

Silberman School of Social Work



**Child Welfare Practice I**

**Session Four**

# Agenda for Today's Session

## UNIT 1: BUILDING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

### Engagement

#### Learning Outcomes: (Competency 7)

Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment

#### You were supposed to Read or Listen to:

Chapter 2 of Lukas Book

Read: <https://socialworkhaven.com/social-work-ecomaps/>

Listen: <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/731/what-lies-beneath>

# Lukas Chapter 2 Looking, Listening, Feeling; Mental Status Exam

What have you observed?

Mental Status Exam is your observations:

Appearance – look & behave

Speech – How do they speak?

Emotions – mood, affect

Thought Process and Content – how do they think?

Sensory Perceptions – Any illusions or hallucinations?

Mental Capacities – Oriented x 3; time, place, person

Attitude Toward the Interviewer – How do they interact with you

# Lukas Chapter 2 Looking, Listening, Feeling; Mental Status Exam con't

Please review and review pp. 29-31

Outline for a Mental Status Exam

Very important Reading and Very Important for Your  
Practice

# What is an Eco-Map in Social Work

An **ecological map** or **ecomap** is a diagram showing the social and personal relationships of an individual.

It gives a *visual* representation of the key relationships a child or an individual has based on a strength based and person-centered perspective.

Ann Hartman developed these ecological maps (or ecomaps) in 1975 to depict the ecological system that encompasses a family or individual (Hartman, 1995).

# What is an Eco-Map in Social Work

Professor Anne Hartman wrote:

*“The ecomap is a simple paper and pencil simulation that maps in a dynamic way the ecological system is represented. Included in the map are the major systems that are part of the family’s life. It pictures the important nurturant or conflict–laden connections between the family and the world. It shows the flow of resources, or the lacks of deprivations”.*

# What is an Eco-Map of Family

Creating an ecomap is a graphic and useful way of identifying all the systems at play in the family's life.

The ecomaps are an assessment tool and gives social workers or other professionals such as nurses a detailed picture of:

dynamics within a family

formal, informal and immediate support available

each individual family members' connections to their formal system (community resources; example social worker, therapist, school)

each individual family members' connections to informal support system

quality and nature of those relationships

areas of deprivation where resources may need to be put in place or strengthened;

and areas of service duplication.

# How Do You Create a Family Eco-Map

When creating a family ecomap, you look at the sources of support.

Informal support or connections (mother, father, step, foster/adopted family, friends, grandparents) and formal (assigned to work with us, we often pay them to work with us examples, doctors, intervention programs, day-care or school)

Between the formal and informal support, there are institutions we choose to be involved with examples are the workplace, clubs, faith organizations, charity and religious organizations.

When we draw an ecomap, we look at these realms of life to find support for the parent or child.

You start by putting the person in the middle of the circle and draw circles around them.

You ask important questions such as who is important in the person's life. Then where does she/he spend most of her time example school.



# How Do You Create a Family Eco-Map

What group activities or memberships do you belong to (example activist, goes to church)

