





West Virginia Infant/Toddler  
Mental Health Association  
*Supporting the social and emotional well-being of children*  
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## Supporting the West Virginia Home Visitation Supervisor and Reflective Practices During COVID-19

 **The importance of holding the space:** This time we are now experiencing has been different for everyone. For some, it has been a very challenging time, full of uncertainty and intense emotions. Those working within home visitation programs and supporting families may be finding that they need extra support. Supervisors can offer support by maintaining regular reflective supervision that supports active listening, is strengths-based, and allows staff the space to step back from the work and look at it differently. Be flexible. This reflective space can be provided in person or virtually. Here are some [guidelines](#) for preparing to transition reflective supervision to a virtual platform.


 **Feeling intense emotions:** It is understandable that supervisors and home visitors may be feeling intense emotions at times. As a supervisor, you may be finding there are more “layers” to uncover. Feelings of anxiety or uncertainty about returning to in home visits, unease over whether relationships will become fractured if visits continue virtually, feeling not adequate enough to support families during this time, feeling scared about bringing the virus home to our own families... all while doing our best to navigate this time with our own needs can feel very overwhelming. Supervisors can play a role in supporting home visitors by offering a respectful, safe space where staff can express vulnerabilities without judgment and space where the work can be considered together, identifying strengths and skills. New understandings, feelings, and expectations can be strengthened. Just as we do with our families, supervisors can model these relationship-based skills.


Here are some documents that may be helpful in supporting these conversations:

- [Reflective Strategies](#)

- [Questions that Encourage Problem Solving](#)
- [Reflective Practice in Uncertain Times: How you are is as important as what you do](#)

Having [resources](#) to share with home visitors during this time can be helpful. Don't wait until home visitors indicate they are feeling overwhelmed or you sense a problem. Regular, consistent reflective supervision is key.

 **Holding differing points of view:** It can be a challenge to untangle our own personal views of the coronavirus and people's response (or lack thereof) to the pandemic. It all feels very messy! As a supervisor, you will be carrying your own personal beliefs and assumptions; however, it is critical to tune in to the home visitor, listening respectfully to what is said in words, voice, and body language. Only then will you be able to support the home visitor to explore his or her own experiences, remain curious, suspend judgment, identify strengths, and enhance personal growth. Your role is not to try to change these differing points of view, but to support the home visitor in the process of exploring the emotional content of the work with families and personal growth.

 **Self-care:** Relationships take work. Holding on to the experiences and emotional content from your staff can feel exhausting. Consider seeking your own support and a regular, consistent space to process your own emotional content to the work. Extend kindness to yourself and find a consistent way to practice good self-care. Do at least one thing each day that makes you happy! Check in with yourself and reflect on how you are feeling. Don't be afraid to ask for help from those around you.