

Ethics in Home Visiting

Early Years Conference 2012

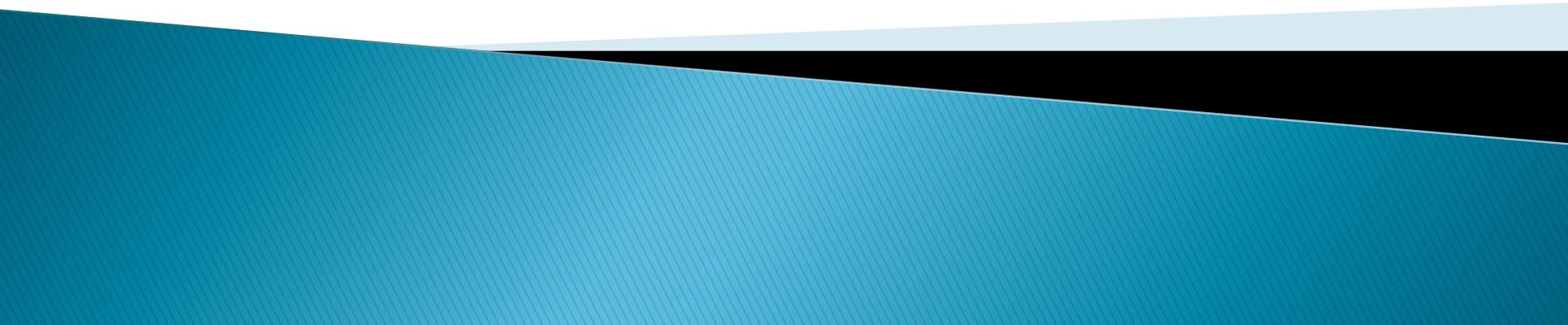
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Objectives

- ▶ Participants will gain an understanding of how ethics and boundaries impact families and home visitors/professionals.
- ▶ Participants will learn how to identify potential conflicts of interest and ethical dilemmas.
- ▶ Participants will learn strategies for managing conflicts and dilemmas and understand the term “dual-relationship” as it applies to home visitation.
- ▶ Participants will become familiar with The Idaho Association for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health’s Code of Ethics.
- ▶ Participants will be able to compare and contrast ethical dilemmas, legal imperatives, and personal biases.
- ▶ Participants will be able to describe the similarities and differences between friendship and home-visiting.
- ▶ Participants will gain an understanding of the role of home-visitor/professional self-disclosure within the home-visiting relationship.

Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health

Competencies covered in this training



Theoretical Foundations

Knowledge Areas

- Cultural Competence

Law, Regulation & Agency Policy

Knowledge Areas

- Ethical Practice
- Government, Law, & Regulation

Thinking

Knowledge Areas

- Exercising Sound Judgment

Reflection

Knowledge Areas

- Self Awareness
- 



Why do ethical codes exist?

- ▶ The principles of conduct governing an individual or a group.
 - ▶ Summarize principles of a profession
 - ▶ Identifies the core values of a profession
 - ▶ Provides guidance for practice in a profession
 - ▶ Protects families, organizations, practitioners
 - ▶ Ethical codes do not guarantee ethical behavior
 - ▶ Ethical decision-making involves a process
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Ethical Codes to Consider

AIMEARLYIDAHO – The Idaho Association for
Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health

www.aimearlyidaho.org

Values

- Importance of Relationships
- Respect for Ethnicity, Culture, Individuality and Diversity
- Integrity
- Confidentiality
- Knowledge and Skill Building
- Reflective Practice

NAEYC

Core Values

- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle
- Base our work on knowledge of how children develop and learn
- Appreciate and support the bond between the child and family
- Recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community, and society
- Respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual (child, family member, & colleague)
- Respect diversity in children, families, & colleagues
- Recognize that children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect.

(excerpt from 2005 position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children)

NASW Code of Ethics

Core Values

- Service
 - Social Justice
 - Dignity and Worth of the Person
 - Importance of Human Relationships
 - Integrity
 - Competence
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AAMFT – Principles

- ▶ Responsibility to Clients
 - ▶ Confidentiality
 - ▶ Professional Competence and Integrity
 - ▶ Responsibility to Students & Supervisees
 - ▶ Responsibility to Research Participants
 - ▶ Responsibility to the Profession
 - ▶ Financial Arrangements
 - ▶ Advertising
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Know your professions' ethics ...

