

Sample Scripts for Providing Universal Education in Pediatric Health Care Settings

Confidentiality and Privacy:

Assessing privacy when scheduling the visit:

"We offer virtual visits. We know virtual visits are new to many families. We share with all families that a virtual visit will mean that the healthcare provider will talk with you and see your child through a video. Other people in your home may be able to see and hear the visit. We know virtual visits work for some parents, but others prefer an in-person visit for many reasons, such as wanting an in-person examination, not feeling safe speaking in their home, not having access to the Internet or a data plan, or for other reasons. All parents may choose an in-person visit for their child."

Assessing privacy when starting the visit:

"Are you in a private place right now?" If not: "If you would like, you can move to a private place, we can schedule an in-person visit, or I can schedule the visit at a later time."

Universal Education and Empowerment:

Broad script offering education and support for multiple stressors, including IPV:

"Being a parent is so hard and parents don't always get to hear how important they are, so I am thanking you for all you do for your children and family. Because people are more stressed than ever, we are sharing ideas about helping yourself and people you care about. Some types of stress that parents are feeling are not having enough food to eat, not having a stable place to live or getting behind on the rent, worries about having enough hot water or heat, not having childcare, feeling lonely or sad, or experiencing stress in a relationship. We want to you to know that we are here for you. We send over a resource sheet to all families, such as fresh food, who to call for help with utilities, numbers to call if you are stressed, lonely, or experiencing violence, and childcare. Before we end our visit, I want to take a pause and see if there is anything that this conversation has brought up for you that you would like to discuss. It is your choice if you want to share, and we provide resources to all families."

IPV-specific script:

“One of the things on the resource list we talk to everyone about is how more stress in our relationships may come with fighting or harm, and that can affect our health. There is free, confidential help available if you know someone who is being hurt in their relationship. Before we end our visit, I want to take a pause and see if there is anything that this conversation has brought up for you that you would like to discuss. It is your choice if you want to share, and we provide resources to all families.”

Support if a Parent Discloses IPV, with a Focus on Validation:

Validation:

“Thank you for sharing that, I am so sorry that this is happening. What you are telling me makes me worry about your safety and health. A lot of parents experience things like this.”

Dynamic assessment of privacy:

“Are you in a private place where we can talk more about this? At any point while we are talking, if you are no longer in a private location, you can say, ‘I am breaking up, I cannot hear you’ and then call me back.”

Connection to resources:

“I can connect you today with people who can help if that interests you. I can send you a list of resources, connect with someone right now if you like, or we can talk more about different resources, whatever you prefer.”

Converting to an in-person visit: “Based on what you are telling me, how would you feel about coming to the clinic to talk about this in safe, private location.”

Mandated reporting:

“I am so sorry for all you are going through. Because your child is being injured, I will need to file a report to Child Protective Services. I will support you through this process [if in a private location]. Can we call Child Protective Services together, right now, to talk about what you told me? If you would like, I can also connect you with a local organization who can help you come up with a safety plan.”

Note: Clinicians can tailor these scripts to their unique clinical settings.

Source: Ragavan MI, Garcia R, Berger RP, Miller E. Supporting Intimate Partner Violence Survivors and Their Children During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Pediatrics*. 2020;146(3):e20201276. doi:10.1542/peds.2020-1276