

Prioritizing Home Visitor Safety

Strategies and Tools to Support the Home Visiting Workforce

Presented by:

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August 2026



Meeting Tips



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Presenter Introductions



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HRSA Disclaimer

The views expressed in this presentation are solely the opinions of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Health Resources and Services Administration, nor does mention of the department or agency names imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Agenda

Time: 10 minutes

Title: Welcome and Overview

Time: 10 minutes

Title: Closing

Time 15 minutes

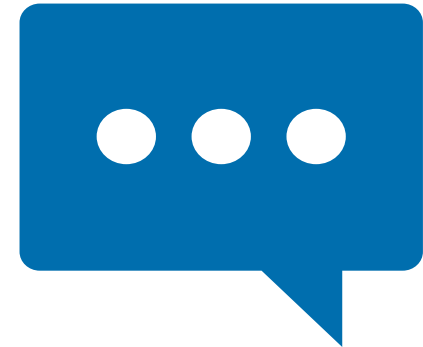
**Title: Strategies for Increasing
Home Visitor Safety**

Time 55 minutes

**Title: Home Visitor Safety Tools and
Resources for the Field**

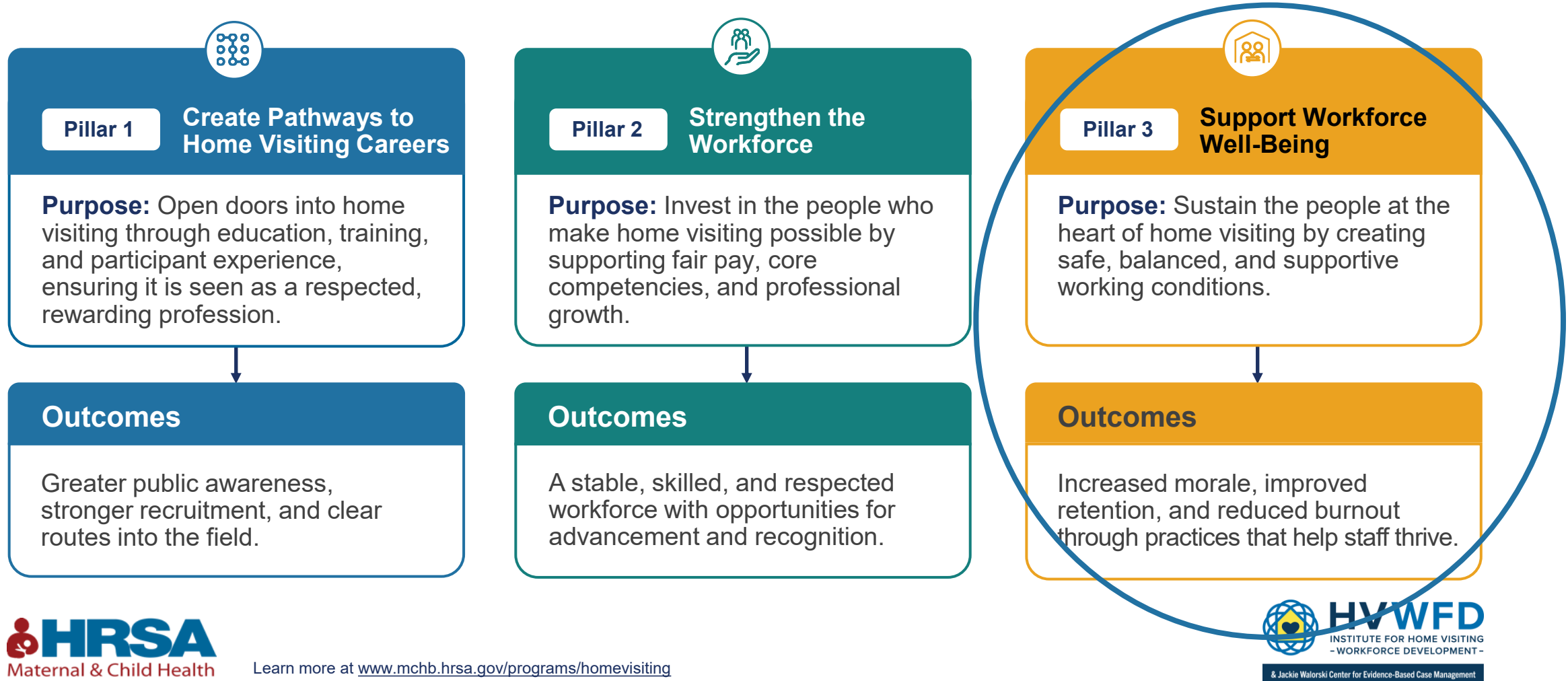
Opening Reflection

- Think about a place or situation where you feel "safe."



Home Visitor Safety Directly Aligns with the National Strategy for the Home Visiting Workforce

THREE PILLARS, ONE SHARED GOAL



Resource: Prioritizing Home Visitor Safety

- Describes why it is important to consider home visitor safety and the potential detrimental impacts that a lack of safety can have on home visitors and programs
