



**RAPID RESPONSE**  
**VIRTUAL HOME VISITING**

# Caregiver Reflective Functioning

May 19, 2021

# IAFSP Rapid Response Virtual Home Visiting

Institute for the Advancement of Family Support Professionals

Your Dashboard All Modules Your Compass Hi Red

## RAPID RESPONSE VIRTUAL HOME VISITING

Resources  
Frequently asked questions

**Want to help?**  
If you would like to support our efforts, please let us know!  
[Contact the RR-VHV for more information](#)

The Rapid Response-Virtual Home Visiting collaborative (RR-VHV) will provide best practice principles and strategies to support all home visiting professionals in maintaining meaningful connection with families during this time of increased anxiety and need.

Through collaboration, the RR-VHV will leverage the extensive resources and expertise that exists across home visiting organizations to support the development and distribution of cross-model, cross system approaches and guidance.

Providing immediate support for our front-line home visiting staff and the families they serve is our highest priority.

The RR-VHV is committed to creating processes to facilitate collaborative content development and shared decision making.

### Available Webinars

**Home Visiting Models and COVID 19 Response**  
(video, April 3, 2020)  
If you are having difficulty accessing the webinar, click here to download the video.  
Learn how HRSA and national home visiting models are responding to the COVID 19 crisis. The discussion will explore needs and priorities from the field, model guidance, resources available to support current efforts and responses from federal, state and local levels.

**Virtual Visit Readiness**  
Learn the basics of using different types of technology to connect with families.  
Available Resources:  
Readiness Subaction (pdf)  
Troubleshooting Tips (pdf)

### Guiding Principles

**Accessible:**

- All materials will be provided both in print and made accessible to providers through the national and state portals.
- All information and resources shared will be designed to meet the needs of all home visiting professionals.
- All materials developed as a result of this project will remain available to support future needs of the field.

**Strength-based:**

- Include as many provider networks as possible in content and resources development.
- All provider bring unique and important issues. Expertise will be sought based on content area and specific needs.
- Every effort will be made to be as inclusive as possible. However, it is important to remember that no one individual or organization is expected to have expertise in every area. Please assess your own areas of strength and capacity to determine those areas in which you believe it is most important to be involved.

**Shared Responsibility:**

- The RR-VHV will create a streamlined process for information gathering and sharing that is inclusive of all providers.
- It will be up to each provider network to determine the most efficient way for inclusion in shared decision-making and content review.
- To maintain a rapid response framework, we

Webinar recordings, slide decks and resources are available at:

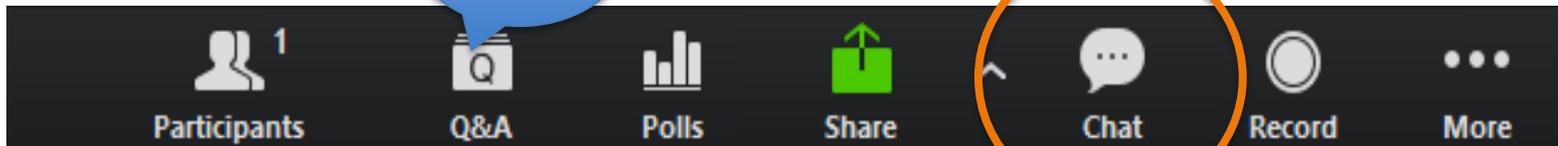
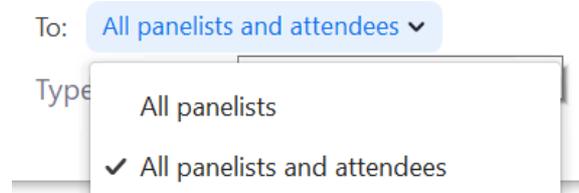
- <https://institutefsp.org/COVID-19-rapid-response>



# Q&A and Chat Features

If you have a specific question for one of our speakers, please use the Q&A function

Please use the chat box to respond to questions we ask you!



# Presenters



Salam Soliman, PhD, IMH-E®  
Director, Center for Prevention and Early  
Trauma Treatment Center  
National Service Office for Nurse-Family  
Partnership and Child First



Shannon Queiroga, MA, LPC, IMH-E®  
Senior Manager, National Training, Child First  
National Service Office for Nurse-Family  
Partnership and Child First



# Content Outline

1. Define Reflective Functioning (RF)
2. Discuss why RF is important
3. Explain various levels of RF
4. Practice determining RF

# Which of these experiences make you feel best in a relationship?

- Receiving a gift
- Going on a date
- Feeling fully understood and accepted by someone
- Receiving flowers

