

Competencies
At-A-Glance











National Family Support Competency Framework

for Family Support Professionals

2022 EDITION



Contents

Welcome!	2
 Domain 1 Infant and Early Childhood Development ...	3
 Domain 2 Child Health, Safety, and Nutrition	7
 Domain 3 Parent-Child Interactions.....	11
 Domain 4 Dynamics of Family Relationships	14
 Domain 5 Family Health, Safety, and Nutrition.....	17
 Domain 6 Community Resources and Support	21
 Domain 7 Relationship-Based Family Partnerships..	23
 Domain 8 Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness...	25
 Domain 9 Effective Home Visits.....	26
 Domain 10 Professional Practice.....	29
Glossary of Terms.....	33
References	34

Welcome!

Welcome to the National Family Support Competency Framework for Family Support Professionals!

The National Family Support Competency Framework is a model of skills shared by all family support professionals (FSPs), from family support workers to nurse home visitors to parent educators. FSPs work in a range of program models, such as Healthy Families America, Nurse Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers, local program models, and many more.

The National Family Support core competencies provide a framework for all of the professional development trainings found on the Institute (institute.fsp.org/). The trainings have been aligned with these competencies to ensure that each learning module is rigorous and relevant to the field. The Institute offers FSPs everywhere the opportunity to learn new skills and grow their careers.

Today's digital world has radically changed the way FSPs engage with families, access resources in the community, and develop into highly-qualified professionals. The Institute offers dynamic educational opportunities and a precision professional development approach that is accessible to everyone, providing an overall roadmap leading to quality service delivery and providing career pathways for FSPs.



DOMAIN 01

Infant and Early Childhood Development

Supporting the healthy physical, cognitive, and social emotional development of children is the critical component of all early childhood work. Family Support Professionals must understand and identify typical and atypical early childhood development across multiple domains and within the context of environment, culture, and family systems. Family Support Professionals help parents understand and support the healthy growth and development of their children.

Dimension 1 Typical and atypical development

Component A Developmental domains

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands terms describing developmental domains: cognitive, physical, language, and social-emotional	Supports parents' understanding that developmental domains are inter-related and helps parents to identify each domain	Coaches parents to use materials in the home that promote development in each domain by jointly planning home visit activities with parents

Component B Developmental stages and milestones

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands terms describing developmental core competencies: cognitive, physical, language, and social-emotional	Supports parents' understanding of development to help them recognize emerging developmental milestones	Coaches parents to set individual goals for children using their developmental stage to support achievement of developmental milestones

Component C Individual needs and differences

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the term "individually appropriate practice"	Supports parents to recognize their child's individuality by understanding developmental differences and unique characteristics of their children	Coaches parents to address each child's individual needs, interests, and learning styles by jointly planning for home visiting activities

Component D Children with developmental delays or identified special needs

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Recognizes possible developmental delays or concerns and explains how these may impact learning and development	Supports parents by connecting to appropriate early intervention services as needed	Coaches parents in understanding the special education rights of children and families and provides connection to additional resources and supports for needs in this area as appropriate



DOMAIN 01

Dimension 2 Prenatal development

Component A Fetal development

RECOGNIZE

Understands the terms “germinal stage,” “embryonic stage,” and “fetal stage”

APPLY

Supports parents’ understanding of weekly fetal development to help parents recognize prenatal milestones

EXTEND

Coaches parents in massaging and talking to the baby prenatally to support prenatal bonding

Component B Teratogens

RECOGNIZE

Understands the term “teratogen” and common teratogens including drugs and alcohol

APPLY

Supports parents’ understanding of common birth defects related to specific teratogens, such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)

EXTEND

Coaches parents to identify and prevent exposure to possible teratogens in the prenatal environment

Dimension 3 Infant care

Component A Crying

RECOGNIZE

Understands infant crying as a form of communication and reasons an infant might cry

APPLY

Supports parents with tips about how to soothe a crying infant, such as rocking or swaddling

EXTEND

Coaches parents to differentiate the infant’s cries in order to determine what the child is trying to communicate and assists parents in responding appropriately

Component B Diapering

RECOGNIZE

Understands infant diapering techniques

APPLY

Supports parents’ understanding of infant diapering techniques

EXTEND

Coaches parents on changing infant’s diaper and provides feedback

Component C Bathing

RECOGNIZE

Understands the process to both sponge and tub baths, and when each type of bath is appropriate for an infant

APPLY

Supports parents’ understanding of how to bathe infant

EXTEND

Coaches parents on bathing infant and provides feedback



DOMAIN 01

Dimension 4 Early language and communication

Component A Language development

RECOGNIZE

Understands typical language milestones from birth to 3 years

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding and use of child-directed speech and imitation with child

EXTEND

Coaches parents in responding to child vocalizations with repetition, expansion, and talking regularly with their child

Component B Dual language learning

RECOGNIZE

Understands stages of second language acquisition

APPLY

Supports parents with books in both the child's home language and second language that provide rhymes, rhythms, and interesting words

EXTEND

Coaches parents in using technology to create simple picture books with photos from the child's daily life and brief videos or audio recordings of the parent singing simple songs in their heritage language

