wrap-up.

Preparing the screener

- Provide information about the screening
 - Explain the screener and the kinds of questions you will be asking
 - Explain why you are conducting the screening
 - Remind the family that this is optional
- Schedule for a time in the future when the parent or caregiver can feel prepared to discuss

Conducting the Screener

- Briefly review the power of the brain to change
- Review the science of positive childhood experiences (PCEs) and the power to offset health outcomes
- Create a safe space to share, acknowledging that parent should not feel obligated to go into detail
- Conduct the screener or assessment

After the screener

- Review PCEs that you have seen in the family
- Celebrate with the parent the work they are already doing to create resilience and health for their children
- Ask the parent if they are interested in brainstorming more ways to create PCEs for their children
- Close with a positive, *HOPE-Informed* messaging



A Guide to HOPEful Intakes in Home Visiting: Exploring Strengths and Access to the Four Building Blocks of HOPE



Intake forms are often designed to identify needs, risks, or eligibility criteria. While this information is important, it can unintentionally focus only on challenges and overlook the strengths families bring. A HOPE informed approach helps professionals see the whole family (strengths, interests, relationships, and goals) while still gathering the information needed for services.

A HOPE informed intake intentionally highlights Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) and the Four Building Blocks of HOPE:

- Supportive Relationships
- Safe, Stable, and Equitable Environments
- Social and Civic Engagement
- Emotional Growth

Throughout the intake process, home visitors can explore PCEs in ways that center strengths, build rapport, and identify opportunities to strengthen positive experiences for families.



1. Preparing for a HOPE Informed Intake

Before beginning the conversation:

- Send benign/neutral questions (like name, address, date of birth) over for the caregiver to complete ahead of time. Hold the sensitive questions for an in-person meeting.
- Celebrate important milestones (for example welcoming a new baby).
- Explain the purpose of the intake and the kinds of questions that will be asked.
- Let families know participation is optional and they may choose not to answer any question.
- Create a comfortable and respectful space for conversation.
- Whenever possible, schedule the intake at a time when caregivers feel prepared to talk.

Beginning with transparency, curiosity, and respect helps families feel safe sharing information.

2. Conducting a HOPE Informed Intake

A HOPE informed intake is not just about completing a form. It is an opportunity to learn about the family's strengths, relationships, goals, and challenges while identifying areas where support may be helpful.

Using open-ended, conversational questions allows home visitors to gather information about families' access to the Building Blocks while building connection and trust. When possible:

- Begin with strengths.
- Use open-ended conversation to gather required information.
- Celebrate the Building Blocks when you hear them come up as families respond to your questions.
- Do not feel obligated to collect all of the information in one session. Some of the information will be best gathered over time.



Practical Tips for HOPEful Intake Conversations

- Use Open-Ended Questions When Completing Required Forms:
 - When required forms are not fully HOPE-informed, open-ended questions can help create space for families to share their story while still gathering the information needed for documentation. Open-ended questions often lead to answers that address multiple required questions.
- Bring Strengths-Based Conversation Before and After Forms:
 - Sometimes programs must use forms that focus heavily on needs or challenges. When this happens, take time before and after completing the form to return to strengths-based conversation. This helps balance the discussion and ensures families are not defined only by the challenges captured in the form.
- Buffer Questions About Challenges:
 - When asking direct questions about challenges such as stress or mental health, it can be helpful to buffer the conversation with support and connection. If a caregiver shares that they are struggling, provide appropriate referrals or linkages to services while also exploring existing supports in their life. For example, you might ask about people they trust or activities that help them feel better and how they might reconnect with those supports.
- Use Accessible Language:
 - Adjust language to match the needs of each family. Simple sentences can support people across different literacy levels, languages, and ages. Using plain language and a conversational tone can make intake discussions feel more comfortable and easier to understand.

3. Closing the Intake

Before ending the intake conversation:

- Reflect back strengths you heard from the family
- Acknowledge the positive experiences they are already creating
- Identify areas where additional support may be helpful
- Ask about the family's priorities and goals
- Discuss next steps and available resources

Ending the intake with encouragement reinforces the family's strengths and builds a foundation for ongoing partnership.