# Reflective Functioning



Holding mind in mind – with curiosity



Seeing oneself from the outside and others from the inside



Awareness of what we are feeling and sense of our self/personalities

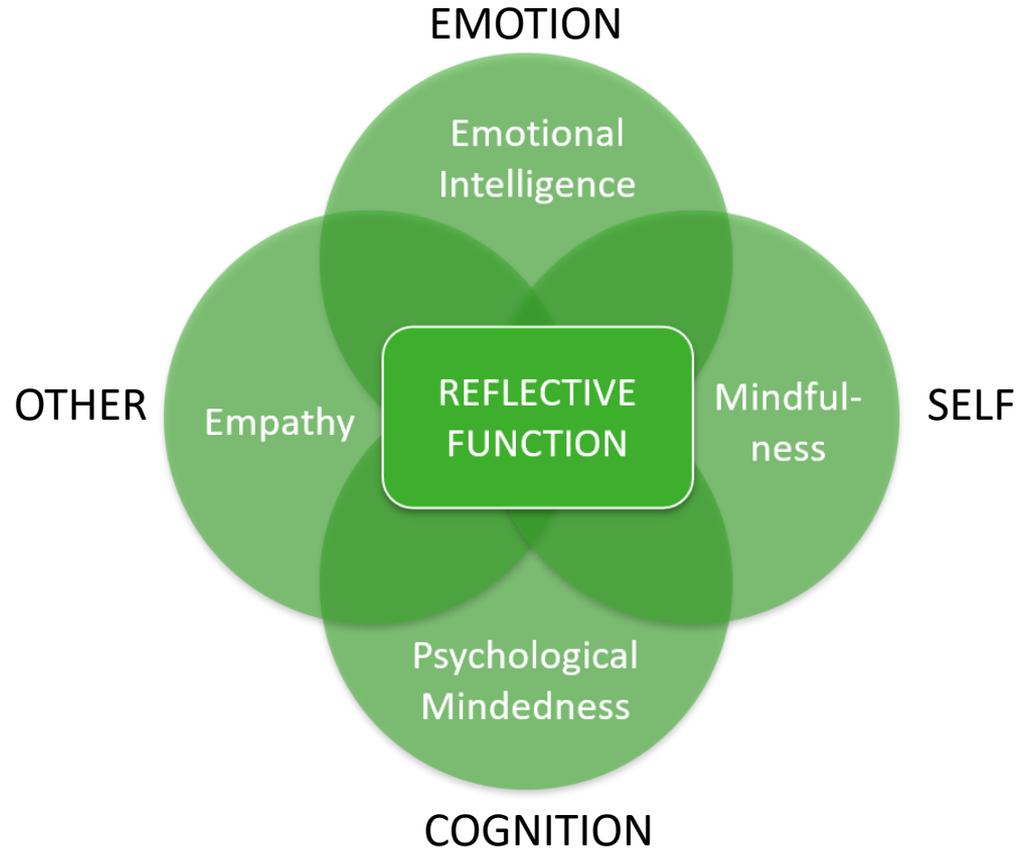


Acknowledgment of limitations in our ability to ever really “know” and that we might get it “wrong”