Component C Autism

RECOGNIZE

Understands common "red flags" indicating risk for autism spectrum disorder

APPLY

Supports parents in recognizing "red flags" in child's development and when to get help

EXTEND

Coaches parents to connect with appropriate early intervention services as needed and follows up to ensure access to services



DOMAIN 01

Dimension 5 Early learning

Component A Routines and interactions

RECOGNIZE

Understands how development and early learning occurs within the context of a secure relationship with a consistent caregiver

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of learning and development that occurs through their daily routines and interactions with their child

EXTEND

Coaches parents in building a healthy relationship with their child through developing home visit activities that emphasize relationships, routines, and interactions

Component B Learning through play

RECOGNIZE

Understands how early learning occurs through play

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of learning and development that occurs through their child's daily play activities

EXTEND

Coaches parents to provide an interesting and secure environment that encourages play, exploration, and learning

Component C Developmentally appropriate

RECOGNIZE

Understands the term "developmentally appropriate practice"

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of developmentally appropriate activities they can use to support and promote their child's development and learning

EXTEND

Coaches parents in planning developmentally appropriate learning experiences

Component D Early literacy

RECOGNIZE

Understands early literacy behaviors in infants and toddlers

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of the types of books to use with children at various developmental stages

EXTEND

Coaches parents in reading, singing, and talking to children using varying levels of voice and inflection



DOMAIN 02

Child Health, Safety, and Nutrition

The health and safety of all family members is essential to family well-being. Family Support Professionals help families develop safe and healthy practices that promote optimum child growth and development and ensure the safety and health of all family members.

Dimension 6 Infant mental health

Component A Brain development

RECOGNIZE

Understands how neural connections in the brain are built over time through the serve-and-return process

APPLY

Supports parents to understand the serve-and-return process and helps them recognize the process in interactions with their infant

EXTEND

Coaches parent in recognizing infant cues and responding in a sensitive and responsive manner that strengthens neural connections

Component B Toxic stress

RECOGNIZE

Understands the terms "positive stress," "tolerable stress," and "toxic stress"

APPLY

Supports parents to understand the long-term effects of toxic stress on health and development and emphasizes the importance of a secure and supportive relationship to buffer the effects of stress

EXTEND

Coaches parents in recognizing sources of stress in their child's life and considering ways to reduce child's exposure to negative sources of stress

Component C Mental health concerns

RECOGNIZE

Understands problems in infant social and emotional well-being

APPLY

Supports parents in recognizing the difference between typical behavioral challenges and mental health concerns

EXTEND

Coaches parents to connect to appropriate mental health services as needed and additional services and resources for targeted parenting support



DOMAIN 02

Dimension 7 Child health and wellness

Component A Immunizations

RECOGNIZE

Understands the CDC recommended immunizations for children from birth through age 6

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of the recommended schedule of immunizations and the type of diseases prevented by each

EXTEND

Coaches parents to connect with immunization providers and follows up to ensure child immunizations are complete and up to date

Component B Well child visits

RECOGNIZE

Understands and uses the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended schedule for well-child visits through age 5

APPLY

Supports parents to access a pediatric medical home and emphasizes the importance of well-child visits and assists parents in developing questions and topics to cover at each visit specific to their child

EXTEND

Coaches parents on completion of recommended well-child visits and satisfaction with child's pediatric medical home

Component C Common childhood illnesses

RECOGNIZE

Understands signs and symptoms of common childhood illnesses

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of common childhood illnesses and differentiates between when to call the doctor and when to use the emergency department or urgent care center

EXTEND

Coaches parents in recognizing signs and symptoms of common childhood illnesses in their child and knowing how to appropriately alleviate symptoms

Component D Oral health care

RECOGNIZE

Understands risk factors for infant dental caries and tooth decay

APPLY

Supports parents to recognize common signs of teething and coaches parent on proper tooth cleaning

EXTEND

Coaches parents to access a dental home by the child's first birthday or within six months of eruption of the first tooth and facilitates access when necessary to ensure routine visits



DOMAIN 02

Dimension 8 Safe environments for young children

Component A Safe sleeping

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands common risk factors of SIDS and safe sleeping environments for infants	Supports parents' understanding of "tummy to play and back to sleep" and emphasizes the importance of always placing infant to sleep on their backs	Coaches parents to observe infant's sleep environment and facilitates access to a crib, bassinet, or portable play area with no toys or loose bedding

Component B Poison prevention

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands signs and symptoms of poisoning and can access the poison emergency number	Supports parents' understanding of common poison prevention strategies, including keeping items in original containers, never referring to medicine as "candy," and always ensuring proper dosage	Coaches parents about poison prevention, including storage of medicines and cleaning products in locked, child-proof cabinets, as well as having quick access to poison emergency number

Component C Vehicle safety

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the recommended progression of car seats from birth through age 5	Supports parents' understanding of guidelines for when to transition between car seats	Coaches parents in proper buckling of child and installation of seat and inspecting proper placement when someone else is transporting their child