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HOPEful Tools to Engage Caregivers

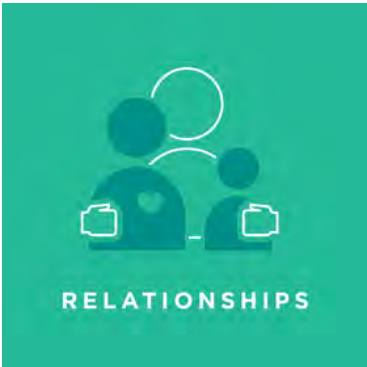


HOPE Framework Observation

Guide for Home Visitors

Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE) focuses on identifying and nurturing the building blocks of well-being. Your observations are key to understanding family strengths. Look for evidence of the Four Building Blocks:

RELATIONSHIPS - Look for signs of connectedness and love.



- Visual Cues: Family photos displayed, pictures of friends, spiritual/religious imagery, images of mentors or community groups.
- Handmade Items: Quilts, knitted/crocheted blankets or clothing, framed children's art—especially items gifted or made with/for someone.
- Pet Interactions: Photos of pets, pet toys/beds, observe gentle and responsive care for animals.
- Conversation Cues: How family members refer to supportive others. Note stories shared about people who care for them.

Observer's Note: "I see the quilt from grandma on the couch. Tell me about her."

ENVIRONMENT - Observe the safety, stability, and enrichment of the physical and emotional space.



- Safe & Engaging Spaces: Designated, safe sleeping space for baby. A defined area for play with age-appropriate toys. Baby-proofed zones where exploration is encouraged.
- Areas for Attention: Identify spaces that may need restriction (ungated stairs, uncovered outlets) and note them for supportive conversation.
- Nurturing Atmosphere: Presence of plants, natural light, comfortable and welcoming furniture. Organized spaces that reduce clutter and chaos.
- Personalization: Decor that reflects family identity, culture, or interests (posters, artwork, colors).

Observer's Note: "I notice this cozy corner with your baby's toys and the soft rug. It's great she has this safe spot to explore."



3. ENGAGEMENT - Look for evidence of interests, play, and participation in family or community life.



- Hobbies & Projects: Visible books, knitting/crocheting supplies, art materials, musical instruments, puzzles, or craft projects.
- Recreation: Board games, video game consoles, sports equipment, dance shoes.
- Rituals & Routines: Evidence of family meals, bedtime routines, or shared activities (e.g., a puzzle left on the table)..
- Community Connection: Flyers for local events, library books, uniforms for clubs/teams.

Observer's Note: "You have quite a collection of cookbooks here! Does the family like to try new recipes together?"

4. EMOTIONAL GROWTH - Observe cues for self-regulation, curiosity, and interpersonal emotional skills.



- Non-Verbal Cues (Parent/Child):
 - Body State: Relaxed posture, shaking leg, fidgeting, clenched hands.
 - Soothing Behaviors: How a parent rocks or pats the baby, self-soothing techniques (deep breath, sipping water).
 - Vocal Quality: Volume, pitch, and pace of speech. Soothing, singing, or animated tones.
- Physiological Signs: Cadence of breath (even vs. rapid), facial expressions.
- Interpersonal & Cognitive Cues:
 - Curiosity & Agency: Questions asked, engagement with recommendations, problem-solving approach.

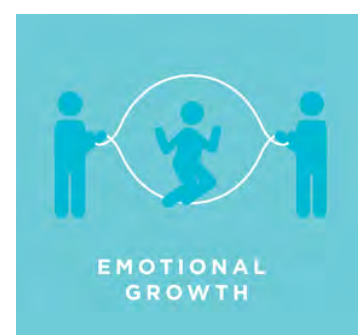
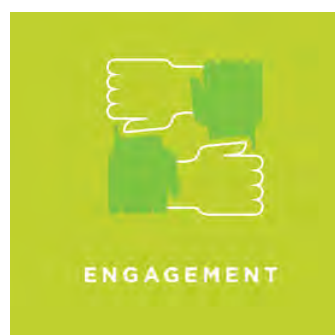
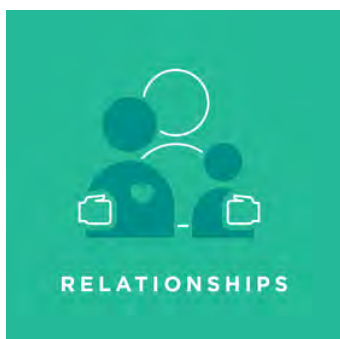
- Stress Management: Verbalizing feelings, taking a break, asking for help, using humor.
- Partner Communication: Observing respectful turn-taking, supportive gestures, shared eye contact, and collaborative problem-solving.

