

## Making Screens and Tools Meaningful During Telehealth

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### NMAIMH competencies addressed:

#### Direct Service Skills:

- Observation & Listening
- Screening & Assessment
- Responding with Empathy

#### Working with Others

- Building & maintaining relationships
- Supporting others/mentoring
- Empathy & compassion

#### Reflection

- Contemplation
- Self-awareness
- Professional/personal development

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Screenings and Tools have always been an essential part of our work with families in the New Mexico Home Visiting Program, but how does this look during COVID-19? They have been a way to look at a family and their child's functioning over time, noting change and growth. The results have been used as one of the key elements that drive services, contribute to service planning, determine frequency of home visits and help engage families by providing a way to help the family understand themselves and their child in a new way.

With Telehealth home visiting, we need to think about how the screens and tools can be meaningful to both the home visitor and the family while keeping in mind the relationship-based approach that we use in our work. Telling a parent you must complete a screening or tool because it is required can be a mismatch. Asking questions in a more conversational and reflective manner builds trust and can be "your eyes into the home" during Telehealth visits. When a parent is resistant to Telehealth home visits or completing screenings, it can be an opportunity to gather more information about what is motivating their decision. Using tools such as the FAN and reflective practice to explore the family's position can give you information about what is happening and the dynamics of the family during this time. The screenings and tools can be the start of a rich conversation with families that should be continued throughout your relationship with them.

By asking open-ended questions about what the family has been doing that was fun and interesting since your last visit, you can gather information about what they enjoy doing together, give them positive feedback, and plan ways to adapt the activity to encourage new skills using the ASQ3 and ASQ:SE2 as your guides. Asking open-ended questions such as "How have things changed for your family since this happened?" can help you identify possible depression or domestic violence risk factors using the EPDS and RAT as your guides. Asking follow-up questions and providing simple affirmations such as "That's great that you've been trying to keep your regular routines with your kids" will build upon the strengths-based approach you have always used. Reflecting on comments can help identify meaning and emotions that you are hearing from parents, "I noticed you sounded concerned when you said you were

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not going to the playground—what concerns you?” You can then summarize, “So you’ve found ways to keep your kids busy and happy, but you haven’t been going to the playground, and you are wondering about other ways your kids can get exercise—is that right?” These questions and reflections can help extend the visit and provide an opportunity to gather more information to complete screenings and tools.

Administration of the PICCOLO can be especially challenging. It can be beneficial to send the parent, by email or mail, a list of the PICCOLO items in “29 Things Parents Do That Predict School Readiness.” Explain that the purpose of the PICCOLO observation is to identify things they are already doing that are preparing their child to succeed in school. Point out to them a couple of the things you have previously observed them doing during home visits. You can guide the family to identify pictures in a picture book that they can talk about, use pretend play toys (e.g., kitchen or picnic toys, plastic cups or containers, empty food containers, plastic spoons and forks), other sharable toys with parts (e.g., building blocks, beads, farm set, small cars, plastic cups or containers that nest or stack), or whatever the family has that the child finds fun and interesting. You may even observe the parent engaging in routine activities such as dressing the child or mealtime as part of the PICCOLO observation.

If you are trying to do a PICCOLO by phone, you will need to be asking the parent what they are doing, how the child is responding, what the child is doing, and what the parent thinks their vocalizations mean. These are valuable observations that become opportunities for providing positive feedback to parents as part of effective home visiting practice.

If a parent finds a phone call difficult because they are overwhelmed with having all their kids at home all day, every day, we can help. Try to find another time when they are willing and able to talk, then focus on ways to make their life with all their kids easier, and not focus on program paperwork or telling them what to do. They are telling you that they are overwhelmed, so if you tell them, “just try this great activity from our curriculum to support the development of \_\_\_\_,” they may never answer the phone again when you call because you are not cueing in on their feelings. Brooke’s Publishing provides some very helpful guidance in a webinar they offer on how this may look different during Telehealth visiting, including how you can gather information on parent child interactions even by telephone. The webinar can be accessed through this link to register and watch:

[https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/8851348285616496135?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=exacttarget&utm\\_campaign=05182020-piccolo-chat-followup](https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/8851348285616496135?utm_medium=email&utm_source=exacttarget&utm_campaign=05182020-piccolo-chat-followup)

It is important to remember that it may take more time to administer the tools and screens virtually because you may be asking questions that are more reflective, as well as the limitations on the time the families can be engaged in the Telehealth visit. Remembering that these Tools and Screens are an opportunity to give positive feedback to parents as well as gather information that can transform their meaning for both you and the families by focusing on what the family wants and what they are interested in. Take notes on their ideas and reflect on them. Then ask which idea they want to try first, when they would have time to do it, what materials they will need, what might get in the way and how they could prevent that, and how they will tell if they want to try it more than once.

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### **Questions to encourage discussion and reflection...**

- How have you been able to highlight the child’s strengths and positive growth in development during Telehealth visits? When you have had difficulty with Tools and Screens, who do you seek support from?
- In what ways do you explore family’s feelings and possible resistance to completing Tools and Screens? How do you explore your feelings about administration of Tools and Screens virtually?

- How are you using Reflective Supervision to explore your feelings about the administration of Tools and Screens during COVID-19 Telehealth visits?
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## References/Additional Resources

- Roggman, L. and Innocenti, M. (2020) *Using PICCOLO & HOVRS in virtual home visits – Q&A from Brookes coffee chat*. Brookes Publishing. : [https://brookespublishing.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/using-piccolo-horvrs-virtually-questions.pdf?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=exacttarget&utm\\_campaign=05182020-piccolo-chat-followup](https://brookespublishing.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/using-piccolo-horvrs-virtually-questions.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=exacttarget&utm_campaign=05182020-piccolo-chat-followup)
- Roggman, L. and Innocenti, M. (2020) *Using PICCOLO & HOVRS in virtual home visits coffee chat*. Brookes Publishing. [https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/8851348285616496135?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=exacttarget&utm\\_campaign=05182020-piccolo-chat-followup](https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/8851348285616496135?utm_medium=email&utm_source=exacttarget&utm_campaign=05182020-piccolo-chat-followup)