Touchpoints™ – A Framework for Connecting with Families

**Touchpoints - A Model of Care:**
- Developed by renowned pediatrician, T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. - Professor of Pediatrics Emeritus at Harvard Medical School
- A preventative approach to care services that is based on child development and building relationships within families
- Through a parent/provider alliance, the provider joins the parent in a system of care around the young child
  - The behavior of the child provides the language for collaboration
- The model does not stand alone; it should be integrated into current delivery systems
  - Change is in the process of care and the ongoing support provided to parents
- Can be a common language between different systems and providers
  - Continuity of care
- Allows for a complete understanding of the child not only from the physical and cognitive viewpoint, but also from the emotional and behavioral viewpoint

**Theory of Touchpoints:**
The approach is described as the interaction of two models of practice: the Relational and Developmental Models.
- **Relational Model** emphasizes the importance of the relationship between parent and practitioner/provider and the focus on the parent-child relationship as development unfolds for the parent, for the child, and for the family.
- **Developmental Model** recognizes that with the process of development in the child, there is a parallel process in the parent

**Goals of Touchpoints:**
- Form an alliance with the parent on behalf of their child
- The alliance is a framework for behavioral & developmental interventions in well-child care
- Essence of the alliance is in joining with the parents’ passion for their child
- Enhance parent confidence
- Foster optimal child and family development

**What are Touchpoints?**
- Predictable periods of vulnerability in the child and/or family
- Times and events in development, causing a change or regression in the child’s behavior
- Typically, this time of disorganization precedes a spurt in a particular line of development (and this development period is called a Touchpoint)
- These periods are accompanied by parental frustrations and self-doubt and can cause a disruption in the family
- These periods can provide opportunities for anticipatory guidance leading to change and healthy family functioning
- Touchpoints offers understanding and the value of disruptions and regressions as signs of healthy, positive growth

**When are Touchpoints?**
Periods of predictable developmental spurts and lulls in development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>4 months</th>
<th>15 months</th>
<th>7 months</th>
<th>18 months</th>
<th>9 months</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>12 months</th>
<th>3 years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prenatal (pregnancy)</td>
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<td>Newborn</td>
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References


Easterbrooks, A.M et al. (2007) Supporting parent-provider relationships in early care and education.