THE POWER OF HOME VISITS
Conscious Discipline
Objective

- Power of home visits
- Setting expectations
- Where to start
- Parent skills you can model/teach during a home visit
Power of Home Visits

01. Support parent/child relationships & attachment
02. Support families where they feel most comfortable
03. Help families to learn in context
04. Help parents learn how to resolve conflicts
Setting Expectations

- Let parents know when you schedule the visit what to expect:
  1. You will be reading a picture book.
  2. Teaching them a fun activity to connect with their child.
  3. Providing them with information to help their child be successful.

Reassure parents that they are the expert on their child and their input is extremely valuable.
“They love their children and are doing the best they can with the tools they have.”

Our Role- provide tools and support
Where to Start

- Starts with a **positive goal-oriented relationship**
- Observation & Reflection
- Teaching through modeling
Parent Attended Conscious Discipline:

- Did you learn something new?
- What was it?
- Did you use it?
- Did it work?
- What do you need more assistance with?
Parent Did Not Attend Conscious Discipline:

Begin where your client is

What difficulties are they experiencing with children’s behavior?

* Certain time of day?
* Transitions?
* Meal Time?
Parenting is hard work
Parent Skill: Routines

- Children feel safe when they know what to expect.
- Misbehavior often comes from children not knowing what to expect.
- You are the safe keeper.
- Think about the time of day when there are more struggles.
- Set up a routine (with pictures) listing what to do next. Consistency, repetition, and modeling work!
- Describe what to do, show a pictures, and model.
- Routine chart, cards, picture. Once taught, encourage children to be independent. “Look at your routine. What comes next?”
Parent Skill: Composure

- The ability to remain calm while upset.
- Safe-keeper = calm
  - If you detect stress, pause, take three deep breaths and reassess the situation.
  - Affirmation: I am safe, keep breathing, I can handle this. Model it.
  - Always help your child by calming yourself first.

- Take a “brain brake”
  - Do you need a break?
  - Short physical activity, connection, or active calming.
  - Take a walk, call a friend, hug someone, JUST BREATHE!
Parent Skill: Noticing

- Noticing feelings
- Noticing interactions

Practice: (describe what child did),
so (how it helped others).
That was (kind, helpful, responsible, caring!)

Power of Attention
What you focus on, you get more of.
Parent Skill: Empathy

- **D- Describe and demonstrate:**
  - “Your arms are going like this. Your head is going like this.” (encourages eye contact and the child’s focus on you.)
  - As soon as the child makes eye contact: Take a deep breath. The child will copy you.

- **N- Name the child’s emotion:**
  - You seem (sad, angry, disappointed, frustrated)”

- **A- Acknowledge the child’s desire:**
  - “You wanted ____.” or “You were hoping ___.”
  - If not sure, take your best guess - the child will correct you.

- What is a common behavior problem in the home?
  *Parents can use First, Than and Two Positive Choices*
Parent Skill: Teaching Missing Skills

Misbehavior points to skills children are missing.

- **Example:** Child screaming over toy they want. Teach them to say “I would like a turn please”.
- **Example:** Child hitting or poking mom to get her attention. Teach them a skill “tap my shoulder when you want my attention”.

*Routine pictures help teach new skills*
*Practice, practice, practice.*
Two Positive Choices

“You have a choice.
You may _____ or you may _____.
Which is better for you?

PRACTICE
“You have a choice.
You can wear the blue jeans or
you may wear the black jeans.”
I Love You rituals are fun, familiar rhymes or games, that you sing or play. They strengthen the connection between parent and child.

- Maintain eye contact
- Touch
- Be playful
- Be present

I Love You rituals reduce misbehavior by 50%
Children need your presence not your presents
GOOD NIGHT MOON

- At bedtime, after you read to your child, tuck your child in bed and you and your child start to say good night to all items you see in the room.

- Then, one by one, say good night to your child’s hair, forehead, eyes, nose, cheeks, arms, and legs and kiss them good night.

- Finish with “good night my wonderful child ___ and good night moon!” Give one final big hug and a kiss and turn lights out.
**THE STORY HAND**

**Story Hand**

To help a child manage stress

Start at the pinky finger. As you massage each finger, tell the story of the child’s life. The thumb discloses the stressor and at the same time reassures the child that s/he is safe and capable.

**Thumb:** Describe the problem area of concern

“But the thumb said, ‘What about me?’ The thumb was worried it might not like joining soccer!’ Fold child’s thumb in and wrap fingers around it and say, “The fingers said, ‘You’re safe. You can do it. We know you can do it.’” Give a little squeeze to the hand to cement it in the brain.

**Index finger:** This little finger likes to draw ladybugs.

**Middle finger:** This little finger likes to swing.

**Ring finger:** This little finger likes to blow bubbles.

**Pinky finger:** Hold child firmly by the wrist. On each finger, tell a story about the child’s life. “This little finger likes to run.”
Visit:

https://consciousdiscipline.com/
THANK YOU
Jennifer Tonkin, tonkinjl@pwcs.edu
Family Engagement Specialist
Prince William County Schools, Head Start/VPI/VPI+ Preschool Program