

Environmental Health Assessment of the Home and Family Project Guidelines

Project Goal: Use the nursing process to promote health and prevent disease in a family by identifying and reducing sources of health risks in the home environment

Process:

1. **Assess** the home and family environment for potential environmental health hazards. This requires an *on-site* (“walk through”) *home assessment* as well as *interviews* of at least one adult in the household.

- Use the *Environmental Health Assessment Guide for the Home and Family* form for your walk-through assessment and interviews. (The guide is available at: www.envirn.umaryland.edu → assessment.) Note that the assessment guide incorporates observation items with interview questions (in bold). This should allow for a “natural” and relaxed experience, if you ask your interview questions as you do your walk-through.

You should practice this assessment activity at your own home, and with a neighbor or friend, prior to working with your clinical client.

- Using the “potential health effects” boxes beside the observation item or question on the assessment guide, identify the hazards in the home.

2. **Plan** an educational intervention with the family to promote health and prevent disease related to environmental hazards in the home.

- Using the websites in the “potential health effects” boxes or the *Home and Family Environmental Health Assessment Resource* (found at www.envirn.umaryland.edu → assessment), research each identified potential hazard. Remember: When using these websites, you are particularly interested in information that will address health promotion and disease prevention.
- Identify at least two government or community agencies that are involved in health promotion and disease prevention related to potential hazards that you have identified, and request public information brochures from them. It would be a good idea to start with your local health department and appropriate state agencies. They may be able to refer you to additional community resources.

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- Develop an educational resource packet for your client. This should include a written evaluation of potential hazards that you identified, as well as information about approaches to address those hazards. It should also include the brochures that you obtained from community agencies.

Note: It is important that your materials are written at the appropriate reading level for your clients. See E.H. Winslow (2001): Patient Education Materials. *AJN* 101(10):33-38 (available on line at www.nursingcenter.com).

3. **Implement** your education intervention by meeting with the family to review your assessment and discuss actions they can take to eliminate or minimize hazards. Encourage dialogue with the family regarding which hazards concern them the most, and their responses to prevention approaches. Help them to develop a written action plan (a “to do” list) with estimated completion dates.
4. **Evaluate** your intervention by meeting with the family again to determine the status of the action plan. If a meeting is not possible, this can be done by phone. Tell the family that you want to know how they’re doing with the plan, and offer assistance if they have run into problems with it.