

WIC Connects

WIC Connects places the participant at the center of every WIC interaction. Staff support families to make healthy choices by helping participants explore their unique strengths, values, and motivation.



Spirit of WIC Connects

- Genuinely warm and respectful, both sides bring something to the table
- Accepting and understanding even when you don't agree
- Individualized, emphasizing freedom of choice
- Collaborative – walk side-by-side, rather than one pushing or pulling the other
- Dancing versus wrestling



Opening the Conversation

- Greet the participant
- Introduce yourself and your role
- Set the agenda
 - How much time you have
 - What you hope to accomplish
 - Acknowledge personal questions
- Ask permission to proceed
- Ask an open-ended question

What is one thing you are really enjoying about your child right now?

What concerns do you have that you'd like to talk about today?

Tell me how things are going for you.



Opening the Conversation

Your opening:



Open-Ended Questions

- Encourages a deeper conversation, allows the staff to gather more information, and helps the participant to think/talk about change
- Requires more than a yes/no answer, specific fact, or number
- Questions are asked in a way that is open, inviting, and accepting
- Come from a place of curiosity, rather than judgment
- Start with “*What...*” “*Tell Me...*” “*How...*”



Open-Ended Questions

Your open-ended questions:



Affirmations

Why affirm?

- Builds rapport
- Encourages greater participation
- Shows your appreciation and understanding
- Increases participant's confidence in their ability to change

Key elements:

- Find opportunities to sincerely compliment
- Make supportive, reinforcing statements
- Focus on successes and efforts
- Avoid using "I" statements
- Stay positive!



Affirmations

**Your belief in the participant's ability
to change can influence outcome.**

Sample affirmations:

“Keep it up: you’re doing great.”

“You’ve worked really hard to _____.”

“You really have some good ideas for how you might do this.”

Your affirmations:



Reflections

A reflection is a brief response that lets the speaker know you've been listening and helps you check your understanding of what is being said or the emotion behind it.

Simple reflections:

- Repeating or rephrasing what the person says in similar words

Deeper reflections:

- Paraphrasing: making a guess to the unspoken meaning
- Reflecting a feeling: a paraphrase that emphasizes the emotion through feeling statements

To develop deeper reflections, ask yourself these questions:

- What do I think she means?
- Why might this be important to him?
- What might she be feeling?
- What might she be trying to say that isn't coming out?



Reflections

Forming reflections:

“It sounds like you...”

“You’re feeling...”

“So you...”

Your reflections:



Summarizing

Why summarize?

- Reinforces what the participant has said
- Shows you've been listening
- Allows participant to hear their thoughts about change
- Insures counselor “got it all” or understands the participant’s concerns
- Provides transition to further discussion

Key elements:

- Start with an introduction - “*Let me see if I understand...*”
- Capture both sides: start with “cons” and end with “pros”
- Check for understanding – “*Did I get it all?*”



Summarizing

If the participant has expressed ambivalence, capture both sides –
“On the one hand... **and** on the other hand...”

Your summarizing statements:

Exchanging Information

Key elements:

- Complete the assessment first
- Ask permission
- Explore what the participant knows, what they've already tried and/or what they would like to know
- Offer information in a neutral, non-judgmental tone
 - Avoid the words “*should*,” “*must*,” “*need to*,” “*can't*,” and “*stop*”
 - Try “*Research shows*,” “*Some parents have found*,” “*You might consider*”
 - Avoid overwhelming them with too much information. Leave them in a frame of mind where they are asking for more!
 - Offer a short menu of options to try
- Explore the participant's thoughts, feelings and reactions
 - *What do you think about this information?*
 - *Based on the ideas I've shared, what could you see yourself doing?*



Exchanging Information

Your ideas:



Use of Printed Materials

Key elements:

- Ask permission to provide
- Limit to one or two key items
- Review key points in the item with the participant
- Have the participant interact with the information by:
 - Selecting items from a list
 - Pointing to important information
 - Circling or underlining key items
 - Highlighting addresses or phone numbers



Use of Printed Materials

Your ideas:



Closing the Conversation

Key Elements:

- Explore the next steps
 - *So where does this leave you?*
 - *We've talked about ____ and ____, what might you focus on in the next few weeks?*
- Embrace the different possibilities besides action for defining a successful visit
- Summarize what's been discussed
- Review plan for follow up/future contacts
- Affirm and express confidence in their ability to succeed
- Thank them for coming



Closing the Conversation

Your closing:





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Adapted from the Oregon WIC Program.

For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats.

To submit a request, please call 1-800-841-1410
(TDD/TTY 1-800-833-6388)

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