Component D Childproofing

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands common household dangers that require childproofing	Supports parents to identify childproofing needs and safety devices within the home	Coaches parents to find appropriate community resources for safety devices such as gates, locks and outlet covers

Dimension 9 Child nutrition

Component A Breastfeeding

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and baby	Supports parents' understanding of various breastfeeding positions and supports mother in learning to express milk either by hand or with a pump when needed	Coaches parents throughout breastfeeding and facilitates access to lactation consultant as needed



DOMAIN 02

Component B Formula feeding

RECOGNIZE

Understands typical formula feeding schedule for infants at various ages

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of how to properly prepare a bottle, feed an infant, and sterilize equipment

EXTEND

Coaches parents throughout formula feeding and facilitates access to WIC as needed

Component C Infant nutrition

RECOGNIZE

Understands typical introduction of pureed and soft foods to infant diet

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of how to select, prepare, serve, and store infant foods

EXTEND

Coaches parents to keep log of introduction to different foods

Component D Nutrition of young children

RECOGNIZE

Understands recommended daily nutrition guidelines for young children

APPLY

Support parents' understanding of nutritional guidelines for young children

EXTEND

Coaches parents in planning meals and snacks that meet nutritional guidelines for young children

Dimension 10 Child abuse, neglect, and maltreatment

Component A Signs of abuse

RECOGNIZE

Understands the terms "child abuse," "child neglect," and "child maltreatment"

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of the warning signs of child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment in children

EXTEND

Coaches parents to self-report abuse when appropriate and connect to appropriate supportive services

Component B Shaken baby syndrome

RECOGNIZE

Understands the term "shaken baby syndrome"

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of infant crying by explaining the period of purple crying and teaches PURPLE acronym to let parents know infant crying is normal

EXTEND

Coaches parents to develop a safety plan for when parents are feeling frustrated or overwhelmed with their infant



DOMAIN 03

Parent-Child Interactions

Parent-child relationships form the foundation upon which all other work is built. Family Support Professionals promote and enhance healthy parent-child relationships. Family Support Professionals understand the importance of bonding and attachment and facilitate healthy attachment between caregivers and children.

Dimension 11 Influences on parenting

Component A Parent's childhood experiences

RECOGNIZE

Understands how continuity of parenting across generations is stimulated by sharing genes, as well as social contexts

APPLY

Supports parents to identify adverse childhood experiences that may have an influence on their parenting

EXTEND

Coaches parents in developing a plan to prevent their own adverse childhood experiences from impacting their child

Component B Social context

RECOGNIZE

Understands social influences on parenting including culture, ethnicity, religion, family, peers, mass media, and social media

APPLY

Supports parents to reflect on the social contexts that influence their parenting decisions and style

EXTEND

Coaches parents in identifying social influences that may have a negative impact on their child's development and creating a plan to remove these influences

Component C Child temperament and goodness of fit

RECOGNIZE

Understands characteristics of child's temperament and "goodness of fit"

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of how temperament affects the parent's view of the child and themselves as parents

EXTEND

Coaches parents in recognizing child's temperament and ensuring a goodness of fit between the child's temperament and environmental demands

Component D Parental self-efficacy

RECOGNIZE

Understands the term "parental self-efficacy"

APPLY

Supports parents with resources to improve their knowledge and confidence in their parenting abilities and consistently provides positive affirmation about parenting skills, especially within parent-child interactions

EXTEND

Coaches parents in reflecting on parental self-efficacy and developing a plan to increase parental knowledge and confidence in parenting skills



DOMAIN 03

Dimension 12 Parent-child relationship

Component A Attachment

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the terms “attachment” and “secure base”	Supports parents’ understanding of the importance of sensitive, responsive, and consistent caregiving in ensuring the development of trust and a secure attachment	Coaches parents in sensitively responding to infant cues to develop a secure attachment between parents and their infant

Component B Sensitivity and responsiveness

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands how sensitive and responsive caregiving is the basis for developing a strong parent-child relationship	Supports parents’ understanding of how to recognize a child’s cues through “speaking for the child” and then responding appropriately	Coaches parents in recognizing child’s cues and responding appropriately through the use of observation, suggestions, questions, and ongoing feedback during parent-child interactions

Component C Facilitation of interactions

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the process of coaching parent-child interactions	Supports positive parent-child interactions by consistently handing toys or other materials to parents and providing suggestions for interaction	Coaches parents by encouraging and reinforcing positive parent-child interactions and sustained engagement by actively observing and prompting parents to help adapt pace to child’s cues without interrupting interactions



DOMAIN 03

Dimension 13 Developmentally appropriate guidance

Component A Discipline versus punishment

RECOGNIZE

Understands the terms “discipline” and “punishment”

APPLY

Supports parents to recognize the meaning behind their child’s behavior and to give attention to positive behavior

EXTEND

Coaches parents in reflecting on the discipline or punishment strategies they use and replacing punishments with positive guidance strategies

Component B Positive guidance strategies

RECOGNIZE

Understands positive guidance strategies including limit setting, providing choices, and natural and logical consequences

APPLY

Supports parents with information about positive guidance strategies and models the use of a variety of strategies

EXTEND

Coaches parents to reflect on child’s challenging behaviors and develop a list of positive guidance strategies to address these behaviors

Component C Promoting self-regulation

RECOGNIZE

Understands the concept of “self-regulation”

APPLY

Supports parents’ understanding of the importance of helping their child recognize and label their emotions

EXTEND

Coaches parents in establishing clear, consistent limits with simple explanations



DOMAIN 04

Dynamics of Family Relationships

A strength-based approach guides all work with families. Family Support Professionals help families identify and develop protective factors to strengthen family security and improve family functioning. Family Support Professionals work with families to identify risks and stressors that impact family well-being and work together with families to set family-centered goals. Family Support Professionals help families to navigate the various relationships that may be present in any given family and understand the ways that trauma, gender, culture, and religion impact family systems.