- Shares concrete strategies that home visiting programs can implement to foster home visitor safety



Prioritizing Home Visitor Safety

Strategies to Support the Home Visiting Workforce

Research-to-Practice Brief | March 2026

Introduction

Home visitor safety is a complex issue that encompasses real or perceived threats of physical violence and experiences that may threaten psychological and emotional safety in the workplace.¹ Because home visitors enter the homes and communities of the families they serve, they typically lack control over their work environment. Individual home visitors may experience different levels of comfort—and perceptions of risk—based on their own characteristics and life experiences. Home visiting programs play an important role in ensuring safety for home visitors.

About This Brief

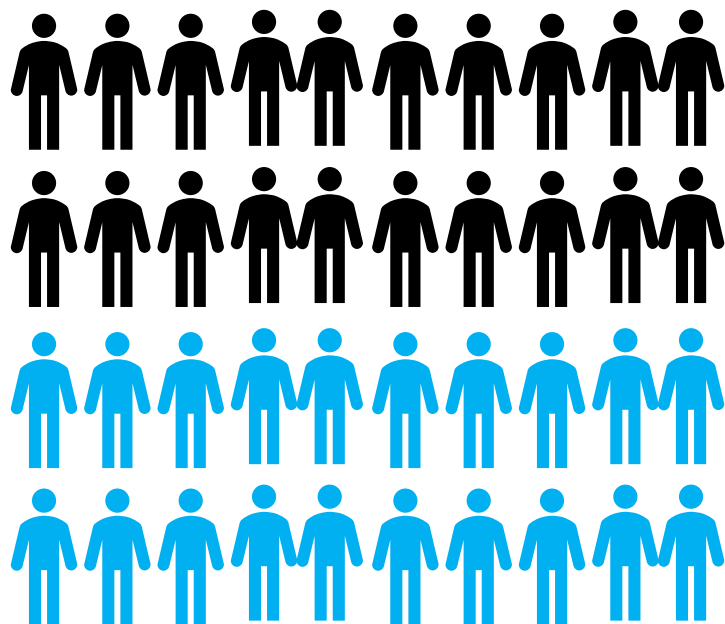
This brief discusses the potential effects of home visitors feeling unsafe at work and the strategies program leaders can use to create a culture of safety. It is primarily based upon a scan of existing literature and resources conducted by the [Institute for Home Visiting Workforce Development](#) (Workforce Institute). It also incorporates voices from the home visiting field gathered through Workforce Institute engagement activities.

