

## Module 7: Parenting a Child Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing

### Section: Parenting Styles and Tips



### Activity 7.3: Guiding Families with Varied Parenting Styles

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A. Encourage family members to reflect on their parenting style. Most parents will experience more than one of the parenting types mentioned in this module at various times or in different circumstances (e.g., positive effective parenting characteristics, struggling parent characteristics, overwhelmed parenting characteristics). Consider some of the following guiding questions:

- Think about your current parenting style. Let's talk about which of these describe you.
- If it is more than one, what are some examples of how you fit into each category (e.g., "I feel positive in bonding with my baby, but I get overwhelmed when I think about everything I need to learn about how to communicate with him.")

Repeat these questions with other involved parents/caregivers as appropriate. Have them share their successes and challenges so they can be supportive of each other.

- B. Pause the video over the "Positive and Effective Parenting Characteristics" segment for the family members/caregivers to see some qualities of this style listed.
- Ask the family members/caregivers to describe a time when they felt like they were positive/effective. What was happening then? For example, maybe the child said her first word or the parent/caregiver has a success story of following the child's lead. It may be something small (e.g., noticing what the child was looking at and commenting on it, remembering to get the child's attention before communicating, simply laughing with the child during fun at the park).

- If a parent/caregiver struggles with coming up with examples, provide some examples based on what you've observed in your time with the family (e.g., "I noticed that you really make an effort ensure the baby sees your face and hands when you are communicating.").
  - Encourage the parent/caregiver to give an example of when he or she noticed another parent/caregiver being positive and effective.
- C. Pause over the section about "Struggling Parent Characteristics and/or Overwhelmed Parent Characteristics."
- Inquire to identify if a parent/caregiver is feeling overwhelmed or struggling. Get specific examples if there are any. Brainstorm together how parents/caregivers might try to move into the positive/effective category on that issue.
  - Encourage family members to see their successes, even if they feel like they're overwhelmed or struggling. Have them reflect on occasions during which they were able to change their style to positive and effective on an issue. Discuss what helped them transition.
  - For individuals who are struggling or overwhelmed, inquire as to how you might be able to support them. Provide referrals as needed (e.g., parent mentor, parenting classes, babysitters who sign so parents/caregivers can take a break, social services).
  - Try to identify what is causing an individual to be overwhelmed. Sometimes there is an easy solution (e.g., helping the family to review challenging insurance paperwork that has been overwhelming, providing the family member with time to make that phone call to the doctor that he or she hasn't found time to make, finding a babysitter so a parent/caregiver can have a few hours break, helping to identify a counselor).
  - For families who speak a language other than English and may find it overwhelming to locate resources and navigate systems and bureaucracies in a language that is not their primary language, support the family if possible in navigating these obstacles.
  - Over a series of home visits, follow up with the overwhelmed or struggling parents/caregivers. Discuss any steps they've made toward their goals. Keep focused on the positive gains they make, even if they're small steps.

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*Developed with Kimberly Leong*