

# Viewers Guide

## Facilitating Relationships and Change: Using Motivational Interviewing Strategies



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Health

**Head Start** has a fifty year history of supporting families to achieve their own goals and to enhance the lives of their children.

To support families, EHS/HS staff engage them in a variety of conversations from discussions about their own goals to discussions about their child's oral health, nutrition, weight, behavior, and developmental status.

Regardless of the topic, these conversations can have great influence on the relationships staff build with families. Through these relationships, staff have the ability to reinforce families' interests, enhance their motivation and support their ability to make progress towards their goals. Conversations with families can leave them feeling open and hopeful or nervous and defensive. When families feel hopeful and, supported they are much more likely to engage in personal conversations about their lives and discuss goals that they would like to progress toward.

At times staff feel unprepared to have sensitive discussions with families. Using Motivational Interviewing (MI) strategies and principles can help staff feel more confident when addressing tough issues. Staff who practice MI techniques may also find that it enhances their relationships with families—opening up a deeper dialogue. Supervisors, directors and consultants have also used these strategies to form more positive and effective relationships with their colleagues. Programs may find strategies other than MI similarly useful in building trusting relationships with families.

## Using the Videos to Enhance your Relationship Building Skills

Use this viewing guide along with Handout 1: Using Motivational Interviewing Strategies to Facilitate

Relationships and Growth and Handout 2: Identifying MI Strategies to help you deepen your knowledge of the process, spirit, and skills of MI.

There are two videos to highlight motivational interviewing strategies that can be used in staff's daily work. You will see two scenes and six "debriefs" for each scene. The scenes are:

**1. A teacher talking to a parent about having the mental health consultant observe her child**

**2. A home visitor talking to a parent about a positive depression screening**

**Handout 1:** Using Motivational Interviewing Strategies to Facilitate Relationships and Growth outlines the process, spirit and strategies of MI.

**Handout 2:** Identifying MI Strategies allows you to observe MI in action.

Supervisors and trainers can incorporate these videos and Handouts 1 and 2 in one-on-one supervision or small group meetings. Staff can also view these videos on their own to replicate these strategies in your practice.

*School readiness begins with health!*

# Handout 1:

## Using Motivational Interviewing Strategies to Facilitate Relationships and Growth

### Process of Motivational Interviewing

- **Engaging:** Establishing a mutually trusting and respectful helping relationship.
- **Focusing:** Seeking and maintaining a direction. Clarifying a particular goal or direction for change.
- **Evoking:** Eliciting the individual's own motivation for a particular change.
- **Planning:** Developing a specific change plan that the client is willing to implement.

### Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

- **Partnership/Collaboration:** The staff person serves as a partner or companion, working together alongside the parent and acknowledging the parent's own expertise.
- **Acceptance/Supporting Autonomy:** Communicates absolute worth, accurate empathy, affirmation, and autonomy support; interviewer accepts and confirms the client's irrevocable right to self-determination and choice.
- **Compassion:** Feeling another's suffering or distress and having a desire to help. The staff person exhibiting compassion feels for the other person and wants what is best for him or her.
- **Evocation:** Elicits the client's own perspectives and motivation. Evocative questions are often open ended questions that elicit an individual to take about their own reasons for possible change.

### Strategies in Motivational Interviewing

- **Open Ended Question:** Asking a question that leaves the parent a great deal of choice regarding how to respond to the question. Open ended questions can generally not be answered with brief one word answers or yes or no responses. Open ended questions allow the parent to do most of the talking.
- **Affirmations:** Accentuating the parent's efforts and acknowledging a person's strengths. Affirmations respect and honor the clients worth, their ability for growth and change as well as their right to choose whether or not to make change.
- **Reflective Listening:** The skill of "active" listening where the staff seeks to understand the parent's subjective experience, offering *reflections* as guesses about the person's meaning. The staff attempts to perceive and reflect back another person's meaning.
- **Summaries:** Summaries bring together a number of things that the parent has been saying. A summary ties together a number of different points.

# Handout 2

The chart below describes the processes, skills and spirit of motivational interviewing and offers some examples of each strategy. Review the chart below and as you watch a video scene. Jot down examples of each of the processes, skills, and spirit that you see. Use a separate chart for each scene. Watch the associated debriefs after each scene. Note if you did not see an example of one of processes or strategies and you might not have observed that skill.

Some topics covered in conversations lend themselves to certain strategies more than others. Jot down any ideas you have for how this EHS/HS staff could have used a process or skill more effectively.

## Identify Processes of Motivational Interviewing

Processes of Motivational Interviewing	Note where in the video you see the strategy	Note if you did not see this strategy. Jot down why this strategy may not have been present
<p><b>Engaging:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing a helpful <i>connection</i> and working relationship</li> <li>Building trust</li> <li>Empathic listening</li> </ul> <p>“Can you share with me what concerns/questions you might have today?”</p>		
<p><b>Focusing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and maintain a specific direction in the conversation about change</li> </ul> <p>“I wonder if there is one of these things you would like to talk about. Or maybe there is another topic you would like to discuss in our time together?”</p> <p>“What changes if any are you hoping will arise from our meeting today?”</p>		