Home Visitor Safety is a Shared Responsibility

- Shared commitment across home visitors, families, and organizations
- Supports well-being—not just preventing harm
- Includes physical *and* psychological safety
- Proactively reduces real and perceived risks
- Built through clear policies, supportive structures, and accountability



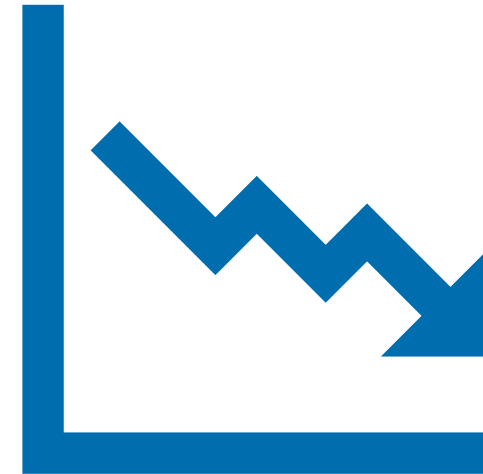
Many Home Visitors Do Not Feel Safe



- **Almost half** of Early Head Start home visitors reported feeling threats to their personal safety at least some of the time during home visits.¹

Potential Negative Outcomes of Lack of Safety

- Safety concerns at work negatively affect home visitor well-being.
- Feeling unsafe at work may lead to lower job satisfaction and retention among home visitors; it may also weaken family engagement.



Strategies for Increasing Home Visitor Safety

Types of Safety Strategies

Policies

Resources

Practices

Supports

Policy Strategies

- **Offer home visit flexibility,** by, for example, meeting with caregivers outside the home, visiting in pairs, and cancelling visits if presented with safety concerns.
- **Implement a reporting system** to document safety concerns.



Practice Strategies

- **Maintain updated information** on home visitor's personal information and home visiting schedule.
- **Discuss safety regularly** with staff.
- **Review intake information** to identify safety concerns (for example, history of intimate partner violence or substance misuse).
- **Partner with law enforcement** and other agencies that can provide information and/or training on situational awareness, self-defense, and other safety topics.



Resource Strategies

- **Implement the use of a “safety word”.**
- **Provide tangible resources** to home visitors, such as whistles, cell phones, agency-issued cars, emergency kits, emergency phone numbers, and name tags or badges.



Support Strategies

Offer home visitors the opportunity to process incidents where they felt they were at risk, such as:

- Individual reflective supervision sessions
- Organized peer support
- Employer–provided counseling or Employee Assistance Program benefits
- External mental health services



Pause and Reflect

Which of these strategy types (policy, resource, strategy, and support) are you most interested in using in your program and why?



Home Visitor Safety Tools and Resources for the Field

Home Visitor Safety Resources

- Prioritizing Home Visitor Safety: Strategies to Support the Home Visiting Workforce [Research-to-Practice Brief]
- [Home Visitor Safety: Self-Assessment](#) [Self-assessment]
- [Organizational Home Visiting Checklist](#) [Checklist]
- [Strengthening Home Visitor Safety: Applying Process Maps and Decision Trees](#) [Resource]



Organizational Home Visitor Safety Checklist

- Assesses policies and practices that support workforce safety
- Designed for leaders, managers, and home visiting teams
- Addresses physical and psychological safety
- Covers key areas: policies, visits, training, voice, and communication
- Helps identify strengths and gaps to guide improvement



Organizational Home Visitor Safety Checklist

CHECKLIST | August 2026

Introduction

Home visitor safety is a shared commitment that build visitors, families, and organizations alike. Ensuring safe environments that minimize real or perceived risks of ph While individual awareness is valuable, true safety emer establish clear policies, supportive structures, and strong checklist can help your organization identify and reinfor uphold a safe, confident, and well-supported home visit

This resource advances the National Strategy for the Ho a sustainable, skilled workforce by providing practical, e workforce well-being.



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In the table below, check off all that your organization currently does to support and promote home visitor physical and psychological safety and where it may not yet exist. Consider what action(s) might be needed to improve home visitor safety at your organization.

