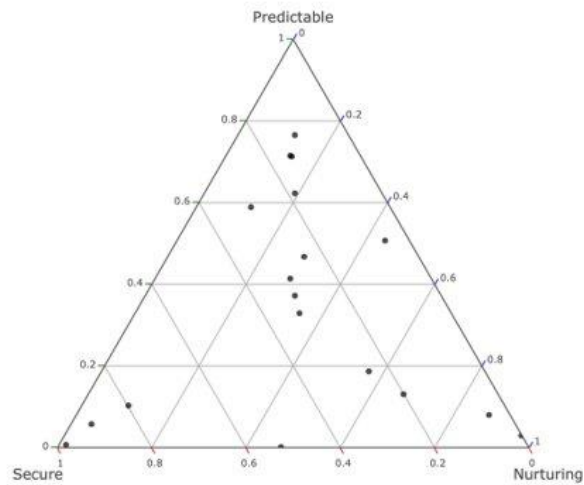
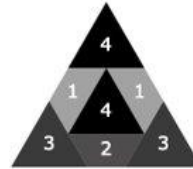


Maternal Child Health Domain: Adolescent Health – 26 Stories

Homelife_Pos

The family's homelife felt...

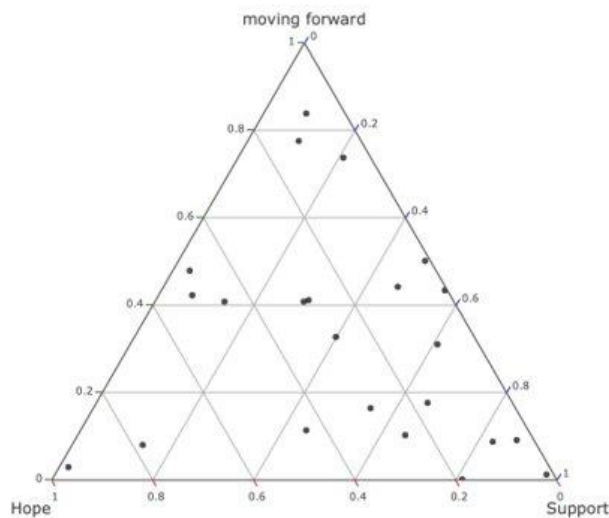
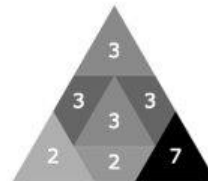
- Secure
- Predictable
- Nurturing



Things got tough

In the experience you shared, when things got tough, what helped the family get through?

- Hope for the future
- Gritting my teeth and moving forward
- Support from others



Struggling alone (519)

I felt like our family was just surviving when my son was struggling with mental health issues. I felt like every day was a fight to ensure he had the services he needed. I wanted desperately for us to be safe, secure and happy but it felt like all the systems were stacked against us. He qualified for inpatient hospitalization but there were no beds available. He needed attendant care and case management but there weren't enough workers to provide the services. He still needed to go to school but the school would call the police on him. I felt so alone and just wanted my child to be safe.

Just Surviving AND Thriving (528)

Recently, we have felt like we are just surviving and aware that we are thriving at the same time. My husband changed careers and our family moved 100 miles away. Our adult daughters had lived in the same home for 23 years. Our two youngest (adopted) children (14 and 16) had lived in the same place with the same family for 10 years, and both of them were extremely unsettled with having to move. It triggered previous trauma, attachment issues and grief of losing friends, home and church that had been stable for them. Aggression, anger, discouragement increased before and after the move. I was re-entering cancer treatment. We all felt in over our heads. And yet, churches, counselors, family on both ends were supportive. The increased support in our new community with youth group, family members, my husband's work environment, increased resources through the cancer center and mental health center all surrounded us with the support needed to respond to the chaos and crises we faced. It still feels like we're barely keeping our heads above water some days, and yet each week we're grateful for resources available, connections made with extended family, youth group sponsors who tell us how grateful they are to have our kids in youth group, counselors and respite, parent support groups, cancer support, wonderful teachers and administrators, siblings, grandparents, and good friends. Sometimes we can experience both and realize how resilient we can be with needed support.

Suicide in my building (626)

Last week a teenager in my building committed suicide and it's affecting my kids and people around us in the building. We feel bad for the family and it makes me feel different about life. I wish more people would reach out if life gets that bad.

Difficulty of single parenthood (2363)

I am the single mother of one son, his father left when he was a baby so I was raising him alone. To help make ends meet I had to get a second job when he was about 13, leaving him home on his own a good deal of the time. My son started drinking and using marijuana. At one point I had to relinquish custody to the state and he was sent to a group home by the court. He was always a really intelligent person, athletic, drugs and alcohol took so much away in his life. After he came home from the group home he did not get in trouble with the law again until he was an adult but alcohol, marijuana, and meth were a constant. He did go to prison once, he did get an autoimmune disease that will be with him for the rest of his life. He left the town we live in and that was how he managed to stop using meth. He is doing well now and involved in an artistic community. I guess the thing I feel and think most in this story is how I could have done something different to intervene in his substance use. When he started to get in trouble friends and parents who had liked him pushed him away instead of trying to help. I also think the government needs to be able to view addiction as an illness and not a crime.

