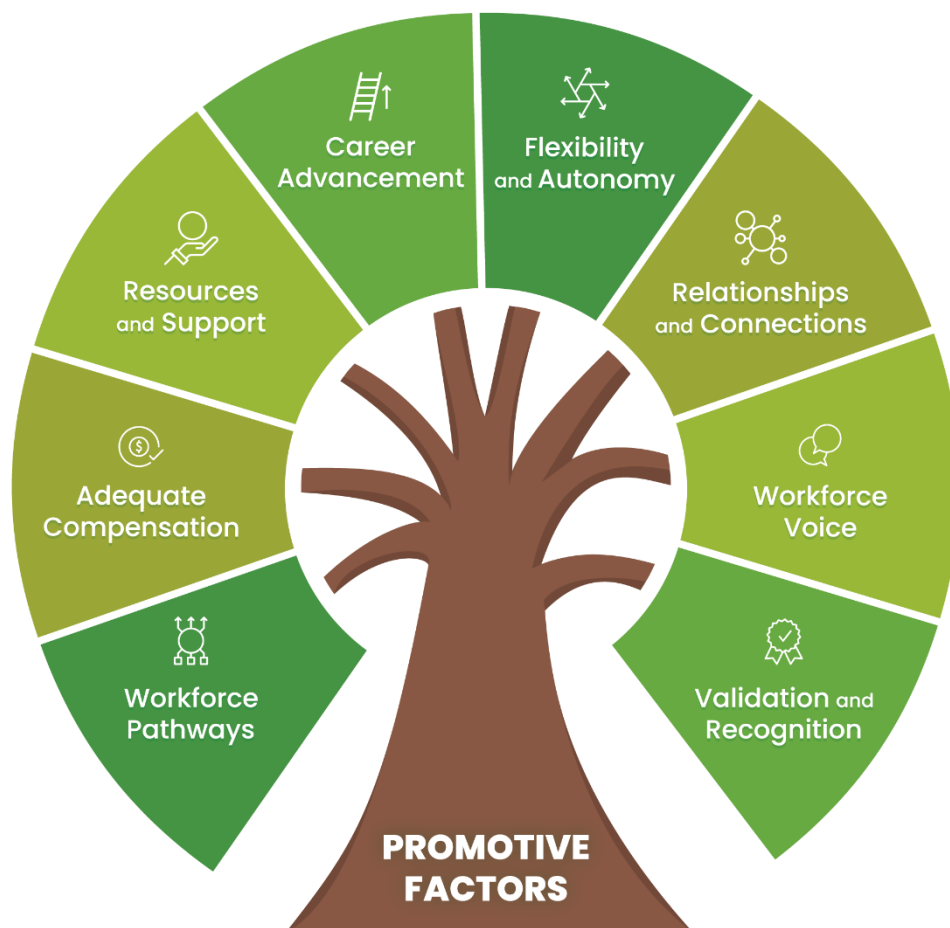


The Promotive Factors Framework: Foundations for a Thriving Home Visiting Workforce

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A stable, thriving home visiting workforce is the foundation of high-quality services for families and young children. Building a workforce takes more than individual skills; it takes a strong system of support. Strengthening that system is the goal of this guiding framework. James Bell Associates (we) developed a guiding framework informed by extensive literature and resource reviews; established conceptual models; and direct engagement with home visitors, supervisors, and program administrators. The framework identifies eight promotive factors to strengthen the workforce.



The eight promotive factors described below are drawn from a broad evidence base, including research on home visiting, related helping professions, and the wider field of organizational psychology. Although each home visitor's experience is unique, these factors share a demonstrated ability to mitigate the negative impacts of common job stressors and demands. We also recognize promotive factors as interacting with and influencing one another in dynamic ways.



