



# Reflective Supervision: The Ongoing Process of Mutual Discovery

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# Goals and Objectives:

At the conclusion of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

- ▷ Define reflective supervision
- ▷ Name 1 characteristic of reflective supervision that distinguishes it from administrative and clinical supervision
- ▷ Describe 1 reflective supervision strategy

# Oregon Home Visiting Core Competencies:

- ▷ Professional Best Practices
- ▷ Professional Well Being

# Infant Mental Health Endorsement Core Competencies:

- ▷ Reflection
  - self-awareness
  - emotional response
  - parallel process

# Agenda

- ▷ Reflection Activity
- ▷ Introductions
- ▷ Defining Reflective Supervision
- ▷ Theoretical Framework for Reflective Supervision
- ▷ Key Strategies of Reflective Supervision
- ▷ Demonstration
- ▷ Discussion
- ▷ Action Plan



# Reflection Activity

What is your experience with reflective supervision?  
What 1 word captures what reflective supervision is  
for you?



# Introductions

Please share your name, your agency, and the name of your home visiting program.

Please also share your 1 word that captures what reflective supervision is to you.

1.

# Defining Reflective Supervision

What it is AND what it is not



# Types of Supervision

- ▷ Administrative
- ▷ Clinical
- ▷ Reflective

# Types of Supervision

- ▷ **Administrative**  
Policies, practices, and procedures
- ▷ **Clinical**  
Case presentations, problem-solving, guidance and recommendations
- ▷ **Reflective**



*Reflective supervision is  
“a collaborative relationship for  
professional growth that improves  
practice by cherishing strengths  
and partnering around  
vulnerabilities to generate growth”*



*“Through this way of being, a holding environment is created—an emotional breathing space—where it is safe to explore accomplishments, insecurities, mistakes, questions, and different approaches to working with young children and their families.”*

# Reflective Supervision is:

- ▷ Relationship-based
- ▷ The process and practice of
  - exercising a capacity to question first impression
  - explore the work filtered through the perspectives of all involved (self, child, family, colleagues)
- ▷ Honors the meaning of internal experiences as worthy of time to pause, contemplate, and explore

# Reflective Supervision:

- ▷ Facilitates
  - empathy
  - open-mindedness
  - collaboration
  - respect
- ▷ Fosters meaningful and productive connections with parents, children, and colleagues

# Reflective Supervision

## IS NOT:

- ▷ Hierarchical relationships
- ▷ Just listening
- ▷ Therapy
- ▷ Only useful for inexperienced staff

## IS:

- ▷ Collaborative
- ▷ Active dialogue
- ▷ Exploration of thoughts & feelings only in the context of the work at hand
- ▷ Thinking more creatively & honestly about very complex situations
- ▷ Has limits in scope
- ▷ May be need for redirection or additional outside resources



*The work is too important and too complex to do alone.*



# Reflective Supervision is a process of:

- ▷ Recognizing the multidimensional complexity of the work
- ▷ Building on the strengths and skills that each individual brings to the relationships
- ▷ Discovering opportunities for rejuvenation, repair, and professional growth
- ▷ Nurturing greater engagement and trust in relationships

2.

# Theoretical Framework for Reflective Supervision



*The work involves “the interlocking network of relationships between supervisor, supervisee, family, and child.”*

## Ripple Effect of Group Reflective Supervision



# Parallel Process

Do unto others as you would have them do unto others.

# Reflective Supervision is a parallel process:

- ▷ The experience that a staff person has with her supervisor can affect the way she interacts with a family.
- ▷ The way the staff person interacts with the child, parent, or colleague can positively spill over and influence the parent's relationship with her child

# Reflective Supervision is a parallel process:

- ▷ All human development occurs in a nonlinear, dynamic manner
- ▷ Reflective supervision is nonlinear and dynamic

# Reflective Supervision is a parallel process:

- ▷ Supervisor and supervisee share their thoughts, feelings, and reactions in order to reach a better understanding of the work and to collaborate more effectively
- ▷ Supervisor's attunement and sensitivity help supervisee regulate

# Reflective Supervision is a parallel process:

- ▷ Feelings matter
- ▷ Willing and able to deal with conflict, to discuss topics, and hold intense feelings
- ▷ Uncovering and recognizing potential
- ▷ Exploring mistakes, ineffective choices, and misconceptions in ways that eventually lead from self-condemnation to self-forgiveness and acceptance
- ▷ Relationship-based



3.

# Key Strategies of Reflective Supervision

# Reflective Supervision Strategies for Home Visitors

- ▷ Attunement/mindfulness
- ▷ Pace
- ▷ Containment
- ▷ Sorting and selecting

# Reflective Supervision Strategies

- ▷ Perspective
- ▷ Gentle inquiry
- ▷ Professional use of self

# Reflective Supervision Strategies

- ▷ Negative capability (listen, learn before speaking)
- ▷ Parallel process
- ▷ Raising concerns (readiness for growth)
- ▷ Track patterns (emerging themes)

4.

# Demonstration

# The Reflective Cycle



5.

# Discussion



# Action Plan

What is your current skill level providing reflective supervision?

What do you need to maintain or grow?

What ways can you think of to pursue meeting your needs?





# Thank you!

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