I was 16 taking care of home. (745)

Growing up as a kid my family had it hard. There were days where our next meal was going to come from. My father struggled hard to maintain the bills as well as keep us fed. He wasn't eligible to get any food assistance because they said he made too much. So as soon as I turned 16 I got a job and kept food on the table. We definitely had to push through and keep the faith that one day we were going to make it out.

Gang Involved Son (861)

Our oldest son was involved in gangs and drugs. He was arrested numerous times as a juvenile. It weighed heavily on the other three children and us.

Help for self harm (862)

I worked with a family who had a family member that was in and out of inpatient psychiatric care with a diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder. When I first met with the family, the teenager, whom was diagnosed with the disorder, shared that she continually felt that there was no therapy that was helping with her self-harm tendencies; therefore, the family was usually in turmoil trying to help this family member. After about a year of working with her when she would land in the inpatient psychiatric unit, the agency I worked for started a Dialectical Behavioral Therapy modality. This teenager was put into this intensive outpatient therapy. After about a year of this intensive treatment, this teenager and this family are thriving. The teenager has not self-harmed and is going to school on a consistent basis, with passing grades.

The Struggle (2765)

From the time I was a Sophomore in high school until the time I was a Senior in College, my mother did not have a job. My mother took off of work to be with me as my Sophomore year is when I got my case for sexual abuse. My brother and I worked through high school to provide for our Mother and two younger sisters. This was a huge change in lifestyle due to my Mother always holding a good paying job. We had to budget her savings and the money me and my brother brought in from working after school. The struggle has been continuing as they now live on Section 8 and are on food stamps. I separated myself while going through college and I am now at a point in my life where I can be that helping hand we needed growing up. The struggle is never ending but joy comes in the morning.

RN- FQHC for over 5 years (1045)

A Mother and her 16 year old came in and the daughter was requesting to get the HPV shot but the Mother would not allow her to get it. The Mom expressed that it was not safe. The daughter expressed her concerns and that she didn't want to get sick later in life.

Up Front and Personal (1055)

Just 'surviving' mode when my nephew was fighting meningococcal infection. He was a college student. He did survive. He lost both legs and one arm. He is a 'survivor'. He was able to later finish up college. Is a aero engineer working in Wichita. At the time of his infection - meningococcal vaccines were not routinely required for the college freshmen. Due to this very personal family experience - I'm a promoter of the vaccine for college freshmen and pleased that it is a requirement for college campuses now.

Changed my mind (1089)

I have been a nurse for over 20 years. I have a son that I have thought very long and hard about immunizing with the HPV vaccine. I had heard and researched many places on the HPV vaccine, and found myself having much anxiety, although I would advocate with my physicians to provide the vaccine to our patients. I still was not sure that I wanted him to have it. I have learned many valuable things at this conference that have eased my mind, and have now decided to go home and begin my 15 years old sons series of 3 vaccines, to ensure I have protected him. Thank you for educating me, and saving my son.

US vaccines rock! (2336)

My family has welcomed a teen in to our home from Cameroon. It is wonderful to be able to update his vaccinations and to know that when and if he travels back to his home country he will be vaccinated fully against preventable diseases.

Overcoming Barriers (2163)

I was caring for a 13-year-old whose mother asked him if he wanted the HPV vaccine and left it up to him. He looked at me and said "I don't know." I'm grateful he was willing to listen to why he should get it and allowed me to educate and vaccinate him. At the end of the visit I was able to help schedule her daughter who wasn't present (and older than the son) to come start her HPV series. It really helped me to see how important educating adolescents/teen/young adults is not just the parents. – One nurse's experience

VFC made it possible. (2663)

We recently had a patient who brought her 13 year old son in for his 11 year old shots and wanted the HPV vaccination as well. They did not have insurance and money was extremely tight for them at the time. She offered to make payments, and asked if we could see if there were any funds left on her childsupport card. We were able to give them VFC vaccines and waive the administration fees due to a hardship. The mother broke down into tears in the waiting room after we told her she will not have a bill for today's services. She stated that she had prolonged bringing her son in on time for his vaccinations because she knew she would not be able to afford the fees.

HPV vaccine (2661)

I have not received the HPV vaccine yet because I was not sexually active and did not want a vaccine I didn't need. I now am at the age that I am thinking of engaging in sexual activities and I will talk to my physician about the HPV vaccines and if it is right for me. I am thankful that the vaccine exists, because I do not want to get diseases that could be easily prevented.

Educating (2157)

A teen came in for his college Menactra and I educated him on the Men.B vaccine and he chose to get both. The parent thanked me for explaining the vaccine to them.

Pressure to get a shot (1142)

32 years ago I had a friend die from meningitis. Because of that, when my son was 19, I learned there was a 2nd dose recommendation for meningitis vaccination. He was a freshman in college at the time. It took me 5 months of reminding before he finally received his 2nd dose. I would not let him take his car back up to college until he was vaccinated. So he did.