Workforce pathways

Expanding a qualified home visiting workforce requires increasing public awareness of home visiting as a profession and having more accessible avenues to enter the field. Workforce pathways may originate from programs in high schools, community colleges, 2- and 4-year colleges,¹ and apprenticeships. Pathways should also exist for individuals with relevant lived experience or who work in adjacent fields, such as early care and education, community health, and social work.



Adequate compensation

Home visitors often draw on their comprehensive, multidisciplinary training and backgrounds to provide complex, individualized services to families with young children. Compensation, including adequate and fair pay and benefits in the form of health care, paid time off and sick leave, and holidays, should reflect the complexity of the work and the needed education and experience.



Resources and support

Home visitors need varied resources and support to perform their job responsibilities. Support can take the form of professional development,^{2,3,4} supervision,^{5,6,7,8} coaching,^{9,10} and mentoring. Tangible support may include computers or tablets, reliable and safe transportation, comprehensive and responsive curricula and materials for families, and material goods to meet family needs. Policies and procedures can help ensure home visitor safety, provide adequate time for travel and data reporting, and clarity about job roles and responsibilities.



Career advancement

The home visiting workforce is generally dissatisfied with the lack of opportunities for promotion.^{11,12,13,14} Sustaining a strong, stable workforce requires developing and implementing career ladders—and aligned compensation structures—to outline expectations and competencies required to advance or move laterally.



Flexibility and autonomy

A sense of work flexibility and autonomy is a common predictor of job satisfaction and retention.¹⁵ Home visitors need to feel a sense of adaptability and control to support individual families. Programs should be flexible about work hours, timing, and location. They should also empower home visitors to use their expertise and knowledge when making decisions about how to best support families.



Relationships and connections

As a helping profession, home visiting entails highly relational work. Relationships and connections with families, children, and communities are powerful workforce motivators and contribute to job satisfaction and retention. Program-level relationships and connections, including those with peers and supervisors, also provide support.



Workforce voice

Having a voice in program decision making is associated with higher levels of staff retention.^{16,17} Programs should ask the home visiting workforce to (1) identify needs and strengths and (2) design and implement support strategies to build workforce relevance and impact.



Validation and recognition

Home visiting is often misunderstood and undervalued. Enhancing public awareness and appreciation can support a stronger sense of validation and recognition. Representing home visitors' work in public spaces; asking them to tell their own stories through research, policy, and advocacy; and recognizing their daily work and accomplishments are opportunities to validate contributions and support job satisfaction and retention.

The framework situates home visitors within multiple levels of the home visiting system, that interact with one another in dynamic ways. Within each level, there is a range of factors, practices, strategies, policies, and procedures that collectively influence promotive factors.

Levels of the home visiting system are described below.

- **Children and families.** This level refers to the physical and relational contexts in which home visitors work with and support families—most commonly, in family homes. Other contexts may arise, especially during virtual visits.
- **Home visiting program.** This level includes the agencies and local home visiting programs employing home visitors.
- **Community.** This level spans the community contexts and characteristics experienced by home visitors and by families.
- **Federal, tribal, state, and model.** This level refers to guidelines, policies, funding, requirements, and support at the federal, tribal, and state levels that affect the home visiting workforce.

Finally, we recognize individual-level factors and characteristics as influencing how each home visitor perceives and values promotive factors, influencing their impact. Individual worker attributes (e.g., psychological and personal resources and approaches to self-evaluation) affect how workers benefit from promotive factors. For example, a home visitor in a single income household may prioritize adequate and fair compensation more than one from a dual income household. Additionally, individual home visitor characteristics influence the type, nature, and number of promotive factors they receive.

Each of the eight promotive factors is supported by a growing body of practices and policies that programs and systems can put into action. We work alongside home visiting programs to assess workforce conditions and identify priority areas for strengthening; translate promotive factors into concrete program practices; and design and evaluate workforce strategies grounded in evidence.

If this resonates with work you are doing or hope to do, we welcome a conversation. Reach out to us at buildhvworkforce@jbassoc.com

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