Dear Medical Student:

Welcome to the Operation House Call Program. This program is offered in a partnership between The Arc of Massachusetts and Boston University Medical School. It is designed to support doctors in building confidence, interest, and sensitivity in their work with individuals with developmental challenges and their families.

To complete therequirements for Operation House Call you are expected to:

* **Attend class. Visit the OHC website. Do readings, check resources and videos.**
* **Contact your assigned family *early the first week of the rotation* to schedule your 2 hour home visit.**
* **Deliver your student evaluation form to your family during your visit.**
* **Post the date of your home visit in your Block’s Chat Room on the OHC website and contribute a comment on your experience.**

***Special note****:* ***Please contact your host family as soon as possible, this week, to schedule your home visit.***The visit time should be at a time that is convenient to your host family. If there are difficulties you cannot resolve, contact OHC staff ASAP (*contact information below*). Remember these are busy families who have volunteered their personal time to help you learn. Your respect and professional behavior will be appreciated, and is expected by your medical supervisors*.*

**Your home visit**: During class you and a partner are given your home visit assignment. This gives you the opportunity to meet an individual with a disability and their family during a time uncomplicated by the need for acute care. A visit lasts two hours.

During your home visit you are expected to interact, to ask questions, to listen and observe. You are not required to do any personal care or to advise the family on medical issues. Reading the student evaluation form before your visit will help you understand basic expectations about your visit. Visiting the OHC website will further prepare you for your time with your family.

**The OHC Chat Room**: Please use the OHC Chat Room to share your observations and your home visit learning with your peers. You are encouraged to read about your classmates’ visits and support their learning, and your OHC Program Coordinator will read and respond to your comments there. The OHC team and Dr Rachel Thompson will have access to your Block’s Forum, but our volunteer families do not access it in order to provide privacy for our students.

Remember the families volunteer to be part of this program; they look forward to meeting you. So relax, have fun and enjoy!

Maura Sullivan, BUSM OHC Parent Instructor & OHC Program Director

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Cell: 781.530.8274

**Operation House Call Learning Objectives:**

1. Model person first behavior, and understand person first thinking and language.

2. Review supportive ways to deliver unexpected or difficult news to parents.

3. Practice building rapport in a home visit to a family who has a child with intellectual/developmental disability.

4. Monitor personal or subjective bias that might affect an evaluation or treatment of a child with IDD.

5. Demonstrate sensitivity to sibling and family issues during the family visit or in class discussion.

6. Increase awareness of resources available to families, including a broad overview of public education support.

***BUSM Pediatric Clerkship supervisors*** ***would like to point out relevant Pediatric Third-year Clerkship Learning Objectives:***

**Objective #2. Child Growth & Development:**

a.) Outline the differential diagnosis and the initial evaluation of an infant or child with failure to thrive, and/or

b) Develop the ability to conduct developmental screening of children and an approach to interacting with children with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

**OHC Website Resource and Home Visit Documentation:**

        Go to [www.operationhousecall.com](http://www.operationhousecall.com/)    NOTE: This is a separate website from the BUSM Blackboard 8 website.  You will have access to this OHC website for the full academic year.

        Log in using your **full BU email address** and the password “Pediatrics”.

        Review class readings and resources on the Operation House Call website prior to your home visit.

      Post your home visit date with comments. How to do this: Go to the OHC website.  Click on your pediatric clerkship block Forum.  The Password for your Block’s Forum: …………..

Posting your completed visit date and contributing your individual comments and learning is required to complete pediatrics.  Your BUSM Clerkship supervisor and the OHC Team will have access and will note your participation. Maura will respond to your class comments by the end of your rotation. Note: the OHC volunteer families do not have access to this forum to protect student privacy.

**Be in touch with Maura Sullivan, OHC Parent Instructor ASAP to address any difficulties in meeting the OHC expectations.**  [sullivan@arcmass.org](mailto:sullivan@arcmass.org) (preferred) or cell: If a home visit is impossible she will work out an alternative arrangement *without which you will face a possible incomplete for the pediatric rotation.*

**OHC Home Visit: Sample questions to ask parents/families\***

***\*These are questions to inspire your own. Playing and talking with all the children during your home visit is encouraged. Enjoy your visit, listen, be curious, and learn.\****

How did you learn of your child’s diagnosis?

What help or advice did you receive at the time?

How did your physician respond to your thoughts and feelings at the time?

Can you tell me something about your family’s response to the news?

Has your doctor helped you learn about what to prepare for? Who has helped you understand these issues?

How has your physician addressed the needs of others in your family?

Who do you turn to most often for help or advice regarding the needs of your child?

Who in the family is the primary care giver? Are siblings expected to give care in any way?

Do you feel comfortable talking with your doctor about your concerns for any of your children?

What does your doctor do to establish a good working relationship together?

What helps a visit to the doctor go smoothly?

Do you have a favorite doctor, and why?

What does your family do for fun?

What does your child/your children enjoy doing most?

Can you tell me about how your children get along with each other?

Can you tell me about friendships? (school, special therapies, hobbies, sports)

Do you have the amount of support that you need?

How has your experience affected your marriage? Adult relationships?

Are there positive or negative aspects that stand out?

How has the experience of your family changed you?

What is a good day in your household?

What makes a day difficult in your household?

**Note to students**: Remember to practice asking questions and to listen to every member of the household. This includes the person who has intellectual/developmental special needs. Ask your host family to teach you about how to learn this if you feel you need help learning, most especially if communication is challenging, or their loved one is nonverbal. That is fine.

Finally: these are only questions to inspire your own. Thinking about them beforehand will help you have a better learning experience, as will going over the six Operation House Call learning objectives, and reviewing material on the Operation House Call website. Playing and talking with everyone in the family is encouraged. Work at connecting and learning from families. They have a lot to share.