

RENEW Review Activity: Hot Spots

At the May 2018 Statewide Meeting, clerical staff gathered to discuss “Hot Spots” in their work. Hot spots, as we defined them, are stressful for staff and happen consistently. In this month’s activity we encourage you to work through these scenarios WIC staff shared through a trauma and resilience informed lens.

Example:

Behavior: A participant only calls when in crisis or calls for assistance after it’s too late (e.g. out of food or formula, severe challenges with breastfeeding). They are “activated” and upset.

Potential Trauma informed explanation of behavior: People who have experienced trauma may often practice magical thinking that avoiding problems (or “freezing”) will solve problems. They may experience difficulty making decisions about when to ask for help, and experience forgetfulness and shame. Past experiences may have been that help is only available when the situation is presented as a crisis.

Strategies: Emotion first, then logic. Reflect the emotion, then discuss potential solutions. *“This is a stressful situation for you. You want to feed your child. Let’s work together to see what options might be available for you. How does that sound?”*

Now, you try!

Behavior: Participant constantly rescheduling. Every time a WIC staff member talks to them on the phone they apologize for missing an appointment and promise to come to their next appointment.

Potential trauma informed explanation of behavior:

Strategies:

Behavior: Participant frustrated with staff member and comparing them to other WIC staff. “Well, the other WIC staff member said this...(incorrect information). Why are you saying something different?”

Potential trauma informed explanation of behavior:

Strategies: