

CHEERS Review Guide for Supervisors

This guide is designed to help Supervisors assure quality when reviewing home visitors' CHEERS documentation. If you need additional assistance, please contact your program's FSS QA Specialist.

Documentation of Postnatal CHEERS:

- _____ The home visitor documents their observations in each domain of CHEERS.
When the child is not present for the entire visit (whether asleep or outside the home), CHEERS documentation is not possible and not required. The home visitor can state the reason the CHEERS observation did not occur under "Cues," and type "N/A" in each of the other domains. In the rare case where the child is present for only a small portion of the visit, the home visitor may be unable to observe for all domains of CHEERS. In this case, they can write "Unable to observe" in the comment boxes of the domains for which this applies.
- _____ The examples documented in each domain are unique and represent the home visitor's overall impression of the PCI. Documented examples may represent different aspects of one activity, or can be drawn from multiple activities.
- _____ Examples in each domain detail the interaction between one parent and one child.
When the child initiates an interaction (for instance by crying), the home visitor documents the parent's response to the child, or lack of it, and (ideally) the child's response to the parent's intervention, showing the full circuit of the interaction.
When the parent initiates an interaction (for instance, starting a game), the home visitor documents the child's response, or lack of it, and (ideally) the parent's response to the child.
- _____ For Level 1 and 2 families where both parents are present: the home visitor documents the CHEERS observation for one parent only, or (optionally) includes two sets of observations, one for each parent. *The home visitor does **not** document a mix of observations, with some domains focused on one parent and some focused on the other.*
- _____ The overall frequency of the type of interaction shown is documented in each domain.
Recommended statements of frequency include: "This represents all of the visit," "This represents most of the visit", or "This represents half of the visit." In the last case, the home visitor would need two examples, one for each "half" of the visit. "This represents some of the visit" is problematic because "some" is open to various interpretations.
- _____ The home visitor's documentation is objective, including only the facts (what they saw or heard and direct quotes). *It does **not** include, either subtly or directly, the home visitor's subjective reactions to, interpretations of, or opinions about the family and their behavior.*
- _____ The CHEERS observation is neutral; the home visitor observes for and documents whatever parental strengths and/or challenges present themselves, rather than strengths only. *Therefore, whenever the home visitor completes the CHEERS observation, "Not observed" does not apply.*
- _____ The home visitor documents the interaction observed between the parent and child only, **not** the home visitor's interventions, which are documented elsewhere.
- _____ For Level 3 and 4 families where both parents are present: the home visitor documents two sets of CHEERS observations, with a separate example for each parent in each CHEERS domain.

Documentation of Prenatal CHEERS

- _____ The home visitor documents any one CHEERS domain for prenatal families at 24-30 weeks, and any two CHEERS domains for prenatal families at 31 weeks or more.
Documenting frequency is not required for prenatal CHEERS.
Where both parents are present, the documentation can include both parents (optionally) as long as the documentation requirement for one parent is also met.
Where documentation is completed for both parents prenatally, the domains documented can be the same or different for each parent. For instance, for a family at 31 weeks where both parents

are present, the home visitor can document Expression and Smiles for Mom and Cues and Smiles for the other parent.

- _____ The home visitor documents their direct observations of the parents and/or the parent's own reporting of events that occurred outside of the home visit.
For the latter, an example of Expression: Mom smiled and said baby was kicking during the night. She stated she talked to him, saying, "Hello baby. Are you a night owl like mommy?"

Overall Strengths

- _____ The home visitor notes the parent's overall strengths, skills and abilities related to any of the CHEERS domains for the current observation.
 - *The documentation does **not** include strengths unrelated to CHEERS.*
 - *Since families generally demonstrate some strength or skill related to CHEERS during every home visit, this section should be filled out for each visit.*

Areas to Focus Support

- _____ The home visitor notes the parent's areas of challenge that need support related to any of the CHEERS domains for the current observation.
 - *The documentation does **not** include parental challenges unrelated to CHEERS.*
 - *Even when parents don't exhibit challenges, the home visitor can generally identify areas where a parent can build on a strength. Therefore, this section is completed for most visits.*
 - *Optionally, the home visitor can note how they plan to offer support to help the family address these specific challenges.*
 - *Where there are serious concerns and/or risk factors, these can be integrated into the Service Plan for the family.*

Reflective Strategies: used to Promote or Address PCI/CHEERS

- _____ The home visitor documents use of an ATP (Accentuating the Positives) to promote the parental strengths and skills they observed during the CHEERS observation.
 - *Because ATPs are the designated method for promoting strengths related to CHEERS, home visitors are expected to deliver at least one ATP to promote CHEERS-related strengths whenever they conduct a CHEERS observation.*
 - *The home visitor is only required to document the reason the ATP was delivered; they do **not** need to document the content of the ATP. For example: "Used ATP when Mom understood from his cues that TC wanted to breastfeed."*
 - *Use of ATPs for other purposes is documented elsewhere. For instance, ATP-ing a parent for progress on a goal is documented in the FGP section of the home visit narrative.*
- _____ The home visitor documents the use of any of the other Reflective Strategies to address concerns related to the CHEERS observation. These include: S-ATP, Explore & Wonder, Feel: Name & Tame, Normalizing, and Solution-focused Talk.
 - *The home visitor does **not** document the use of Reflective Strategies for other purposes in this section. For instance, using Solution-focused Talk to gain information about a parent's mental health issues would be documented in the "Family Functioning/Self-Sufficiency/Crisis Intervention" section.*
 - *Unlike ATPs, there is no guideline for how often other Reflective Strategies should be used.*
 - *Additional means of addressing CHEERS-related challenges include: referrals, offering resources, and use of curriculum, all of which are documented in their respective sections.*
 - *Expressing curiosity does not constitute "Explore & Wonder," and saying that something is "normal" is not the same as using the Reflective Strategy "Normalizing." Refer to the handout "Reflective Strategies at a Glance" for a review of the required steps for each Reflective Strategy.*