Observer's Note: "I noticed you took a deep breath when the baby got fussy. That seemed to help both of you reset. What other strategies help in those moments?"

How to Use These Observations

- Strengths-Based Lens: Frame observations as noticed strengths. *"You've created a very warm and personalized home."*
- Open-Ended Questions: Use observations to spark dialogue. *"Tell me about this picture..."* or *"I see your crochet project, how does working on that make you feel?"*
- Link to Building Blocks: In your notes and planning, connect observations to the HOPE framework (e.g., "Relationship strength noted: strong evidence of extended family support through photos and handmade items.").
- Goal-Setting: Use identified strengths as a foundation for setting goals. A parent engaged in a hobby (Engagement) can be supported in finding moments for self-care (Emotional Growth).

Your Role: You are a strengths-spotter. By observing and naming these positive experiences, you help families recognize and build upon their own foundations for resilience and well-being.





Strengths Map Exercise

Instructions

This strength map can be used during well-child visits to help understand how individuals are already accessing the Building Blocks. It can give you insight into areas that are already very developed and areas where you might want to offer some informal or formal supports.

- Start by writing the patient's name in the center box.
- Review the impact of positive childhood experiences and protective factors.
 - Emphasize that these look different for everyone.
- Select a building block to start with
 - *Tip: pick one you already have information about.
 - Review the building block summary provided.
 - Provide examples of local ways to get involved (refer to community resource binder).
- Move through the remaining building blocks.
- Review ways they can strengthen their least developed building block - circle the ones you will follow up on at next visit.
- Leave room for questions or comments from the patient.
- Provide resources and handouts for the patients to bring home.
- Let family know that this is something you will re-visit and work on together.

Notes

Your Unique Strengths

Name: _____





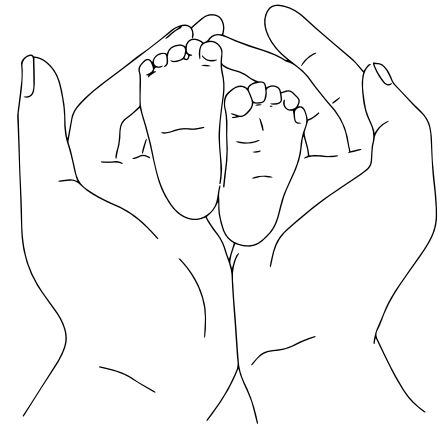
Opportunities for emotional growth as children feel supported through difficult emotions

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HOPE Resources for Caregivers

