



Beyond Bubbles and Blocks

Tips for MA EI Home Visitors



Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome:

The rate of infants born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) has grown significantly in the past years. The national rate of NAS was 5.8 per 1000 births in 2012. In New England the numbers are even higher at a rate of 13.7 for 1000 hospital births. Lianne Renaud, the program director at Criterion Worcester, has done a literature review as part of her graduate work. She reviewed current research in order to study the effects of NAS on development as well as learn about strategies EI clinicians can use when working with families affected by NAS

“Every 25 minutes a baby is born suffering from opioid withdrawal.” National Institute on Drug Abuse

Strategies?

Build relationships with mothers who have substance use disorder:

Strained relationships with healthcare professionals can create barriers for adequate healthcare. Strong relationships improve child outcomes (Morton & Konrad, 2009)

Support Treatment for Maternal Substance Use and Mental Health

Issues: Understanding addiction and mental health conditions help to gain trust, allow for customizations of outcomes, enhance parent engagement, decrease relapse, and improves infant outcomes. (Cleveland & Bonugli, 2014)

Understand personal feelings:

Often clinicians are left feeling angry, helpless, and frustrated, when

working with families struggling with substance use disorder. A self - assessment of your own personal feelings can be helpful in determining if your work will be affected. (Pajulo et al., 2012)

Support Development of the Mother infant relationship:

Strengthening attachment can help increase maternal confidence, give the mother hope for a positive future and decrease the chance of relapse. (Pajuli et al., 2012)

Encourage Breastfeeding:

Breastfeeding is a positive intervention that only the mother can do to help her infant. It can help with NAS symptoms, and help to start the early attachment and bonding between mother and infant. (Pritham, 2013)

Evaluation/ Assessment tip



AVOID THE USE OF JARGON

When working with children and families we need to make sure we are avoiding using jargon and this is particularly true when doing an evaluation. The words you use to explain what you are doing or testing should be easily understood by the parent. Although we know what fine motor, muscle tone, and Physical Therapist mean, a parent many have no idea. Take the time to explain the terms you are using. EI home visitors understand “EI speak” but often times parents are not aware or are unsure of what we mean when we use jargon, professional terms, or “EI speak”.

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