Safety Policies and Procedures	YES	NOT YET	ACTION REQUIRED
The organization has clear policies and procedures regarding staff physical safety.	☐	☐	
The organization has clear policies and procedures regarding staff psychological safety (e.g., zero-tolerance policies concerning sexual harassment and bullying, employee grievance procedures, policies related to confidentiality, safety protocols for conducting home visits).	☐	☐	
The organization has an emergency preparedness plan that is regularly reviewed and updated.	☐	☐	

Pause and Reset



1-Minute Eye Reset: Look Away to Refresh!

Feeling screen fatigue? Try the 20-20-20 rule



LOOK

Focus on something 20 feet away
(e.g., a window view, plant or artwork)

Do this for 20 seconds



MOVE

Roll your eyes gently
Clockwise → Counterclockwise (5 seconds each)



BLINK

Blink slowly 3-4 times
Moistens and relaxes your eyes

Tip: Try this once every 20-30 minutes while working!

Home Visitor Safety: Self-Assessment

- Encourages reflection on physical and psychological safety experiences
- Focuses on the individual, program or team, supervisor and organizational levels
- Identifies strengths and areas for additional support
- Includes definitions, examples, and guided reflection

What do we mean by home visitor psychological safety?

Psychological safety encompasses the organizational conditions and supervisory practices that create a work environment in which home visitors feel comfortable expressing concerns, asking questions, sharing ideas, and acknowledging mistakes without fear of judgment, punishment, or negative consequences.

In this context, it means that home visitors feel:

- Respected and supported by supervisors and colleagues;
- Safe to speak up about challenges they encounter as a home visitor;
- Able to seek help or feedback when they're uncertain or emotionally impacted; and
- Confident that their well-being matters as much as their performance.

This concept is especially important in home visiting practice emotionally demanding, unpredictable, and some Psychological safety empowers home visitors to reflect and learn continuously, strengthening their effectiveness provide high-quality services to families.

Home Visitor Psychological Safety Self-Assessment

Each statement relates to an aspect of home visitor psychological safety on the **past six months**, please indicate your level of agreement.

Individual Level	Strongly Disagree
I feel emotionally safe when interacting with families during home visits.	☐
I feel emotionally safe when interacting with my colleagues.	☐
I have access to the resources and support I need to handle unsafe or uncomfortable situations with families and colleagues.	☐
I feel comfortable seeking help (e.g., reflective supervision, accessing behavioral health supports) after a stressful home visit.	☐
I can recognize when I'm feeling emotionally overwhelmed or unsafe.	☐
I receive adequate training on de-escalation, boundary setting, and personal safety.	☐
I am aware of personal experiences that may heighten my response to certain situations, interactions, or environments during home visits.	☐

Reflection Questions

Use the space below to reflect on your responses to the psychological safety assessment.

1. What does "feeling psychologically safe" mean to you in your work?

2. What would a "psychologically safe" team meeting look like to you?

3. What agreements could be added to strengthen psychological safety in your team?

4. Reflect on situations, interactions, or behaviors that may affect your sense of psychological safety during home visits. What strategies, supports, or supervisory conversations would help you feel safe, supported, and able to do your best work?

5. What could help you or your team feel emotionally safer and more grounded in this work?

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— A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT —
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This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number 1U49CE001063, of the leading HRSA/HRSA grant 1U49CE001063 with non-governmental sources. The contents and those of the survey(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor are they endorsed by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Strengthening Home Visitor Safety: Applying Process Maps and Decision Trees

- Information on how process maps support home visitor safety
- Two example process maps on animals in the home and disclosure of intimate partner violence
- List of steps and resources for creating your own process map or decision tree as a team



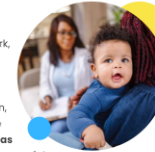
Strengthening Home Visitor Safety: Applying Process Maps and Decision Trees

RESOURCE | March 2026

Introduction

Home visitors carry out essential, relationship-driven work, entering different homes and community environments that can involve physical, emotional, and professional risks. Home visiting agencies play a critical role in ensuring that home visitors have the training, supervision, resources, and procedures needed to carry out their role effectively and confidently. **Process maps – also known as flowcharts, workflow diagrams, or decision trees – are powerful visual tools that can strengthen both the physical and psychological safety of home visitors by making the process easier to understand.**

This resource equips information on how to home visitor safety in type of process map: different courses of a teams and leadership strengthen both physical and psychological safety of home visitors by making the process easier to understand.



