baby bonding
the best start possible

Session plan
Home visit example 2

Week number: 2 - Baby states!
Date:
Time:
Venue:

Aim: to increase awareness and use of Reflective Functioning and to share developmental knowledge about baby states

1. Welcome (Headspace and containment):

- Warm introductions - ask how both parent/carer and baby is feeling today!
- How did we get on this week, watching our babies and thinking about them???
-Today we will look again at tuning in to our little ones through activities such as baby watching, rhymes, baby touch games and Head, Heart and Hands (more on this later), and relaxation for us
- We will also look at the 6 baby states and how recognising these can help us feel more able to help our babies and also cope with sometimes distressing crying

2. Our agreement (Headspace and containment):

Gentle reminder of our contract (confidentiality, respect, mobiles, turn taking, fun, etc).
Add any new ones if needed.

3. Circle time (Headspace and containment):

Say hello to everyone including babies-in-waiting (avoid asking parents to share their intimate names for babies not yet born)

Playsongs, rhymes and games
• The grand old duke of York rhyme with actions
• The wheels on the bus song with actions
• Or more suitable alternatives for culture

NB. Permission must be sought from the baby – parents are encouraged to decide if their baby wants this activity and if not, to use a "spare" baby to practice.

4. Breathing and regulation (Regulation and Relaxation):

Practice breathing in deeply through nose and blow it out through mouth for the count of 5 – practice slowing it down even more – ask p/c and baby how this mindful breathing makes them feel

Stand up with baby and practice rocking whilst using deep breathing
Feel your feet firmly on the ground and as you breathe expand to contain you and your baby – practice being bigger and kinder

Share safeguarding message that a good parent will put their baby down safely if they cannot cope and walk away for a while - take a little while to calm down - make a drink - phone a friend

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5. Watching and Wondering (Head, Heart and Hands):

Babywatching – every week!
Play gentle music on your phone in the background, spend 5 minutes really thinking about your baby – if any other thoughts come into your head, acknowledge them and send them away – isn't it hard to just hold our baby in mind. The research shows that us doing this really strengthens our relationship with the baby – this relationship is protective and helps them do so much better as they grow (older babies/toddlers can explore the homemade streamer ribbons during this observation).

6. Loving touch (Head, Heart and Hands):

- Twinkle twinkle little star (hum/sing it slowly and gently to your baby)
- Practice the velvet cloak baby stroke from the baby strokes sheet (practice on spare baby doll if needed, keep asking parents to think about their baby's preferences, likes and dislikes)
- Handout: "touch me" poem

7. A "gift" or "bag of ideas" (Developmental Knowledge):

Watch baby states video on phone/tablet together – 3 awake states and 3 asleep states. Encourage each parent/partner to then guess what state our baby is in right now! Pregnant parents/partners can guess from pictures of baby faces.

8. Creative Relaxation (Regulation and Relaxation)

Tree of Life script or alternative relaxation ideas.
https://www.headspace.com/headspace-meditation-app

9. Try this at home (Head, Heart and Hands)

Spend some time each day watching our babies and trying to work out what state they are in and how we might help them. We will see how we got on next week.

10. Brief recap of session and see you next time (Headspace and Containment)

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REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: (complete after each session):

1. What went really well in today's session?

2. What seemed really hard in today's session?

3. What feelings/reactions did I notice among parent/carer and baby?

4. How well did I contain the pair - what changes are needed?

5. How well did I support Reflective Functioning (RF) in the parent/carer - any changes needed?

6. Any thoughts or ideas to take forward?

7. Any concerns about parent, carer or child? (NB. Please follow your child protection policy and any other relevant policies and protocols).

8. Any points or worries to discuss with my mentor/supervisor?

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