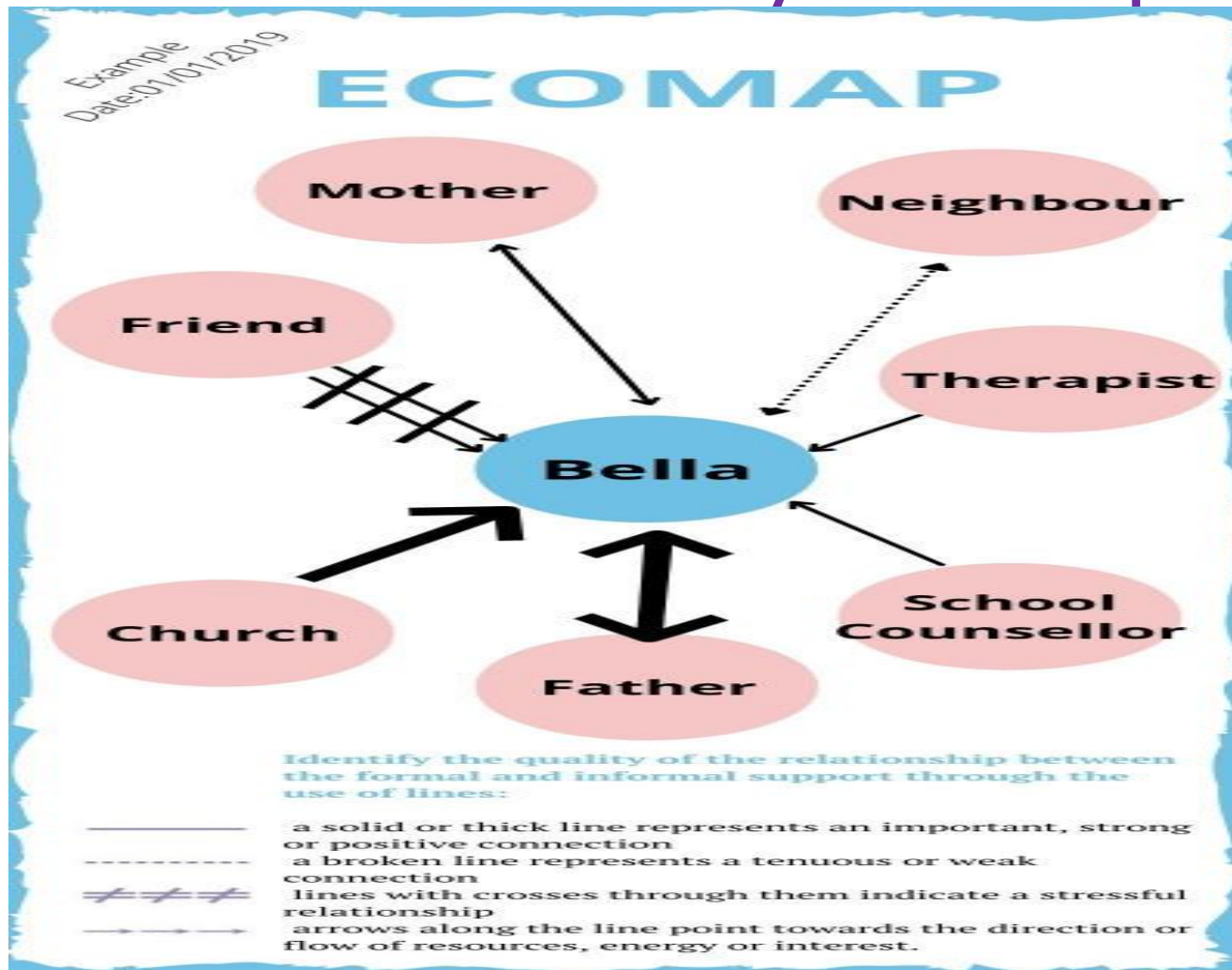
Is there anyone missing, are there any other groups or anyone else she spends time with.

Then you discuss how the person relates to everyone and their connections.

Ask questions to determine whether the relationship is strong, reliable or pebbly?

You then explore the quality of the relationships—are they strong, weak, one sided or reciprocal, weak or strenuous.

# Bella's Family Eco-Map



## Example of Eco-Map

Bella is in the middle of the circle and has a thick line pointing to her parents and arrows pointing both sides.

This means that she receives love from her parents and gives back love (this is reciprocal). Her relationship with her father is stronger.

A straight line between her and the school counsellor and therapist show she receives energy from both of them.

However, if she argues a lot with her friend, stripes can be put in the line to show it is a strenuous relationship.

A dashed line—this could indicate a relationship with a neighbor.

## Example of Eco-Map con't

The dashed line means the relationship is significant and not active but gives her peace of mind to have someone to go to in case of a fire or other pressing things.

For social work professionals, it is important that we see a balance.

If the individual gives a lot of energy and does not receive much back, there is no balance and it becomes draining and vice versa.

It is important to think about the impact such imbalance could have on the individual or relationships.

# What is the importance of family ecomaps?

Family ecomaps are important because it;

1. Gives an excellent overview of the dynamics of a someone's relationships.
2. Shows what groups they belong to.
3. What support they have within each group.
4. Where there is a possible to grow support network.
5. Meaningful dialogue between the social worker, parent or child.
6. Making an ecomap together with a family will give you an understanding of a family's social environment and evaluate connections together.

Remember to date the ecomap activity because over time relationships will change.

## How Do You Draw An Ecomap?

- When starting an ecomap, it is important to remind the family or person that they do not have to discuss anything they don't want to discuss.
- You can explain that you want to learn more about the family in order to help you work on what will benefit them the most.
- So, for example, you can say *“I would like to know more about your family, the support system you may already have or what support I can connect you to in the community to help you meet the outcome you set”*.
- Have basic materials such as papers, pencils, ecomap key or legend available.
- The first step is to draw the service user or client in a large circle in the middle.
- Next step is to draw smaller circles around the service user or client.

