



## Tips for Mentoring Staff

### Getting started:

- Before the participant arrives, establish rapport with the staff person being observed.
  - *“How is your day going? Thanks for letting me observe today?”*
- Explain the purpose of the observation.
- Ask: *“What are you working on?”* OR *“What would you like me to listen for?”*(OARS)
- Share that you are taking notes, so you can remember and share helpful information.
- Assure that all information will be kept confidential.

### While observing:

- Choose a seat out of the way, preferably where you can see both parties.
- Observe the participant interaction and listen for what the staff person is working on.
- Write quotes of what you hear the staff person and the participant say to help you share specific comments.
- Identify your affirmations for the staff person to share after the participant has left.

### Mentoring Discussion:

- Affirm the staff person right away. Examples may include:
  - *“You really got the conversation off to a good start.”*
  - *“You easily connected with the participant.”*
- Ask open-ended questions to encourage self-assessment. Help the staff person explore her feelings, thoughts and hopes about the participant interaction. Examples may include:
  - *“How did that go for you?”*
  - *“What do you think went well?”*
  - *“What if anything, might you do differently next time?”*
  - *“What did you observe about the participant?”*
- Reflect the staff person’s response to each question to encourage further exploration.
- Ask permission: *“Would you like to hear my feedback?”*
  - *“Here are some examples of things I heard you say.”* Share a few examples.
- Balance the feedback. Offer positive feedback (identify strengths) in addition to asking for and suggesting ideas for improvement.
- Find something to affirm everyone on. End on a positive note!
  - *“You do a nice job with reflections. It is great that you are trying different types.”*
  - *“You shared some great affirmations. They really made the mom feel good.”*
- Identify next steps and offer future support. Summarize feedback and lessons learned.

Encourage staff person to select one skill or strategy to focus on.

- For more tips on the mentoring discussion, see [Providing Positive Feedback](#).

### **Closing the discussion:**

- Offer future support and arrange for follow-up, if appropriate.
  - *“What kind of support could you use in the future?”*
  - *“How can I help?”*
- Thank the staff person for letting you observe and for receiving feedback.
  - *“Thank you so much for letting me observe the appointment. I learn so much from doing these observations.”*
- Share affirmations to highlight something special about the person. Examples may include:
  - *“You really want to do a good job. I can tell that you have been practicing.”*
  - *“You care about your moms. Your warmth and caring shines through.”*