My Sister (1160)

My sister is 20 years old, she came from a stable family until our father was diagnosed with dementia when she was 10 years old, he then passed away 5 years later. When attempting to get grief services here in Wichita at a well known establishment after my father's diagnosis, my family was told that to qualify the individual must have passed away, therefore my family had little support during this process and my siblings suffered terribly. My sister has been diagnosed with several mental health disorders and is a recovering substance abuser. She graduated from high school but due to the substance use and mental health, she was unable to continue to further her education. She has been unable to maintain employment which has kept her from qualifying for any kind of insurance. She has been without insurance for over a year now and therefore has not been receiving therapy, struggles to purchase her meds; however, has continued to stay sober. She also has a thyroid disorder that is not being monitored regularly due to lack of medical care. Her anxiety and other mental health disorders limits her ability to work full time, so she gains part time work as she is able, although she is still prone to leaving those jobs due to these issues. She currently lives in Kingman, where employment options are slim and due to lack of insurance is not taking care of her medical and mental health which is limiting her ability to thrive. My mother has limited income from Social Security (survivors benefits) but is not employed due to taking care of my younger brother who is still in high school, this has disqualified her from receiving Medicaid as she doesn't work; although my brother also has mental health concerns that have limited her ability to work outside of the home. She is unable to afford private insurance, therefore her medical needs are being neglected. She has recently been diagnosed with Diabetes, something that has probably been going on for quite some time and would have been discovered sooner if she had insurance. Due to limited income, she helps my sister purchase her prescriptions as she is able but is not always able to afford to help.

Thankful for New Vaccines and Physician Recommendation (1167)

When my daughter was living in the dorm and KU, the meningococcal vaccine was new. She is a type one diabetic. Upon consulting our endocrinologist, he suggested that she receive the MCV vaccine, even though it was not required by the school and was a pretty new vaccine. I was relieved that she was able to receive this and our insurance did cover the vaccine.

Physician Said the HPV Vaccine Wasn't Necessary (1540)

When I was a preteen, I went to the doctor with my mom for a routine check-up and vaccines. I think my doctor asked me and my mom if I wanted the HPV vaccine. As I planned to wait until marriage to have sex, neither my mom or I thought it was necessary. My doctor also didn't think it was necessary and didn't particularly recommend it. As a young, married adult, who now has more knowledge of the cancer-preventing benefits of the HPV vaccine, I now plan to get the vaccine, but I just haven't gone into the clinic yet.

We were up, then down, now headed back up (1617)

When our boys were young, we were all happy & healthy. Life was going very well; we were thriving. They were introduced to weed by a cousin when they were 14-15 years old & they loved it. Then meth, then crime. We reacted by shielding them from consequences, thus they did not learn the down side of rotten choices. Our family was in turmoil; we were barely surviving. Now we are raising two little (3 & 4) grandkids and are experiencing tremendous joy; we are again thriving.

16 and pregnant (2347)

When my grandson was born my daughter was 16. Being pregnant at 16 caused many family issues and troubles to graduate high school. He was 6 weeks premature and had to be in the hospital for two months before he was big enough to go home. This put tremendous strain on everyone in the family and beyond. Transportation was a huge issue. 16 years old. No car. For the first two years we had a lot of separation between all of the families. Time helped heal the emotions and now we have 4 generations living together supporting one another.

Surviving (1824)

Teenager in family of 4 suffering from mental health issues

Cancer-preventable vaccines (1844)

I was still living at home with my mom, stepdad, and four younger siblings when I was 20, and attending community college. My mom was always the type that treated sex as taboo. We didn't talk about it in my family other than if you do it, you're a slut. Anyway, I was doing it and she took me to get pap tests as recommended for my age and history. When I was 20 I received results that required further testing. After more tests, it was revealed that I had HPV and precancerous cells. I was scared and devastated as the doctor told me in front of my mom that I had a STI and that I'd have to undergo a procedure called LEEP. The cells were removed with an electric wire and it was incredibly painful. I thought I would pass out afterwards. I am fortunate to not have had any issues since that. It was definitely a lesson in how I will educate and treat my children when it comes to sex, STIs, and the HPV vaccine. I don't think the vaccine was available when I was a preteen and I would encourage everyone to get it now that it is. Why wouldn't you do something to prevent cancer?
CANCER.

Suicidal surviving (1880)

The time when my son was having suicidal thoughts, we as a family were surviving one day at the time, spending time together, me “sleeping by his side” just to make sure he wont wake up and try to hurt his self. Making appointments, calling at schools, enroll him in all types of extra activities, basketball, music, etc.

Difficult Youth (491)

A 15 year old boy was brought to our program by his father asking for help. The boy had an ankle monitor for committing a crime and was difficult to handle at home. Our program started him volunteering in the community and provided access to relationships with others who were positive male role models. The boy accepted our help and the family is now doing much better.