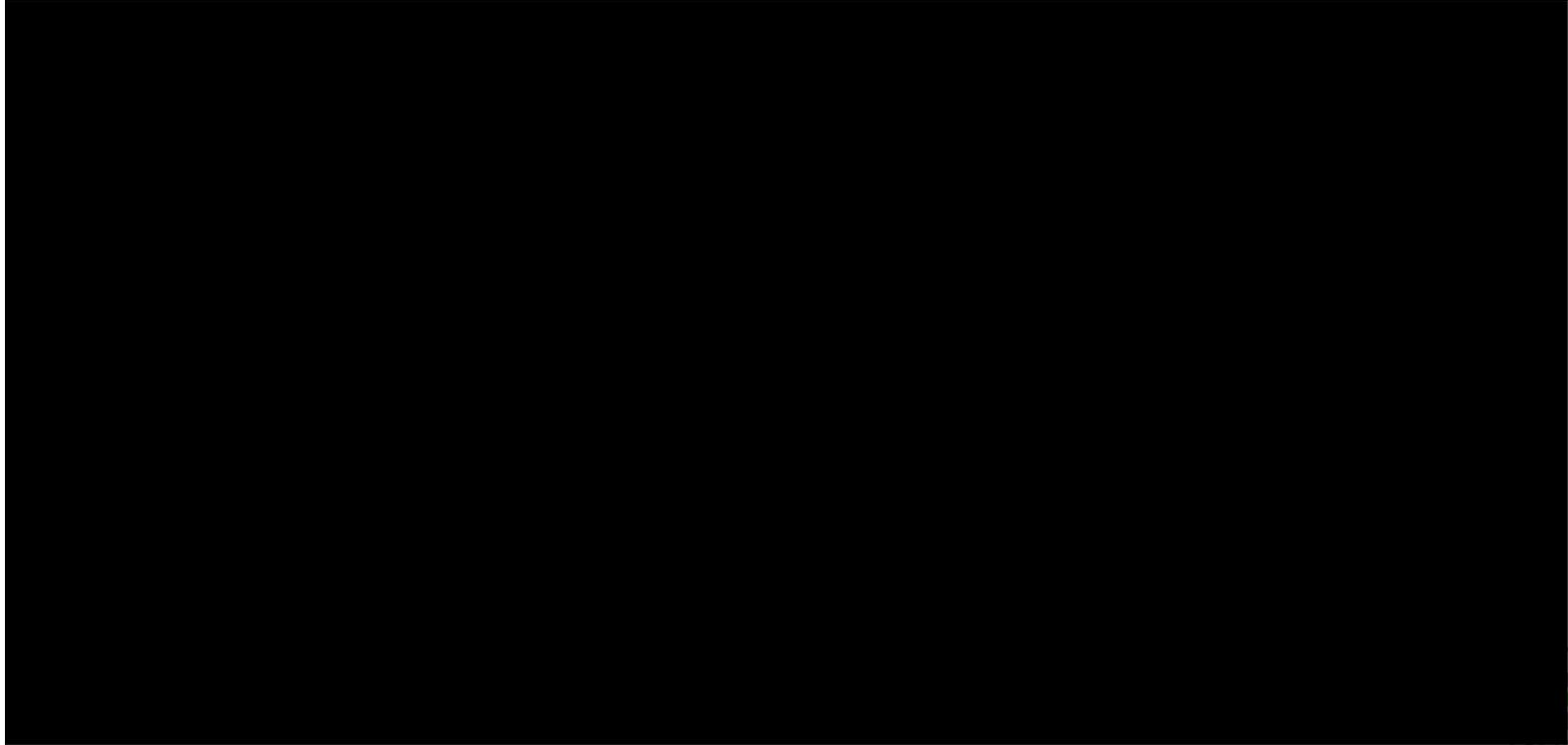


Having a language for communicating about internal experiences and representing them symbolically

# Reflective Functioning



# Broccoli or Goldfish?



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# Why is RF Important?



# Why is RF Important to the Child?



- Behavior becomes predictable

# Why is RF Important to the Child?

- Promotes and maintains attachment security



# Why is RF Important to the Child?

- Facilitates the appearance-reality distinction



# Why is RF Important to the Child?

- Enhances communication



# Levels of Reflective Functioning

- Negative
- Absent
- Low or Emerging
- Definite or Ordinary
- Marked or Exceptional

# Negative RF

**Caregiver provides bizarre explanation  
about the child's behavior**

“The devil sent him to punish me”

“She wants to be sexy today”

# Absent RF



Parent gives no indication that their child may have an internal life and that his thoughts may be distinct from her own.



Questions about what child may be thinking are responded to with brief and vague answers “She’s fine”

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# Low or Emerging RF

**A recognition that the child has mental states, that she has feelings, thoughts and intentions of her own**

He's sad", "She's angry", "He likes apples"

Linking these states to behaviors is inconsistent

# Ordinary RF

We can describe a parent as reflective once they manifest the capacity to link the child's (or caregiver's own) internal state to behavior or to other internal states.

Consistent use of “because” to explain child's behavior and how it may be connected to child's internal state.

# Marked or Exceptional RF

Affect can vary in intensity

Affect can diminish and build over time

Feelings can be disguised or are unobservable

One set of feelings can trigger another set of feelings

Affect has dynamic, transactional properties

Internal working model of emotions and intentions

# Ways to Enhance RF

- Wondering stance (Creation of a playspace for the caregiver)
- Holding the caregiver in mind (or working at a level the caregiver can manage)
- Presenting the child's mind
- Curiosity about caregiver's history and how it relates to current situation

# Ways to Enhance RF

- Making Links

*“How were tantrums handled in your family?”*

- Identify need to refer for additional supports



# Vignette 1



# Vignette 2



# Vignette 3



# Vignette 4



# Vignette 5



# Vignette 6



*“How can I get him to stop screaming when I try to get him out of the car to go to school?”*

# Vignette 7



# Questions?



# Credits

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**Connect**

[rapidresponse@nationalalliancehvmodels.org](mailto:rapidresponse@nationalalliancehvmodels.org)

[www.institutefsp.org](http://www.institutefsp.org)