CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT & DISABILITY

NEW MEXICO Early Childhood Education & Care Department

ECECD Home Visiting Tips and Resources

Building a Sustainable Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN) Culture

The FAN was developed in the context of the Fussy Baby Network at Erikson Institute starting around 2005 and has evolved into a meta-framework: a conceptual and practical tool for "attunement" in helping relationships. At its core is the importance and the value of attunement. Creating supportive relationships in which the person (parent, caregiver) "feels connected and understood." That felt sense of being understood builds safety and openness, which creates space for change, growth, and new ways of relating. FAN helps us tune in to what a caregiver needs *in the moment*, and respond accordingly, while also monitoring their own emotional state (self-regulation) and engaging in reflection. FAN is one of the few models that is focused on supporting the family *and* supporting the practitioners' well-being (preventing burnout, building reflective capacity).

What We Know About FAN's Impact

Supports Home Visitors in Real-Time Practice:

- Helps navigate emotionally complex, unpredictable moments.
- Supports reading and responding to caregiver cues.

Reduces Burnout and Role Strain

- Shifts pressure away from "fixing."
- Validates relational and reflective work (Imberger et al., 2022.)

Strengthens Family Engagement

- Building trust, collaboration, and shared goal-setting (Gilkerson, 2015; Gilkerson et al., 2012).

Builds System-Wide Consistency

- Creates a shared practice language across roles.
- Parallel process aligns supervision and practice (Imberger et al., 2022).

Helpful Hints for Using FAN in Home Visits

- **Create small rituals before, during, and after visits** that support grounding, reflection, and connection in your home visiting work.
- **Pause and notice before responding.** Pay attention to the caregiver's emotional cues before moving into problem-solving.
- **Allow space for emotions.** When feelings are acknowledged, caregivers often feel more understood and open to reflection.
- **Stay curious about the caregiver's experience.** Invitations like *"Can you tell me more about that?"* can deepen understanding.
- **Explore together before offering solutions.** Spending time wondering with the caregiver can lead to more meaningful next steps.
- **Reflect after visits.** Ask yourself: *Which FAN Wedge did I use most? What might I try differently next time?*

Building Sustainability Within Programs

- **Embed FAN in reflective supervision.** Use FAN stances to guide conversations, modeling attunement and curiosity.
- **Support regular reflection.** Create space in team meetings for staff to reflect.
- **Normalize self-regulation and well-being.** Encourage practices that support regulation (e.g., pausing, checking in, acknowledging emotional work).
- **Use a shared FAN language.** A shared frame-work helps staff stay grounded in their work.
- **Integrate FAN into onboarding.** Introduce new staff early to support consistency and culture-building.
- **Level 2 FAN certification.** Support staff in obtaining certification after training to promote supported practice, reflection, and deeper integration into daily work.

RESOURCES

Click here for more on Enhancing the Capacity of Home Visitors with a Reflective Practice Approach.

Click here for more on the FAN Tool developed by Erikson's Fussy Baby Network becomes a national model.

For more information, visit us below:

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