National Association of Social Workers

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

National Association for the Education of Young Children

<http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/Ethics%20Position%20Statement2011.pdf>

Division for Early Childhood

http://www.dec-sped.org/uploads/docs/about_dec/position_concept_papers/Code%20of%20Ethics_updated_Aug2009.pdf

American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

http://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/About_Us/Policies/HOD/Ethics/CodeofEthics.pdf

American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

<http://www.aota.org/Consumers/Ethics/39880.aspx>

American Speech–Language–Hearing Association (ASHA)

<http://www.asha.org/policy/ET2010-00309/>

Agency Policies

- ▶ Transporting Clients
 - ▶ Social Networks
 - ▶ Childcare
 - ▶ Do agency policies conflict with professional code of ethics?
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Legal Issues

- ▶ Confidentiality
 - ▶ Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect
 - ▶ Threats of Harm to Self
 - ▶ Threats of Harm to Others
 - ▶ In some states ... Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse
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Home-Visiting vs. Center Services

»» How are they the same?

How are they different?

Are Home Visitors “Friends?”



Similarities between Friendship & Home Visiting

- ▶ Informal
 - ▶ Friendly
 - ▶ Empathetic
 - ▶ Trusting
 - ▶ Genuine
 - ▶ Encouraging
 - ▶ Supportive
 - ▶ Courteous
 - ▶ Considerate
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Differences

- Home visiting is goal directed
 - Home visiting is focused on the participant
 - The home visitor is conscious of working to establish a relationship
 - Big value differences may exist
 - Relationship is not reciprocal
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Establishing & Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries

- » Dual-Relationships
- » Self-Disclosure
- » Managing Conflicts & Dilemmas
- » When Boundaries are Blurred

Antwone Fisher

- »» A young navy man, is forced to see a psychiatrist after a violent outburst against a fellow crewman. During the course of treatment a painful past is revealed and a new hope begins. Identify issues in the following clips related to professional ethics.

Dual Relationships

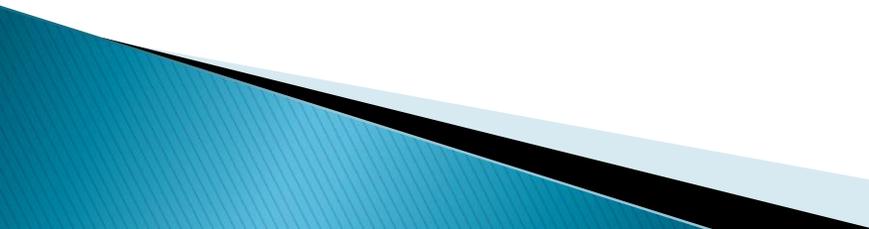
- ▶ in psychotherapy refers to any situation where multiple roles exist between a therapist and a client. Examples of dual relationships are when the client is also a student, friend, family member, employee or business associate of the therapist
- ▶ where the active or primary working relationship co-exists with a supervisory, therapeutic, academic, personal or familial relationship, which might cause (at times) complications, a conflict of interest or a positive or negative bias.

www.psychotherapy-competency.eu/Appendices/appendix7.php

Dual Relationships

- »» Examples from the field ...
Benefits?
Challenges?

Factors to consider regarding dual relationships ...

- ▶ How will this “new” or “old” relationship change the power differential or take advantage of a power differential in the home-visiting/therapeutic relationship?
 - ▶ How long will this relationship last? Is it a one-time occurrence or expected to last indefinitely?
 - ▶ How will ending one relationship affect the other relationship?
 - ▶ How much will objectivity be impaired?
 - ▶ What is the risk of exploitation?
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Self Disclosure

Benefits

- ▶ Reciprocity
 - ▶ Trust-building
 - ▶ Parents won't feel all alone in their journey
 - ▶ May help parents process their own feelings about their child or their situation
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Self Disclosure

Dangers

- ▶ Role-reversal, parents may feel responsible for helping the professional
 - ▶ Could make the parents uncomfortable
 - ▶ Could confuse the parents about boundaries
 - ▶ Focus could be too much on the professional and not enough on the family
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Continuum



Under-Involved

Distant

Cold

Detached

**What might
cause us to
drift?**

Over-Involved

Enmeshed

Intrusive

Dependent

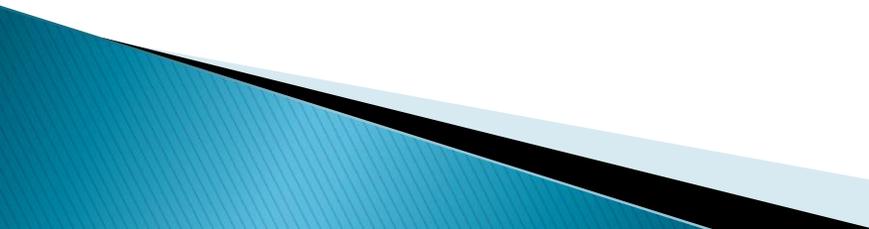
Home Visitor Boundary Questions to Consider ...

- ▶ How do I know when it is okay to share something personal about myself with a family?
 - ▶ When I'm asking questions about the family's life & routines, how do I remain respectful of the family's privacy and their right to determine when to share information?
 - ▶ What if the family invites me to dinner or to a family event? Is it okay to attend?
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More Boundary Questions ...

