

Individual visit with the father/non-birthing parent

within the Swedish national program for the well-baby clinics

Nina Thomsen, child psychologist
The unit for the well-baby clinics
Stockholm, Sweden



National model for early parental support

1. Home visit within one week after the delivery. Joint visit for both parents.
2. Joint visit for both parents at the well-baby clinic (2-4 weeks)
3. Individual visit for the mother (6-8 weeks post partum). Screening of new mothers' mental health with EPDS
4. Individual visit for the father/nonbirthing parent (3-5 months). Whooley or EPDS on indication.



The father/non birthing parent visit

- The child
- Parenting
- Family life
- Co-parenting
- Mental health



Co-parenting

Supporting co-parenting

- Fathers early engagement in the care of the child predicts high quality in co-parenting.
- Quality of coparenting affects infant and toddler socioemotional development



Family violence

Information about violence at the joint home visit
Routine questions at the individual visits

1. Have you ever experienced violence or threats from someone close to you? As adult or child?
In what sense does your experiences affect you today?
Do you think it affects your parenting or are you afraid it might do so in the future?
2. Are you currently afraid of your partner or someone close to you?
When? What happens? Are you being pushed? Beaten?
Controlled? Ridiculed? Threatened?
3. Is your child(ren your children) in any way exposed to violence or threats?
When? Tell me, what happens? In what way is your child exposed? Does domestic violence occur in your home?



Implementation

- Great variety in terms of the degree and pace of implementation of the model.
- Great need of education and supervision
- Negative attitude can be seen as an expression of uncertainty and lack of knowledge.



Implementation – need for reflection

- Different expectations of parents depending on gender or social background
- Fathers' participation is dependent on the commitment of the nurse.
- Nurses' commitment give results even though challenges remain.



What did work?

- A visit for all parents
- Including the visit in the model for parental support
- The conversation guide
- Continued education and supervision in small groups
- Child focus



Results

The father visit

- is perceived as natural and positive
- clearly conveys values and expectations of equal parenting
- confirms fathers as primary caregivers
- enable an increased understanding of the family that facilitates adequate support

Fathers participate to a higher extent in the well-baby program and receive more parental support.



Thank you for listening!

nina.thomsen@regionstockholm.se