

Motivational Interviewing

Parent-centered, guided conversation to elicit and strengthen motivation for change

Learn the skills, then use your own words.

Based on work by: P. Weinstein, 2021

Motivational Interviewing

1. Build rapport and trust: NO premature advice



Show care and concern by asking open-ended questions

“What is it like for you to be a new mom?”

“How is it going when you brush your child’s teeth at home?”

Be a careful listener. Ask permission before offering advice

“It sounds like you’re having trouble with toothbrushing at home. Would you like me to share some ideas that have worked for other parents?”

“You said you don’t worry too much about baby teeth. Can I share a few things we have learned about baby teeth?”

Use affirmations to recognize parenting skills

“I notice you give your child water in her sippy cup. That’s the healthiest choice!”

“You must do a great job in the morning. Your child is always ready to learn when she comes into the classroom!”

2. Uncover motivation

Ask what they want for the baby/child’s dental health

“When you think about your child’s teeth and smile, what would you like for him/her?”

Ask about the dental health of the parent or family

“Tell me about the experiences of your family in keeping teeth healthy.”

3. Reframe some important concepts

Talk about infections, not cavities

“When you brush your child’s teeth every night (or wipe your baby’s gums) you are preventing an infection that could hurt him/her.”

Explain the importance of baby teeth

“Research shows that infections in baby teeth lead to infections in permanent teeth.”



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4. Encourage “change” talk - the more the parent talks, the better

“If 1 is a little and 10 is very much, how much do you want your child to have beautiful teeth?.. Why not a 9 or a 5?”

“You told me you want your child to have beautiful teeth. Close your eyes and imagine what he/she will look like as a young man/woman. What will healthy teeth and a beautiful smile help him/her achieve in life?”

5. Help the parent to create a goal

Brainstorm ideas, problem solve, encourage choice and collaboration.

Support the parent in selecting a first small step that is attainable.

Ask about the details - when, where, etc. Talk about the steps that will need to be taken.

Ask who is supportive in the household and who is not.

Be realistic. One goal is enough.

Do not recommend or encourage too much change at once.

6. Follow-up is essential, by phone or in person

More than once is best: At 2 and 4 weeks; then 1 month later.

7. Be sensitive to resistance. Keep a positive relationship.

Encourage change talk.

Do not argue or try to convince.

Acknowledge and affirm positive steps the parent has taken.

Go back to mom’s motivation.

“What will happen if you do nothing or don’t make changes?”

“Tell me what you want for your child’s teeth.”

Remember:
**Change is a process and
the parents are in charge.**