Dimension 14 Healthy family functioning

Component A Family communication

RECOGNIZE

Understands characteristics of positive communication within families

APPLY

Supports families with positive communication strategies, such as active listening, clarifying, restating, and validating

EXTEND

Coaches family members to identify communication patterns and role plays to practice positive communication strategies

Component B Family strengths

RECOGNIZE

Understands common family strengths

APPLY

Supports families in identifying family strengths and competencies

EXTEND

Coaches parents to plan home visit activities that build on existing family strengths

Component C Conflict resolution

RECOGNIZE

Understands the steps of conflict resolution

APPLY

Supports families to identify individual conflict management styles

EXTEND

Coaches parents on conflict resolution through the use of "I statements"

Component D Networks of support

RECOGNIZE

Understands common sources of formal and informal supports for families

APPLY

Supports families to identify specific networks of support through development of an ecomap

EXTEND

Coaches parents in reflecting on how these networks of support influence their parenting and their child's growth and development



DOMAIN 04

Dimension 15 Influences on family well-being

Component A Racism and discrimination

RECOGNIZE

Understands the terms “racism” and “discrimination”

APPLY

Supports parents’ understanding of how racism and discrimination lead to systemic barriers and may be a source of trauma

EXTEND

Coaches parents to identify systemic barriers and brainstorm ways to overcome them

Component B Culture and language

RECOGNIZE

Understands how culture and language relate to well-being and social status

APPLY

Supports parents in recognizing the complexity of relationships and the ways in which their cultural values may shape their expectations and interactions with others

EXTEND

Coaches parents to promote pride in cultural identity and the transmission of culture to children

Component C Socioeconomic status

RECOGNIZE

Understands the term “socioeconomic status”

APPLY

Supports parents’ understanding of the impact of poverty and/or homelessness on child health and development

EXTEND

Coaches parents to develop financial, educational, and employment goals in order to improve socioeconomic status

Component D Risks and stressors

RECOGNIZE

Understands potential risks and stressors to family well-being such as parental incarceration, divorce, mental health issues, substance abuse, intimate partner violence, and trauma

APPLY

Supports parents’ understanding of the impact of these stressors on individual family members, parenting, and child development

EXTEND

Coaches parents on accessing formal and informal supports as needed and follows up to ensure family is supported



DOMAIN 04

Dimension 16 Fatherhood

Component A Importance of fathers

RECOGNIZE

Understands the developmental benefits of father involvement

APPLY

Supports parents in recognizing the father's unique parenting contribution and the benefits to their child's development

EXTEND

Coaches parents to review all program and marketing materials through a lens of father involvement and importance and makes recommendations when edits and revisions are needed

Component B Engaging fathers in home visits

RECOGNIZE

Understands strategies that can be used to engage fathers in home visits

APPLY

Supports father to engage as a partner in the visit, rather than an observer

EXTEND

Coaches parents by providing specific activities for the father at each home visit

Component C Non-custodial fathers

RECOGNIZE

Understands the structure of child support laws for noncustodial parents

APPLY

Supports parents to allow father to visit with his children regardless of his financial situation

EXTEND

Coaches parents by encouraging or facilitating communication with and involvement (when appropriate) with non-custodial fathers



DOMAIN 05

Family Health, Safety, and Nutrition

The health and safety of all family members is essential to family well-being. Family Support Professionals help families develop safe and healthy practices that promote optimum child growth and development and ensure the safety and health of all family members.

Dimension 17 Maternal health

Component A Contraception

RECOGNIZE

Understands various forms of contraception and differentiates between reversible and permanent methods

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of each method and the effectiveness of each method

EXTEND

Coaches parents to determine best method of contraception and facilitates access to that contraception

Component B Family planning

RECOGNIZE

Understands the health risks associated with closely spaced pregnancies

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of the importance of spacing between pregnancies in terms of reproductive health

EXTEND

Coaches parents by supporting the development of a reproductive life plan

Component C Prenatal care

RECOGNIZE

Understands what happens at prenatal care visits

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of the importance of prenatal visits and works with parents to develop a list of questions and topics for each visit

EXTEND

Coaches parents to facilitate access to prenatal care in the community and follows up on completion of recommended prenatal visits

Component D Prenatal nutrition

RECOGNIZE

Understands prenatal nutritional guidelines and foods to eliminate from diet during pregnancy

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of the importance of folic acid, multi-vitamins, and prenatal nutritional guidelines

