

ADVANCED LEADER TRAINING

Emotional Changes and Challenges

In order to promote leader engagement further, PEPS provides additional training and support methods for our wonderful leaders.

Our event on the topic of Emotional Changes and Challenges was held on May 14th, 2020, 5-7 pm. Keeping in mind the current circumstances, we held this event virtually. Also based on last year's feedback we had incorporated a modified structure for this training. The first hour was speaker led information and discussion following which the Leaders were distributed into Break out rooms, to practice the three facilitation aspects of introducing the topic, transitioning to and from the video, as well as closing the discussion.

Event Summary:

We had about 25 attendees, spanning leaders who have led more than 25 groups, 5-10 groups, 1-5 groups as well as Brand new Leaders. Some PEPS speakers also attended along with some staff members.

Mia Edidin from Perinatal Support Washington was the expert speaker for this event. She gave a very comprehensive presentation about the topic, explaining its relevance to new parents, as well as its significance in current times. She explained how these range of overlapping emotions experienced by parents are coming from circumstances and systems beyond their control. She addressed how Leaders can create a safe space, acknowledge the feelings shared, and steer parents away from agonizing over any feeling of guilt and see themselves as successful.

Another aspect discussed was the sentiments of overwhelm that are currently compounded by the COVID instigated isolation and how leaders can validate the significance on these emotions while normalizing them. Leaders must always remember that they do not have to be experts in this field and hence they must keep the conversation focused on emotions and experiences and not on symptoms.

Facilitation aspects like introducing the topic, prompting conversation by asking questions and giving examples, presenting the video along with its positives and drawbacks, encouraging parents to speak about their needs, and viewing this topic as an opportunity to express all emotions, were discussed. Use the mantra "The more you share the more you get"

Leading this topic can be even more challenging during these times when meetings are virtual. It is important for facilitators to be even more active in their listening, be more attentive, make good use of facial expressions and exaggerate their emotions on screen.

Thank you to all the Leaders for sharing the wealth of knowledge that they have gathered through their PEPS experience and making this a rich discussion.

Event Survey Results:

- *The event was well-received. When asked about their favorite aspect of the event, group leaders appreciated the informative slides, learning about the specific language describing feelings, and Mia's expert advice overall.*
- *Participants liked the three-level approach that was discussed for facilitating this topic. They loved the reminder to validate and offer perspective.*
- *Overall attendees thought that the event was relevant, informative, engaging and welcomed diverse perspectives.*
- *Leaders thought that this training was delivered effectively in the virtual setting and suggested using more instructions for breakout rooms.*