**Identify Processes of Motivational Interviewing** *continued*

Processes of Motivational Interviewing	Note where in the video you see the strategy	Note if you did not see this strategy. Jot down why this strategy may not have been present
<p><b>Evoking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking versus telling</li> <li>• Instead of telling parents what to do, MI evokes the parent's own motivation and resources for change</li> <li>• The parent's ideas</li> </ul> <p>“What concerns you most about...?”</p> <p>“What are the advantages of the behavior and the advantages of not changing?”</p>		
<p><b>Planning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to change</li> <li>• Develop a plan that includes adequate structure, accountability, benchmarks and rewards</li> <li>• Clarify when someone is willing, able and ready</li> <li>• Forming a plan of action and commitment to change</li> </ul> <p>“What do you plan to do next?”</p> <p>“How will you respond to the obstacles that might get in the way?”</p> <p>“What is the next step?”</p>		

**Identify Spirit of Motivational Interviewing**

Spirit of Motivational Interviewing	Note where in the video you see the strategy	Note if you did not see this strategy. Jot down why this strategy may not have been present
<p><b>Partnership/Collaboration:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The staff person serves as a partner or companion, working together alongside the parent and acknowledging the parent’s own expertise</li> </ul> <p>“What are your thoughts about the situation?”</p> <p>“How do you see this going?”</p>		
<p><b>Acceptance (supporting autonomy):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The parent must make their own decisions about their lives and any changes they wish to make</li> <li>Respect the parent’s autonomy—whether or not they change or take action</li> </ul> <p>“It sounds like this idea might not fit with the way you see things. That is OK.”</p> <p>“There is no one right way to do this. You know what is likely to work best for your family”</p>		

**Identify Spirit of Motivational Interviewing** *continued*

Spirit of Motivational Interviewing	Note where in the video you see the strategy	Note if you did not see this strategy. Jot down why this strategy may not have been present
<p><b>Compassion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acts kindly to promote the individual’s welfare, giving priority to the client’s needs</li> <li>• Genuine care and concern</li> <li>• Understand and validate the struggle</li> </ul> <p>“It sounds like you are exhausted from worrying so much about your son.”</p> <p>“It can feel overwhelming to have so much on your plate.”</p> <p>“It sounds like this is a really difficult decision.”</p>		
<p><b>Evocation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore parent’s motivation, goals and ideas</li> <li>• Help individuals come up with their own reasons for making a change</li> <li>• Identify and resolve ambivalence</li> <li>• Focus on past successes</li> <li>• Identify barriers to change</li> </ul> <p>“What do you plan to do next?”</p> <p>“Of the various options you’ve discussed what option seems most plausible?”</p> <p>“How serious is this for you right now?”</p> <p>“How would you like for things to change?”</p> <p>“If you decide to make this change, what might be different in the future?”</p>		

**Identify Communication Skills of Motivational Interviewing**

<p><b>Communication Skills in Motivational Interviewing</b></p>	<p><b>Note where in the video you see the strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Note if you did not see this strategy. Jot down why this strategy may not have been present</b></p>
<p><b>Open Ended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question that cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no” answer</li> <li>• Elicits more communication</li> </ul> <p>“Tell me about...”</p> <p>“Say more about...”</p> <p>“How are you feeling about...”</p>		
<p><b>Affirmations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes and reinforces success</li> <li>• Expressed with genuineness</li> <li>• Offers perspective in face of difficulties</li> <li>• Expresses optimism</li> <li>• Sees any progress as progress</li> </ul> <p>“It takes a lot of strength to go through all you have been through.”</p> <p>“I’m so impressed with the way you...”</p> <p>“You are persevered despite some major obstacles that have been in the way”</p>		

**Identify Communication Skills of Motivational Interviewing** *continued*

<p><b>Communication Skills in Motivational Interviewing</b></p>	<p><b>Note where in the video you see the strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Note if you did not see this strategy. Jot down why this strategy may not have been present</b></p>
<p><b>Reflective Listening:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mirrors what the individual is saying</li> <li>• Makes a guess about the meaning of what the individual is saying</li> <li>• Shows collaboration and equity</li> <li>• Should be done frequently—try to offer two reflections for every question you ask</li> </ul> <p>“It sounds like you . . .”                      “You’re saying that . . .”                      “You’re feeling like . . .”                      “You sound unsure . . .”</p>		
<p><b>Summaries:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps the parent to know you are listening and understanding</li> <li>• Pulls together and links relevant information</li> <li>• Helps parents to hear their own motivations and ambivalence</li> <li>• Helps to clarify thinking or communication</li> </ul> <p>“Let me see if understand this so far . . .”                      “You care for your son very much and you are concerned that we might not be meeting his needs . . .”</p>		



## Other considerations:

### Reflect on your own reactions:

- What thoughts and feelings were elicited as you watched this interaction?
- What would you do differently now that you know more about MI?

### Reflect on the quality of the relationship:

- What are your feelings and thoughts about the quality of the relationship between the staff person and the parent.
- Do you feel this staff person is genuine and is fostering a trusting relationship with the parent?
- In both of these scenes the staff and parents have established trusting relationships with each other. How does this foundation of trust and partnership impact these conversations?
- How can using some of these strategies help you support families to make progress towards their goals?

## Resources

CCNC Motivational Interviewing (MI) Resource Guide, retrieved 8/5/14 <https://www.communitycarenc.org/media/files/mi-guide.pdf>

Glossary of Motivational Interviewing Terms, William R. Miller & Stephen Rollnick, Updated July 2012, retrieved 8/5/14, [http://www.fead.org.uk/docs/Glossary\\_MI\\_Terms.pdf](http://www.fead.org.uk/docs/Glossary_MI_Terms.pdf)