## How Do You Draw An Ecomap?

- These circles will represent both informal and formal support.
- Write the name of each individual or group of people in the circle.
- The last step is to have a discussion using open-ended questions to find out the type of connections between the service user or client and each of the units in the smaller circles around them.
- Using the legend, you can show a visual representation of the strength of each connection.
- Arrows can show the flow of energy.
- For example, a healthy relationship between child and father is likely to be represented by an arrowhead on both ends, showing the reciprocity of the relationship, while one-sided relationships would have an arrowhead pointing in only one direction.

## Questions for Ecomap Development?

Ecomap interview questions should always be in the form of open – ended questions. Examples include;

Who is important in your life?

Who do you spend most time with?

What groups, activities or memberships do you hold or belong to?

Who do you talk to when you're there?

What is your source of income?

Who is your emergency contact?

Do you join any groups?

Are there any clubs or places you visit during the week?

Is anyone missing?



## You can ask questions to determine what informal support is available.

1. Who lives in the home with you and your child?
2. Are there any siblings in the home?
3. If there are siblings, how old are they?
4. Do you have a family that lives close by?
5. Are your parents alive and together?
6. Do you have any siblings?
7. Who will you go to if you wanted to share some good news about your children?
8. If you had bad news, who will you share this with?
9. Tell me about your neighbors.

## How To Determine Formal Support

1. Are you or your child receiving any support from services?
2. What level of support do they receive and how often?
3. Who is your doctor/dentist?
4. What sort of financial support does your family receive?
5. Do you have someone who cares for your child?
6. Is there anyone paid to be nice to you?

## How To Determine Immediate Support?

1. What does your family do on Saturday or Sunday mornings?
2. Do you work outside of the home?
3. Do you have any hobbies?
4. What do you do?
5. What does your family like to do in your free time?

## How To Determine Levels of Support

1. How often do you see or talk to family and friends?
2. Do you get along with them?
3. How much influence do they have on you?
4. Do you see your relationship as positive?
5. Do you like this person?
6. Why do you like or not like them?

## Why Are Ecomaps Important?

- As a VISUAL assessment tool, the ecomap helps determine the family's strengths, resources, needs and deficits.
- Helps the worker keep track of who's who in the family system.
- An ecomap helps the family and children understand the various systems in which they interact and gives professionals the opportunity to encourage them to build upon their network for support if necessary.

## How Does an Ecomap Help in Practice?

1. An ecomap show key themes of a family structure.
2. It reminds you of who everyone is!
3. Provide a starting point for your conversation with a person and their family.
4. Provides a framework for discussing family relationships and family history.
5. Helps you stay organized at the start of an assessment

## How Does an Ecomap Help in Practice?

6. It shows you areas of confusion
7. It shows you where there are gaps in your knowledge
8. Helps you identify the most important people in a person's life
9. Helps you identify what further information you need to gather from a person you are supporting.
10. Supports you to identify themes emerging from the nature of different relationships within and around a family.

## In Class Activity

Group work focused on family issues in child welfare:

1. Take out or recall the drawing you did 2 weeks of your family;
2. Reflect on the discussion on eco-maps; make an eco-map of your family;
3. Be prepared to discuss in your groups and in class



## Next Class Session

### **BUILDING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES**

#### Engagement

Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

Identify the steps in the engagement process

#### To Do:

Read: [https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/f\\_fam\\_engagement.pdf](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/f_fam_engagement.pdf)

- Critelli, F. M. (2015). Parenting in a new land: Specialized services for immigrant and refugee families in the USA. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 16(4), 871-890

doi:<http://dx.doi.org.proxy.wexler.hunter.cuny.edu/10.1007/s12134-014-0359-z>

- Rogers, T. N., & Rogers, C. R. (2019). Social services professionals' views of barriers to supporting homeless noncustodial fathers. *Family Relations*, 68(1), 39-50.

doi:<http://dx.doi.org.proxy.wexler.hunter.cuny.edu/10.1111/fare.12345>

Listen: <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/28/765040505/a-refugee-family-takes-viewers-on-a-years-long-escape-in-midnight-traveler>