EXTEND

Coaches parents in tracking nutrient intake for proper prenatal nutrition



DOMAIN 05

Component E Pregnancy risk factors

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands key risk factors in pregnancy, including high blood pressure, pre-eclampsia, substance use, and poor nutrition	Supports parents' understanding of how these risk factors impact mother's health and the developing fetus	Coaches parents to facilitate access to prenatal care in the community and follows up on completion of recommended care

Component: f. Postpartum depression

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands common signs of postpartum depression	Supports parents' understanding of the signs of postpartum depression and recognizing when to get help	Coaches parents to facilitate access to maternal mental health counseling, provides ongoing support, and follows up regarding proper care

Dimension 18 Mental health

Component A Depression

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands common signs of parental depression	Supports parents' understanding of the impact of parental depression on child development, especially the development of attachment between a parent and infant	Coaches parents to facilitate access to appropriate mental health services as needed

Component B Toxic stress and trauma

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands possible childhood experiences that could lead to toxic stress and trauma as an adult	Supports parents' understanding of the impact of toxic stress on the human physical response	Coaches parents to effectively manage toxic stress and trauma through connection with appropriate supports and services

Component C Mental illnesses

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands common symptoms of mental illness (e.g. anxiety, post-traumatic stress, personality disorders, psychotic disorder) and describes the connection between trauma and mental illness	Supports parents' understanding of the effects of family mental health problems on child safety and well-being, particularly in relation to child maltreatment and trauma	Coaches parents to facilitate access to mental health providers for evaluation and treatment when needed



DOMAIN 05

Dimension 19 Physical health

Component A Family diet

RECOGNIZE

Understands dietary guidelines for healthy eating for a healthy weight as defined by The Dietary Guidelines for Americans

APPLY

Supports families in establishing healthy eating habits and emphasizes the importance of family mealtime

EXTEND

Coaches parents by supporting their culture and working with the parents to identify ways to make cultural dishes healthier

Component B Exercise

RECOGNIZE

Understands the benefits of regular exercise

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of the importance of exercise and provides suggestions for family exercise activities

EXTEND

Coaches parents to develop a family exercise plan and follows up with parents to see how it is working

Component C Substance use

RECOGNIZE

Understands physical signs of intoxication and impairment due to substance use

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of common co-occurring risks to children of chemical dependent parents and describes the connection between trauma and substance use

EXTEND

Coaches parents to facilitate access to substance use disorder treatment providers and follows up regarding treatment

Dimension 20 Environmental safety

Component A Fire safety

RECOGNIZE

Understands common causes of house fires

APPLY

Supports parents in obtaining and installing working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

EXTEND

Coaches parents to develop fire escape plan and practices with family at least twice per year using the smoke alarm to teach children how to respond to the sound

Component B Emergency preparedness

RECOGNIZE

Understands environmental disasters that could happen within the community

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of protective measures that should be taken before, during, and after an emergency

EXTEND

Coaches parents to build an emergency kit for disasters and to keep the kit maintained and stocked



DOMAIN 05

Dimension 21 Intimate partner violence

Component A Recognizing intimate partner violence

RECOGNIZE

Understands common signs of intimate partner violence

APPLY

Supports parents' understanding of the effect of intimate partner violence on survivor's physical and mental health and on parenting abilities

EXTEND

Coaches parents to increase their understanding of common co-occurring risks to children who live in homes where intimate partner violence is present

Component B Safety planning

RECOGNIZE

Understands the components of an effective safety plan

APPLY

Supports parents to develop an effective safety plan

EXTEND

Coaches parents to seek assistance by providing referrals to intimate partner violence centers and other supporting services when needed



DOMAIN 06

Community Resources and Support

Engaging community resources and support are a critical component to positive outcomes for parents and children. Each community is unique in the specific services that are available to families. Effective Family Support Professionals are knowledgeable of the network of supports available and advocate for services where gaps exist. Family Support Professionals work with parents to plan for transition from the moment they are enrolled. They coach parents on how to advocate for themselves and their children and how to access resources when needed.

Dimension 22 Building community relationships

Component A Identification of community resources

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands resources within the community that provide social, financial, health and other services to children and families	Supports parents in obtaining the basic necessities of living and other needed services from community resources	Coaches parents in identifying career and educational services to promote self-sufficiency

Component B Collaboration with providers

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the importance of engagement with other service providers in a timely manner, and maintaining interagency and community connections to best meet the individual needs of the family	Supports parents to develop functional relationships with service providers by being responsive, communicating openly, and in challenging situations, seeking alternative solutions and compromises	Coaches parents to lead the communication and collaboration with other service providers. Ensures that the home visiting curriculum is being reinforced and that reciprocal relationships are established with other service providers that reinforce the strategies, goals and objectives of each provider and align with the family goals for the services

Dimension 23 Service system coordination and referral

Component A Referral process

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands elements of an effective referral	Supports parents to coordinate the variety of services they may need in response to the presence of one or more risk factors	Coaches parents to evaluate if the referrals to other services are meeting their needs and working as intended