Welcoming Your Baby

With the Power of Positive Experiences



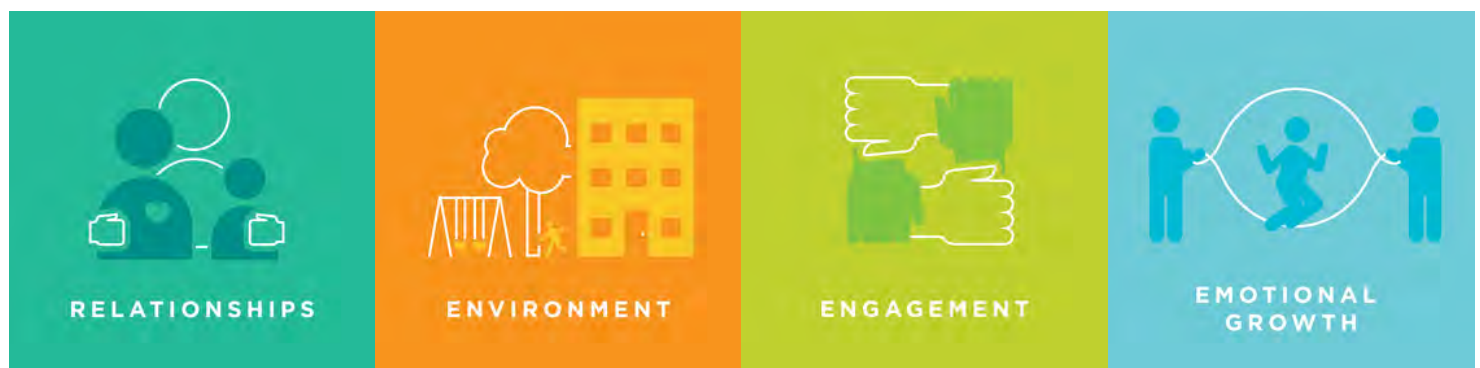
What is the HOPE Framework?

HOPE stands for Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences. It's a powerful way to understand how simple, loving, everyday moments can shape your baby's future.

From cuddling and singing to keeping routines and showing love—these experiences build your baby's brain, strengthen emotional bonds, and support resilience, confidence, and lifelong well-being. When parents, caregivers, and communities focus on creating positive experiences, they help children grow stronger, healthier, and happier.

The Four Building Blocks of HOPE

Research shows that positive childhood experiences (PCEs) help children grow into healthy, resilient adults. The HOPE framework centers around the Four Building Blocks of HOPE, key types of PCEs that all children need to thrive.



Relationships

Loving, supportive relationships are the foundation of your baby's healthy development. From the very beginning—even during pregnancy—your voice, touch, and attention help your baby feel safe and loved. These early bonds build trust and emotional security, essential for your child's brain development and lifelong well-being.

How to nurture relationships after birth:

- Cuddle skin-to-skin as often as you can.
- Respond to your baby's cries with calm, loving words and gentle touch.
- Make eye contact, smile, and talk to your baby throughout the day. Your baby learns from you!
- Pay attention to your baby's cues and answer with love, comfort, and kindness.
- All babies cry. Once you are sure that they are OK- fed, clean diaper, etc. – sometimes you need to let them cry it out. This is where having another adult available can really help!
- Build routines filled with love—feeding, bathing, sleeping, and playing are all bonding moments.
- Encourage your baby's "conversations" (when they make sounds or gestures, be sure to respond. This back-and-forth helps them learn and connect.

Take a moment to reflect

- Can you remember a time when someone made you feel truly loved and supported?
- What simple moments of love would you like to share with your baby every day?
- Every loving interaction helps your baby feel secure, seen, and valued





Environments

A safe, stable, and equitable environment gives your baby the foundation to grow and thrive. It reduces stress, supports healthy brain development, and helps your child feel secure and loved.

How to promote environments after birth:

- Create simple, loving routines (like a bedtime song or morning cuddle).
- Keep your baby's space clean, quiet, and smoke-free.
- Reduce overstimulation by keeping the sounds soft to create a peaceful environment.
- Babies learn from their own experiences. Avoid screens as much as possible for the first two years.
- Make your home a kind, nurturing place for both you and your baby.
- Ask for help when needed: emotional safety for you creates safety for your child.

Take a moment to reflect

- Was there a place where you felt especially safe and calm as a child?
- How can you create that kind of peaceful space for your baby now?
- When your baby feels safe, their brain can focus on growing, learning, and connecting.



Engagement

Positive social and community connections help children build trust, empathy, and a sense of belonging. These experiences shape how they relate to the world and others throughout life.

How to can promote engagement after birth

- Foster social connections that feel meaningful to you—such as with extended family, friends, or community groups.
- Introduce your child to new faces and experiences in a way that feels safe and nurturing for you both.
- Visit community spaces like parks or libraries when you feel comfortable.
- Celebrate family and cultural traditions—it strengthens identity and belonging.

