Strength Based Approach

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Case Study - Samantha

• 21 year old mother with an 18 month old daughter. They have just begun living in a homeless shelter.

• Refusing to put her daughter in child care so she can’t get a job.

• Doesn’t have a place to live and doesn’t want to live with her mom anymore no matter what.
Parental Strengths: PreSIP

☐ Parental Strengths were discussed at last health supervision visit (9, 24 month visit)
☐ Answer ‘yes’ if there is documentation that parental strengths were discussed at the last health supervision visit (ie, 9, 24 month visit), can include:
  ☐ Documentation of a discussion of Parental Support
  ☐ Use of Connected Kids People who care about me worksheet
  ☐ Documentation about helping parents identify their own/families strengths including the following: having a friend or family member to turn to when they need help, able to make independent decisions, participates in community activities, copes with stress, has self-confidence
Strength-based approach

- Strength-based approach outlined in Bright Futures
  - Built on the life course framework
  - Giving parents and children the ability to continue their development by providing opportunities to grow and build competency
    - Building parents knowledge and encouraging mastery but also providing good ideas on how to integrate into their daily life
  - Independent decision-making and problem-solving
    - Giving people a chance to problem solve and become efficacious in making own decisions
    - Honoring the idea that they are an expert on their family
  - Parents want to do well by their children
    - Messages should align with the fact that parents want to do well by their children (Brazelton)
Strength-Based Approach

- Identify parent/child strengths
- Give feedback to the parents
  - Use a framework
- Utilize shared decision-making
Shared Decision Making/Helping Skill

- Identify the problem
- What could you do?
- What would happen if you did that?
- What would you like to try first?
- When can I follow up with you?

Source: Natural Helpers Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1997
Support for Strength-based Preventive Care

- Consistent with an expertise in health behavior counseling
- Consistent with self-determination theory
- Consistent with motivational interviewing
The Importance of Increasing Assets

The following chart shows how youth with more assets are much less likely to be involved in a range of risky behaviors, based on Search Institute research with 250,000 public school 6th- to 12th-grade youth in hundreds of communities across the country.
Risk Behaviors Decline With Number of Assets

- Alcohol Use (past 30 days)
- Ever Had Sex
- Marijuana Use (past 30 days)
- Physical Fighting (past 12 mos)
- Cigarette Smoking (past 30 days)
- Binge Drinking (past 30 days)
- Planned Suicide (past 12 mos)


Healthy Behaviors Increase With Number of Assets

Wear Safety Belt (always or almost always)
Aerobic Exercise (3+ days, past week)
Wear Bicycle Helmet (always or almost always)


Let’s get back to Samantha

- Filled out all the forms

- Found out that her concerns were
  - Boyfriend's mother had a child with autism
  - Risk factor identified – new immigrants at homeless shelter – had contact with people from Laos for three weeks
There is a family from Laos at the homeless shelter; child had been playing with their children.

Worried about additional shots because boyfriend’s mother had a child with autism.
SEARCH FOR STRENGTHS

Risks need to be identified

BUT:
• Strengths are an essential part of health
• Look for Resiliency and Strengths: ask about strengths at every encounter!
• Promoting strengths will enhance interactions with parents
• Search for strengths
• Connection
• Competence/ Mastery
• Independent decision-making
• Generosity
Identified her strengths

• Helps out at the shelter with reading- went to the library to get the books (Helps out)

• Wants to have her daughter grow up always feeling safe and smoke-free (independent decision-making)

• Finished her GED, works as a waitress, never interacted with an agency before (Mastery)

• Has a partner who has been with her and Samantha for 6 months – lives with his parents (Belonging)
Touchpoints Principles of Practice (Brazelton)

- Value and understand the relationship between you and the parent.
- Use the behavior of the child as your language.
- Value passion wherever you find it.
- Look for opportunities to support mastery.
- Be willing to discuss matters that go beyond your traditional role.
The parent is the expert on his or her child.

All parents want to do well by their child.

All parents have *strengths*.

All parents have something critical to share at each developmental stage.

All parents have ambivalent feelings.

Parenting is a process built on trial and error.
Touchpoints Practitioner Assumptions (Brazelton)

- Each practitioner is the expert within the context of his or her practice setting.
- Practitioners want to be competent.
- Practitioners need support and respect of the kind we are asking them to give to parents.
- Practitioners need to reflect on their contribution to parent-provider interactions.
What could a strength-based approach provide to children, youth, and families?

- A framework of healthy developmental themes and markers
- Ideas for what parents need to “say yes to”
- A list of strengths identified by a child health professional who is not a friend or family member
- If included, a decision-making strategy to use at home
Connected Kids: Family Support

People who care about

Please list the names and phone numbers of those people who can help you raise your child in a healthy and safe way. Keep this list in a place where you, and those who care for your child while you are out, can easily find it in an emergency.

Your name and phone number: ____________________________ (Name)

Home: __________________ Work: __________________ Cell: __________________

Other adults in your home:

Name: __________________ Phone: __________________
Name: __________________ Phone: __________________
Name: __________________ Phone: __________________
Name: __________________ Phone: __________________
Name: __________________ Phone: __________________

Other adults who regularly help you care for your child:

Name: __________________ Phone: __________________
Name: __________________ Phone: __________________
Name: __________________ Phone: __________________
Name: __________________ Phone: __________________
Name: __________________ Phone: __________________

LIFELINES: If you are stressed out or feeling frustrated, who can you call? Please include the relationship this person has to your child, for example, relative, friend, or neighbor.

Name: __________________ Relationship: __________________
Name: __________________ Relationship: __________________

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

Parental Stress/Parent-Child Conflicts—voice: 800/448-3000/TTY: 800/448-1833

Poison Control—voice or TTY: 800/222-1222

Medical Emergencies—911

For local information, please call:

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