DOMAIN 06

Component B Transition

RECOGNIZE

Understands the need for eventual withdrawal of program involvement

APPLY

Supports parents to understand and prepare for the potential emotional impact as they transition out of the home visiting program

EXTEND

Coaches parents to develop transition plans that address short-term and long-term strategies for successfully transitioning out of home visiting

Dimension 24 Advocacy

Component A Empowering families

RECOGNIZE

Understands situations in which a family might seek legal assistance to assert a right or entitlement

APPLY

Supports parents in becoming advocates for themselves and their children

EXTEND

Coaches parents in evaluating the results of advocacy, celebrating small wins, adjusting strategies if necessary, and encouraging persistence

Component B Service barriers

RECOGNIZE

Understands and identifies barriers to implementing services and gaps in available services

APPLY

Supports parents by working collaboratively within community to improve and increase service availability

EXTEND

Coaches parents in advocacy efforts on a local, state, and/or national level for increased resource accessibility and/or diminished barriers to access for families



DOMAIN 07

Relationship-Based Family Partnerships

Relationship building skills are essential for the Family Support Professional. Working with the family in their home sets the stage for building the partnership but the skill set of the professional is the key ingredient. Domain 7 describes the specific skills needed to achieve strong relationships with families.

Dimension 25 Respect and responsiveness

Component A Respect for diversity

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands and respects the many forms of diversity represented by families served	Supports parents by adjusting behavior according to cultural norms and cues to comfortably and skillfully interact with families who represent many forms of diversity	Coaches parents to recognize parenting as primary mechanism for transmission of culture and to lead discussions with service providers on the parents' culturally preferred practices in child-rearing

Component B Relationship building

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands how relationships are the key element of successful home visiting	Supports parents by building rapport to develop a trusting, mutually respectful relationship	Coaches parents to look for and engage in meaningful decision-making opportunities for their child

Dimension 26 Positive communication

Component A Active listening

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands common characteristics of active listening	Supports parents by utilizing active listening skills to gain understanding of the parents' perspective	Coaches parents in active listening techniques

Component B Effective inquiry

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands various strategies for effectively eliciting information from parents	Supports parents by utilizing reflective questioning to prompt parents to expand and extend their thinking	Coaches parents by utilizing reflective questioning on the impact of parental choices on child health and development



DOMAIN 07

Dimension 27 Collaboration

Component A Role of the Family Support Professional

RECOGNIZE

Understands the role of the Family Support Professional

APPLY

Supports parents by collaborating to develop mutual roles and expectations

EXTEND

Coaches parents to engage in parent leadership in decision making and planning

Component B Goal setting

RECOGNIZE

Understands the characteristics of a SMART goal

APPLY

Supports parents to write goals that are family driven, positive, behaviorally specific, attainable, and measurable

EXTEND

Coaches parents to write goals that capitalize on family strengths and values

Component C Action planning

RECOGNIZE

Understands information that should be included in action planning steps

APPLY

Supports parents to develop an action plan for each written goal

EXTEND

Coaches parents in tracking progress and celebrating completion of goals



DOMAIN 08

Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

The relationship between the family members and the professional are key to achieving family retention and positive outcomes. To achieve a positive relationship, the professional must be sensitive to the cultural and linguistic needs of the family members. The professional must remain open to learning more about the cultures of the families they serve.

Dimension 28 Cultural competency

Component A Cultural identity

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands “culture” including both explicit (e.g. food, language) and implicit (e.g. spiritual beliefs, educational values, child-rearing beliefs) variables	Supports parents’ understanding of how culture shapes values, beliefs, and behaviors and impacts child development and family systems throughout the life course	Coaches parents to discuss their culturally preferred practices to use in child-rearing and family situations and integrates these practices into services

Component B Knowledge of culture

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the process of acculturation	Supports parents by utilizing active listening in order to recognize and acknowledge the family’s definition of its culture/cultural affiliation and values	Coaches parents by actively seeking new knowledge regarding diversity in cultural beliefs and practices in order to provide effective family support services to individual families



DOMAIN 09

Effective Home Visits

Home visits are the service delivery location for many family support programs. Meeting with the family in their home assists in equalizing the power differential and helps the family members to feel more comfortable because they are in their own environment. Increased family comfort should lead more quickly to fostering a trusting relationship between the professional and the family members. For the professional, it is an opportunity to see how the family functions in their own environment with all members of the family. Home visiting paints a more vibrant picture of the family with the complexity of their relationships revealed.

