



Welcome

Michigan WIC Program
 Client-Centered Webinar Series
 Webinar 3: Tips for Dealing with Difficult People

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Guidelines

- ▲ Phones on mute
- ▲ Raise hands
- ▲ Chat box



The Plan

- ▲ **Topic area:** Dealing with Difficult People
- ▲ **Survey:** Sharing challenges, tips and strategies
- ▲ **Key concepts:**
 - Emotions drive behaviors
 - Best practices
 - Listen
 - Cultivate empathy
 - Explain the process
 - Encourage autonomy
 - Choosing our reaction

Harness the Power Within You



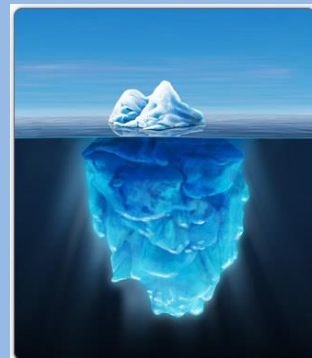
Challenging Situations

- ▲ Demanding / rude / attitude
- ▲ Not prepared
- ▲ Multiple rescheduling / no shows
- ▲ Late
- ▲ Only interested in vouchers
- ▲ WIC regulations
- ▲ Dishonesty / fraud / compliance
- ▲ Cell phones / texting
- ▲ Difficult co-workers



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Emotions Drive Behaviors



Difficult Participants - Possible Causes

- ▲ Feeling powerless
- ▲ Not having options
- ▲ Unmet expectations
- ▲ Vulnerability / shame
- ▲ Feeling disrespected
- ▲ Stressful life challenges
- ▲ Fear



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Examples

- ▲ Client missed the appointment and no benefits on the EBT card. Client gets angry when her expectation is not met.
- ▲ Discussions on weight, clients don't believe their child is overweight... Some of the questions we have to ask can be hot points.
- ▲ Be upset with boyfriends, or upset with the child, had a hard time getting to the appt. It's always WIC fault to me regardless of what it [is]. Whoever's at the front desk catches all the attitude and frustration of that client.
- ▲ Waiting too long for appointments.
- ▲ Their children crying, no transportation, asking them to do what they are required to do in order to get their benefits, the need to come to an appt. when they are working, picking up and dropping off other kids.

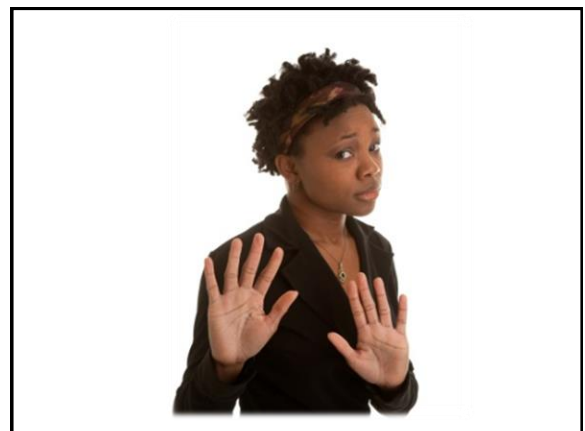


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Emotions wear masks



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Emotional Needs

- ▲ Connection / love
- ▲ Confidence / self-esteem
- ▲ Significance / importance
- ▲ Security / control
- ▲ Growth / improvement
- ▲ Understanding / respect

Techniques

- ▲ Listen
- ▲ Cultivate empathy
- ▲ Explain the process
- ▲ Show me that you like me
- ▲ Offer choices
- ▲ Ask permission
- ▲ Apologize

Listening



Listening

- ▲ Listening and letting them talk before you do seems to help.
- ▲ Always listen to the client in order to understand where they are coming from.
- ▲ Listening to them, typically there is an underlying issue.
- ▲ Usually just listening to their story and trying to help them as much as I can.
- ▲ I think listening is the best advice.

Reflective Listening

- ▲ 1. Always stop what you're doing and listen. 2. Make eye contact and repeat back their concern 3. Address it if you can, or refer to a supervisor.
- ▲ Listen to what they have to say, think about what they said, clarify what they stated and try to figure out how I can help them.
- ▲ Always repeat what you hear them saying for confirmation. This is helpful so everyone is on the same page and the client knows you are listening to them.
- ▲ Let them know you understand. You're here to try and help them, and accommodate to their needs if we can. Or find them some resources to help.
- ▲ Convey that I understand how they feel. Let them know I will try to help them however I can.

