

# THE ROLE OF REFLECTIVE CONSULTATION

PEP Webinar Series  
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## OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

- Introductions
- What is reflective supervision?
- Why is it important?
- What does it look like?
- How should I begin?

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## IMPROVING ONES WORK

Many people think about their work and how they might make improvements:

- Farmers look at their methods to see how they can be more efficient and productive
- Retail businesses look at their share of the market and think about what they might do to increase their share
- Writers consider the comments of editors and "readers" as they perfect their work.

Reflective Consultation is a process which invites a knowledgeable someone you trust to help you think about your work.

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## REFLECTIVE CONSULTATION

The goal of Reflective Consultation is to strengthen the quality of services provided to adults, children and families.

It is an approach designed to encourage learning through thoughtful observation of oneself and others.

It is a respectful undertaking where exchanges of information, thoughts, and feelings about the things that arise around one's work can occur. The focus is on the families involved and the experiences of the person getting the consultation.

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It is not possible to work on behalf of human beings, to try and help them without having powerful feelings aroused in yourself.....

These feelings can come out of one's own experiences, one's own "world view" and one's own bias.

-Unless we examine these reactions, they can impact on our work with families in a way that does not necessarily reflect their needs or our own best practices.

We know that the effectiveness of our work with children and families is directly related to the quality of our relationships with them.

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## WHY NOT DO IT ALONE?

We can and certainly do reflect on our work alone, we do it when we write our notes, we do it when we prepare for each contact, we do it when we look at what is going well , what needs to change.- Isn't that enough?

No- its not

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We first learn about families and relationships in the families we grow up in. This serves as the foundation of our learning. Of course as we grow we expand that learning, even perhaps rejecting some of our earliest beliefs and values. Sometimes we have beliefs about families and relationships that have become our "truths" and we may assume they are the "truths" for all.

The intimate quality of our work with families is apt to trigger things from our past and present that may skew our view. So without being aware of it, we may react out of our own "truths, whether that fits the needs of the family. Discussing with the trusted other helps us get "outside" that box.

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## REFLECTIVE CONSULTATION

There are three primary components:

1. Reflection- thinking about one's thoughts, feelings and behavior in a situation, speculating about the feelings of others involved in the situation.
2. Collaborative problem solving-sharing those reflections with a trusted other who helps you think about them-who may reflect what they see and who with you create a sense of "we-ness" in the work- It's a problem solving partnership similar to that you want created between practitioner and family
3. Regularity --predictable routines and sufficient frequency to support trust and relationship building

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## HOW DO WE KNOW IT MATTERS?

The last number of years has seen an increase in the research relative to reflective consultation as it has come to be used in a variety of professions and disciplines- The research has found that good reflective consultation -

- Encourages critical thinking and trial action
- Develops and enhances relationship building skills
- Increases effective, engaged practice
- Improves program quality and accountability
- Improves individual practice

Research cited in:  
 Gilkerson & Shank, "Relationships for growth" in Osofsky, J.D., and Fitzgerald, H, eds, The WAIMH handbook of infant mental health , New York, Wiley, 2000  
 Heffron, M.C, & Murch, T. Reflective supervision and leadership in infant and early childhood programs, Washington, D, C, ZERO to THREE

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## PURPOSES

Useful Purposes for Reflective Consultation

- Provide quality services and programming to families, children and adults;
- Allows providers to learn new approaches and ways of providing services
  - Self awareness
- Explore barriers that may be roots in the providers needs or beliefs;
- Evolution of professionals and programming.

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## WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE ?

- Joint
- Verbal
- Safe
- Strengths based
- Process orientated
- Reflective
  - Insight into self, others and processes
- Can explore processes, experiences, response
- Analysis, and action.

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## HOW DOES THIS LOOK IN COACHING

- Coaching is a way to help someone change something they are doing. It involves, observation, reflection, feedback and joint planning.
- Similar processes
  - Reflection > Feedback/Discovery > Planning
- Evolution into next phase.

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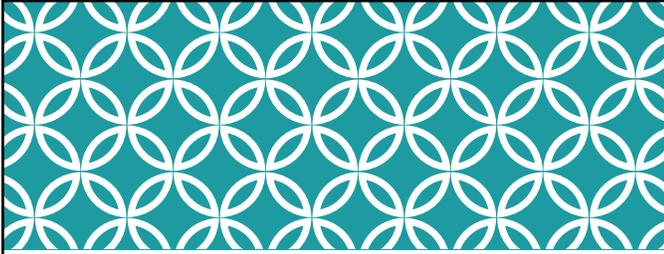
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**NEBRASKA'S REFLECTIVE CONSULTATION NETWORK**

Jen Gerdes

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**FROM THE PROVIDER**

<http://cacenter-ecmh.org/news/1769-2/>

Comments . . .

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**FROM A SUPERVISOR POINT OF VIEW**

Please comment . . .

<http://cacenter-ecmh.org/news/1772-2/>

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**A CONSULTATION SESSION**

<http://cacenter-ecmh.org/news/1743-2/>

Please comment . . .

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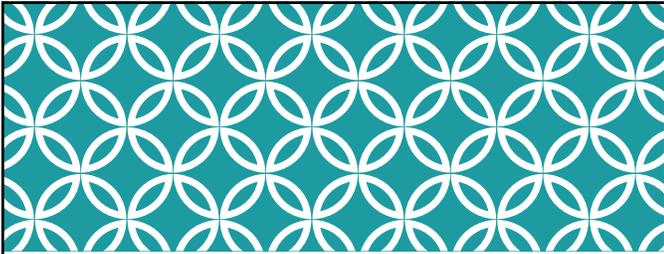
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**QUESTIONS?**

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**TAKE THE FOLLOW UP SURVEY (5 QUESTIONS)**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2FFR9KM>

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