Dimension 31 Assessment

Component A Assessment cycle

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the steps in the assessment cycle including assess, plan, implement, and re-assess	Supports parents by involving them in the assessment process	Coaches parents to use assessment results to inform development of appropriate goals and planning of home visit activities

Component B Screening

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the difference between screening and diagnosing	Supports parents by regularly screening for child development concerns, depression, substance abuse, and intimate partner violence	Coaches parents to utilize screening results to access additional supports and resources as needed

Component C Interviewing

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the stages of an effective interview	Supports parents by utilizing a range of interview techniques that facilitate effective communication and elicit assessment information	Coaches parents by facilitating in-depth exploration of their stories through use of empathy, clarification, reframing, and solution-focused questions

Component D Observation

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands the components of effective observation	Supports parents by using observation to collect meaningful information in the home and family environment	Coaches parents to utilize observations in interactions with their child



DOMAIN 09

Component E Progress monitoring

RECOGNIZE

Understands the term “progress monitoring”

APPLY

Supports parents by utilizing assessment information to demonstrate progress and capture change over time

EXTEND

Coaches parents to adjust goals and plans as needed based on assessment results

Dimension 32 Planning

Component A Individualization to needs of each family

RECOGNIZE

Understands specific needs and learning styles of each family

APPLY

Supports parents by adjusting learning approaches and activities to fit their learning styles

EXTEND

Coaches parents by utilizing results from assessments and collaborative goal setting to individualize home visit activities for each family

Component B Focus on positive child outcomes and parent-child interaction

RECOGNIZE

Understands strategies for redirecting and/or connecting conversation to child outcomes

APPLY

Supports parents by including parent-child interaction as a key focus of each home visit

EXTEND

Coaches parents by adjusting plans and practice based upon changing family needs without losing focus on the parent-child relationship

Component C Parenting education

RECOGNIZE

Understands basic characteristics of both adolescent and adult learners

APPLY

Supports parents by utilizing strategies for engaging adolescent and adult learners with a variety of learning styles

EXTEND

Coaches parents by planning home visit activities that utilize and reinforce family strengths and priorities



DOMAIN 09

Dimension 33 Data and documentation

Component A Professional writing

RECOGNIZE

Understands necessary content for each type of case documentation

APPLY

Supports parents by writing contact notes in clear and complete language so that another professional could work with the family if necessary

EXTEND

Coaches parents by providing case information to support all conclusions, opinions, assessments, recommendations without supervision

Component B Documentation

RECOGNIZE

Understands documentation requirements prescribed by the agency or funding source

APPLY

Supports parents by documenting all interactions, processes, and forms related to work for and with the family

EXTEND

Coaches parents by utilizing documentation of interactions and processes to plan for future home visits

Component C Data systems

RECOGNIZE

Understands data entry requirements prescribed by the agency or funding source

APPLY

Supports parents by completing documentation and data inputs accurately and within prescribed timeframes

EXTEND

Coaches parents by sharing ideas for system improvement and methods of data entry that provide improved quality of services to families



DOMAIN 10

Professional Practice

In home visiting, relationships form the foundation upon which all other work is built. The quality of the relationships between home visitors and families has a significant impact upon our ability to make a difference in the lives of families and young children. Home visitors must learn strategies for establishing, building and enhancing relationships with families in a way that also promotes the strengthening of relationships within the family. Home visitors will develop skills to help them prepare and process home visits that build upon family strengths and promote resiliency.

Dimension 34 Ethical and legal practice

Component A Mandatory reporting

RECOGNIZE

Understands the duty and procedure for reporting suspected child maltreatment

APPLY

Supports parents by discussing mandatory reporting role and encourages self-report whenever possible

EXTEND

Coaches parents on what to expect and how to advocate for their family in the event of a report to child protective services

Component B Confidentiality/social media and technology

RECOGNIZE

Understands and complies with confidentiality laws by changing passwords frequently and keeping all home visit forms and papers secure at all times to protect the confidentiality of the family

APPLY

Supports parents in understanding their confidentiality rights

EXTEND

Coaches parents to take precautions and safety measures to ensure confidentiality of family information

Component C Policy and procedures

RECOGNIZE

Understands relevant policy and procedure as needed for family support work

APPLY

Supports parents by increasing their understanding of the purpose and necessity for agency policies and procedures

EXTEND

Coaches parents to identify opportunities to participate and advocate for policy change



DOMAIN 10

Dimension 35 Reflective practice

Component A Critical reflection

RECOGNIZE

Understands key elements of critical reflection

APPLY

Supports parents by utilizing critical reflection to examine thoughts, feelings, strengths, and identify areas for growth

EXTEND

Coaches parents in using critical reflection to examine thoughts, feelings, strengths, and identify areas for growth

Component B Biases

RECOGNIZE

Understands how the personal value system, cultural beliefs, attitudes and beliefs related to parenting, and familial background are sources of possible biases

APPLY

Supports parents by self-reflecting to identify personal behaviors of the professional that discourage or perpetuate biases

EXTEND

Coaches parents to reflect on how their personal value systems, cultural beliefs, and attitudes shape their parenting and any potential biases they may hold around parenting practices

Dimension 36 Professional development

Component A Continuous learning

RECOGNIZE

Understands and identifies specific areas for additional growth and development

APPLY

Supports parents through building professional skills by seeking out training, feedback, or other opportunities for on-going learning and development

EXTEND

Coaches parents to become continuous learners by developing personal growth goals and timelines, and accountability checks

Component B Current research

RECOGNIZE

Understands the importance of keeping up with current research by accessing research journals relating to child development and family support

APPLY

Supports parents by keeping their professional skills up to date by joining professional organizations relating to child development and family support

EXTEND

Coaches parents by using information from research journals and professional organizations in planning and implementing home visit activities to ensure information and skills are up to date