Example 1:

Animal Safety Decision Tree

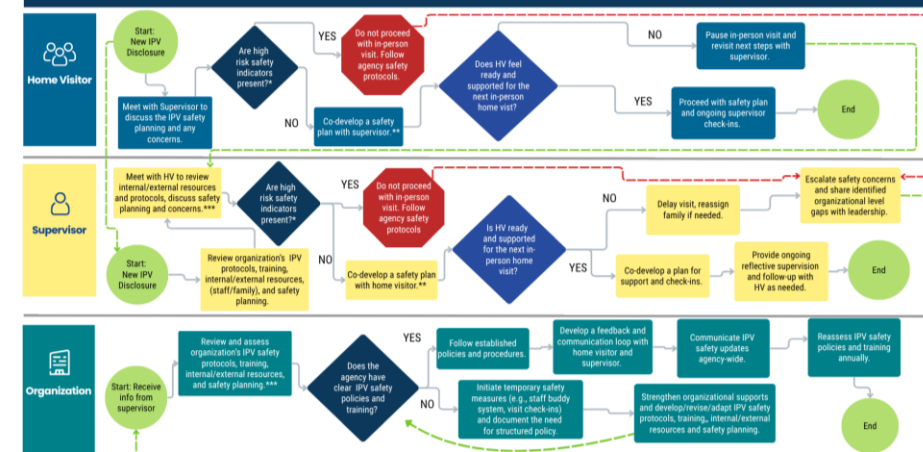
The Animal Safety Decision Tree is designed to help home visiting staff clarify the expectations, decision making process, considerations, and action steps to be taken to ensure safety when there is an animal present during a home visit.

Animal Safety Decision Tree	
Purpose	- Clarity - Shared understanding/expectations - Consistency of practice/safety measures - Create an established framework/guideline to adapt/grow from - Reduce anxiety, address/support potential secondary trauma related to animal attacks
Decision-making Process	- Determine your process for reviewing and approving safety-related decisions. - Follow your agency's safety policies and procedures. - Each home visitor has the responsibility and authority to determine if they need to cancel or reschedule a home visit due to concerns about animals. - If discomfort occurs, discuss with your supervisor before the next home visit with the family.

of situations that must be reported to supervisor for guidance.

4

Intimate Partner Violence Safety and Readiness Decision Tree



Closing and Wrap-Up

Turning Commitment into Action: Advancing Safety Together

- Home visitor safety is essential to workforce well-being and effective practice
- Safety includes both physical and psychological well-being
- It is a shared responsibility across leadership, supervisors, and home visitors
- Programs can strengthen safety through policies, practices, resources, and supports
- The safety tools offers practical ways for home visiting programs and staff to reflect, assess, and take action
- Small, intentional steps can strengthen safety across your program

Share one word or phrase:

- What is one thing you are taking away from today's presentation?



Continue the Conversation:

Visit the Institute for Home Visiting Workforce Development

Visit: hvworkforce.org

Explore resources to support your workforce

- Home visitor safety tools, resources and briefs
- Discussion guides for six workforce well-being topics including home visitor safety
- Short on-demand learning videos including home visitor safety





We appreciate your input!

Please complete
the post-webinar
survey to help
inform our future
content!

TA Webinar HV Safety



THANK YOU!

Questions?

Email us at Hvworkforce@edc.org

For more information,
check out **hvworkforce.org**



Disclaimer



This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Maternal and Child Health Bureau Cooperative Agreement (1 UU6MC50283-01-00) totaling \$4,499,239.00 with 0 percent financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](https://www.hrsa.gov).



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