- ▶ What if the family and I have a good connection and want to make plans to spend more time together?
 - ▶ What if the family is doing something in the home that makes me uncomfortable. Should I say something? How do I bring it up respectfully?
 - ▶ Should I give a client my personal cell phone or home number?
 - ▶ When is it ok to give a hug, or put my arm around a client?
 - ▶ What if I feel a co-worker is crossing a boundary?
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Ethical Decision Making ...

- ▶ “A process of critical reflection, evaluation, and judgment through which a practitioner resolves ethical issues, problems, and dilemmas. (Gray & Gibbons, 2007)
 - ▶ Is never easy
 - ▶ Is not the same as “legal” decision–making
 - ▶ Is rarely “black” or “white;” ethics is the “grey” area
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Case Examples

- ▶ You provide home visitation services to a single mom. At your first home visit, you realize that the client lives close to your neighborhood and that your 10 year old son plays with her 10 year old son.

Case Examples

- ▶ You are providing home visitation services to a family where the father has recently been laid off. You know he did grounds-keeping work and you are in the position of needing help with your yard work. You decide to help the family out financially by hiring him to do the work.
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ETHIC Model:

- ▶ **E**xamine relevant personal, societal, agency, client, and professional values.
- ▶ **T**hink about what ethical standard of the relevant Code of Ethics applies to the situation, as well as relevant laws and case decisions.
- ▶ **H**ypothesize about possible consequences of difference decisions.
- ▶ **I**dentify who will benefit and who will be harmed.
- ▶ **C**onsult with supervisor and colleagues.

(Gray & Gibbons, 2007)

Cultural Awareness & Boundaries

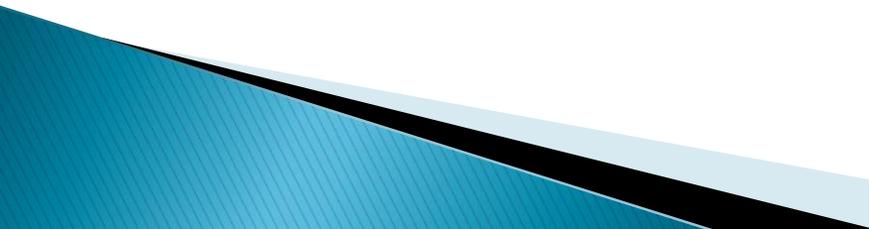
- ▶ What are some cultural considerations I need to think about
 - When greeting the family & entering their home?
 - When providing information?
 - When food or drink is offered to me?
 - When medical concerns arise?

Personal beliefs and biases ...

- ▶ Self awareness is important.
 - ▶ Working with infants, toddlers and their families stirs deep feelings.
 - ▶ Regular supervision is critical even for the most experienced professionals.
 - ▶ Having opportunities to reflect openly about personal beliefs, biases, and experiences in the work is critical to ethical practice.
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When Do Ethics &
Boundaries Challenge
You the Most?

Managing Conflicts & Dilemmas

- ▶ Remain calm.
 - ▶ Rely on concrete observable facts.
 - ▶ You don't have to know all the answers on the spot, seek consultation as soon as possible.
 - ▶ Identify family strengths even when the situation is stressful.
 - ▶ Access applicable ethical codes, input from colleagues, professional organizations.
 - ▶ Create a plan for moving forward that is sensitive to all involved.
 - ▶ Document conversations and actions.
 - ▶ Monitor the action plan and adapt as needed.
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Risks/Impacts of ethical breaches and/or crossing boundaries

- ▶ Harm to family
 - ▶ Loss of professional license
 - ▶ Loss of membership in professional organization
 - ▶ Legal problems
 - ▶ Loss of job
 - ▶ Damage to agency's reputation
 - ▶ Personal safety could be compromised
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Maintaining Ethical Practice

- ▶ Know the legal issues related to your work.
- ▶ Know your agencies' policies/procedures.
- ▶ Be very familiar with the professional code of ethics for your field.
- ▶ Communicate regularly with your supervisor.
- ▶ **Ideally ...**
 - participate in regular reflective supervision and/or consultation to support effective and ethical practice with infants, toddlers, and their families.
 - This is a work filled with strong emotion. Maintaining ethical relationships with families requires that we are in supportive relationships with peers/supervisors.

Wrap-up ...

- ▶ Impact of ethics/boundaries on families & professionals
 - ▶ Identification of potential conflicts/ethical dilemmas
 - ▶ Strategies for managing conflicts
 - ▶ Dual-Relationships
 - ▶ Similarities and differences between friendship and home-visiting
 - ▶ Role of self-disclosure
 - ▶ Understand uniqueness of ethics in home-visiting vs. office/center based services.
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Questions? Comments?

»» Evaluations and Farewell!!!