DOMAIN 10

Dimension 37 Professional boundaries

Component A Individual well-being and self-care

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands and explains the relationship between individual well-being and their own ability to help others	Supports parents in developing their own personal self-care and determining strategies to maintain healthy balance	Coaches parents to build a healthy network of supportive relationships and seek emotional support when needed

Component B Stress management

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands possible sources of work-related stress in their family support work	Supports parents in developing self-awareness of specific stressors and their effects on parenting and well-being	Coaches parents to develop long-term strategies to mitigate and overcome stressors that impact their parenting and overall well-being

Component C Boundaries

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands warning signs and possible boundary violations that could occur when working with families	Supports parents by openly discussing boundaries and establishes clear agreements with each family regarding these boundaries	Coaches parents through self-reflection on developing healthy boundaries for relationships in their lives

Component D Personal safety

RECOGNIZE	APPLY	EXTEND
Understands when proceeding with a home visit would be counter-productive and/or unsafe and how to document	Supports parents by demonstrating techniques for deflecting or de-escalating parent hostility and when to use them	Coaches parents on developing personal safety techniques



DOMAIN 10

Dimension 38 Quality Improvement

Component A Program evaluation

RECOGNIZE

Understands the importance of all program evaluation efforts

APPLY

Supports parents by being able to explain the value and importance of program evaluation in a way that makes parents comfortable with participating in evaluation

EXTEND

Coaches parents on topics and parenting behaviors as a result of effective program evaluation results

Component B Service quality

RECOGNIZE

Understands the importance of eliciting critical feedback from families regarding satisfaction with service

APPLY

Supports parents by using assessment information to identify strengths and weaknesses in professional practice with parents

EXTEND

Coaches parents through use of new solutions as a result of continuous quality improvements and program data

Component C Reflective supervision

RECOGNIZE

Understands the concepts of reflective practice and reflective supervision

APPLY

Supports parents by delivering services that reflect the conclusions and content attained in reflective supervision

EXTEND

Coaches parents by explaining the parallel process of reflective practice and supporting parental reflection to bring awareness on their impact of their child's development

Glossary of Terms

Acculturation: the process of sharing and learning the cultural traits or social patterns of another group

Advocacy: the act of pleading for, supporting, or recommending

Attachment: an emotional attachment between an infant or toddler and primary caregiver

Autism: a pervasive developmental disorder that commonly manifests in early childhood, characterized by impaired communication, excessive rigidity, and emotional detachment

Boundaries: guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave towards them and how they will respond when someone passes those limits

Child maltreatment: abuse and neglect that occurs to children under age 18

Cognitive development: how children develop intelligence, conscious thought, reasoning, memory, and problem-solving ability

Competency: the capability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform essential work functions or tasks in a defined work setting

Developmental delay: refers to a child who has not gained the developmental skills expected of him or her, compared to others of the same age.

Dual language learning: refers to children ages 0-5 who are learning two languages

Embryonic stage: from fertilization through the eighth week

Fetal stage: extends from the beginning of the ninth week after fertilization to about 38 weeks after fertilization, which is the average time of birth

Germinal stage: from conception until two weeks (implantation)

Individualization: to adapt to the needs or special circumstances of an individual or group

Intimate partner violence: domestic violence by a current or former spouse or partner in an intimate relationship against the other spouse or partner; can be physical, verbal, emotional, economic and sexual abuse

Language development: speech abilities, using verbal and non-verbal communication and comprehension of others' communication

Mandatory reporter: an individual who holds a professional position that requires him or her to report to the appropriate state agency cases of child abuse that he or she has reasonable cause to suspect

Non-custodial parent: an individual who does not have physical custody of his or her minor child as the result of a court order

Parental self-efficacy: a caregiver or parent's confidence about their ability to successfully raise children

Physical development: gross motor skills that involve moving large muscles like arms and legs, and fine motor skills that involve movement of small muscles, like fingers and hands

Postpartum depression: depression suffered by a mother following childbirth, typically arising from the combination of hormonal changes, psychological adjustment to motherhood, and fatigue

Quality improvement: systematic and continuous actions that lead to measurable improvement in services and the status of targeted groups

Reflective practice: the ability to reflect on one's actions so as to engage in a process of continuous learning

Secure base: an infant or child's enhanced ability to explore the surrounding environment when doing so from the base of a secure attachment relationship with a caregiver

Self-regulation: the ability to monitor and manage one's energy states, emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in ways that are acceptable and produce positive results

Service barriers: obstacles that make it difficult or impossible for families to access services, such as lack of transportation, quality health care, finances or insurance

Shaken baby syndrome: a condition characterized by cranial injury, retinal hemorrhage, etc. observed in infants who have been violently shaken or jolted

SMART goal: a goal that is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound

Social emotional development: a child's experience, expression, and management of emotions, and the ability to establish positive and rewarding relationships with others

Teratogen: a drug or other substance capable of interfering with the development of a fetus, causing birth defects

Toxic stress: can occur when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity—such as physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence, and/or the accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate adult support

Trauma: an experience that causes psychological injury or pain