Listening



"It is your fault that I keep missing my appointments. You keep scheduling me in the morning. That is when I have to take my son to school. How can I be two places at once?"

Show Me You Heard Me



"Afternoon appointments are going to work better for you."

Poll Question: How Would You Respond?



Empathy



Empathy

- ▲ Try to put yourself in their shoes. I was at one point in my life and it wasn't by choice. Be understanding of their situation.
- ▲ I just try to remember when the client is upset, it's usually because of something else they have going on in their life and not anything to do with me or WIC.
- ▲ Being non-judgmental or non-biased, remembering we all have a story & we are not sure what that family faced before coming to their appointment.
- ▲ Always remember that these clients have a lot that they are dealing with in their personal lives and to try and eliminate more stress to them. Keep a smile on your face and always use a calm voice and make them feel valued.
- ▲ I just remind myself, that I don't know what happened in their life prior to us coming in contact. And I always remember; we don't know what happens behind closed doors in their life. Try to communicate with them, so they aren't going to feel threatened.

Explain the Process



Explaining the Process

- ▲ We will try to accommodate all clients as best we can, but there are instances where we just can't. You can explain to them the best you can, offer a month of benefits where applicable, etc. you just do your best.
- ▲ Talk quietly so they have to stop yelling to hear.
- ▲ Remain calm explain policies.

Show Me That You Like Me



Interact with My Children

- ▲ "The one lady always makes conversation with the kids so they are very friendly."
- ▲ "We love coming to this place. My kids love being here. Everyone is so kind."
- ▲ "They always have smiling faces and are kid-friendly. They keep my kids entertained."

Show Me that You Like Me

- ▲ I smile and show compassion. Try to get them to tell me what they don't understand, so I can help them. At times I chat briefly about my children, when they were younger; this apparently [makes me] appear I am human:-)
- ▲ Pick up their kids while they are here. Sometimes just a couple of minutes without the kid climbing on them can ease their tension. Soft speaking and smile.
- ▲ You can also ask them , How's they're day going. or are they having a bad day.

Strategies for Autonomy



- ▲ Offer choices
- ▲ Ask permission
- ▲ Apologize

Poll Question: How Would You Respond?



Choosing Your Reaction



Staying Open to the Shift



- ▲ Treat everyone the same, and don't get upset or angry just because they are upset or angry. Try to have them smiling by the end of the appointment.
- ▲ Remember to always stay positive. Do not take it personal. Always do your best to calm the person that is agitated and angry.

Controlling Your Emotional Response

- ▲ Breathing
- ▲ Think before reacting
- ▲ Ask questions
- ▲ Choose your state

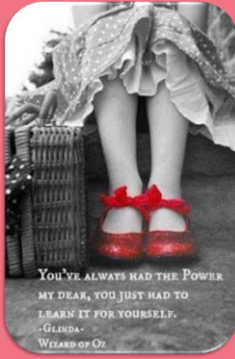
Choose Your State

- ▲ Take a deep breath and listen... that allows you some time to think of the best solution.
- ▲ I continue to smile, have a pleasant tone of voice, and I do not feed into the negativity but I am firm when required.
- ▲ Deep breathing helps, there are times when you have to excuse yourself, sometimes asking a coworker to finish.
- ▲ Don't take it personally, ask for assistance from director if needed, (call in back up!)
- ▲ If you are in a no win situation, just tell the client you will look into things and be right back. Take a brief min to collect yourself and review everything; then go back and most of the time the client also took that min to reflect themselves too and communication works better.

Building Relationships is a Process

- ▲ People always remember how they feel after an encounter. They may not remember specifics of what you may say but they certainly remember how they felt after a WIC visit. I always try to remember that and try to avoid creating negative feelings about WIC. Maybe the education is not as great as it should be at the appointment but my next encounter may be more productive because my client has a positive feeling about her first visit. It's all about rapport!!! And this can be a slow process.

Harness the Power Within You!



YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD THE POWER
MY DEAR, YOU JUST HAD TO
LEARN IT FOR YOURSELF.
-GLINDA-
WIZARD OF OZ