Take a moment to reflect

- Think back to ways your parents helped you feel part of a community. Is there anything there you would want to repeat for your child?
- What things do you do, or what groups are you part of? What helps you feel connected and how could your child be part of that?
- What community or cultural experiences would you love to share with your child?
- Every connection, big or small, helps your child feel loved, accepted, and part of something greater.





Emotional Growth

Babies and young children begin to learn about emotions through their relationships with caregivers. Understanding, expressing, and managing emotions are key skills for lifelong mental health and healthy relationships. Early emotional support helps children feel safe, seen, and capable of handling the world around them.

How to can promote emotional growth after birth:

- Use playful facial expressions, songs, and gentle touch to connect with your baby.
- Pay attention to your baby's cues and answer with love, comfort, and kindness
- Create moments of back-and-forth play (peekaboo, simple games)—these "serve and return" interactions build emotional connection.
- Name emotions during daily routines: "You're excited to see me!" or "That loud noise surprised you."
- Laugh and play together—positive shared moments help your child feel safe and understood.
- Sometimes caring for a new baby is sheer joy. However, parents of infants also feel tired and sometimes overwhelmed. Think about how to take care of yourself, and remember that as your baby grows, it will become easier.

Take a moment to reflect

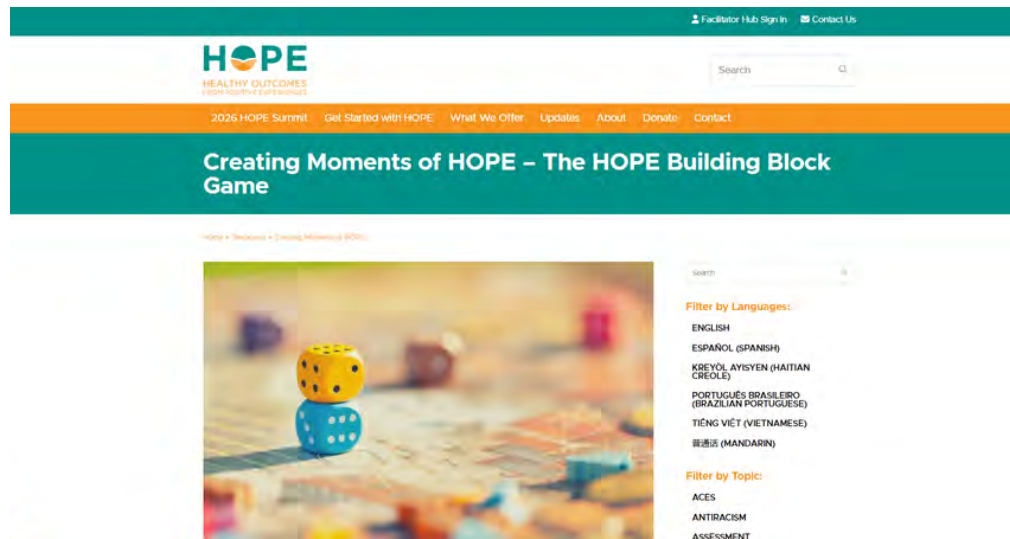
- Newborns respond well to being held, gently rocked, eye contact, and a soothing voice. As you and your baby get to know each other, you will figure out what works to co-regulate!
- When you play and connect emotionally with your baby, you're teaching them that feelings are okay—and that you're there to help them understand and handle each one calmly.



HOPE Games for Parent and Child

Creating Moments of HOPE Dice Game

This game provides four dice, one for each Building Block of HOPE. Each die includes 5 positive childhood experiences (PCEs) themed around a Building Block of HOPE. This dice game helps make practicing PCEs more intentional and fun for you and the children around you.



HOPEful Conversations Card Deck

This card deck is for educators, parents, caregivers, youth workers, facilitators—and young people themselves. Whether you are supporting others or exploring your own journey, these cards spark meaningful, thought provoking conversations, nurture emotional growth, and invite reflection on resilience and self-agency.



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HOPE References



Need help? Additional assistance from the HOPE team is available. Please reach out to us at tufts.mc.hope@tuftsmedicine.org.

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