



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Child Welfare Pre-Service Training**

**Week Two**

**Core Participant's Workbook**

**November 2023**



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This curriculum was developed by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services and revised by Public Knowledge® in 2022 and 2023.

Content in this training was created specifically for child welfare professionals in response to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) policy regarding the integration of principles of equity, inclusion and diversity into the policies, practices, and training of child welfare workers by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

The training workshops are interactive in nature, and the focus is on practical knowledge and skills that participants can apply within the workplace while respecting the dignity of others, acknowledging the right of others to express differing opinions, and the right to freedom of speech and association.

The training is not intended to, and should not be understood to, solicit or require an employee to endorse or opine about beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles regarding matters of contemporary political debate or social action as a condition of employment and are not intended to, and should not be understood to, solicit or require an employee or applicant to describe their actions in support of, or in opposition to, those beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles.

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## Table of Contents

Instructions.....	8
Course Themes.....	8
Training Overview .....	10
Week Two, Day One Agenda.....	12
Welcome.....	13
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias (continued).....	14
Considerations for Children and Youth in the LGBTQIA+ Community.....	14
Learning Objectives .....	14
Handout: LGBTQIA+ Community – Terms and Definitions .....	15
Video: Learning About Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression .....	18
Video: Experiences of LGBTQIA+ Youth in Child Welfare .....	19
Questions and Reflections .....	21
Debrief: Supporting LGBTQIA+ Youth .....	22
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).....	23
Placement Preferences .....	23
ICWA Background.....	23
Handout: Placement Preferences .....	25
Active Efforts.....	26
Questions and Reflections .....	27
Cultural Considerations .....	28
Cultural Humility .....	28
Tribal Traditions .....	30
Tribes in North Carolina .....	31
Questions and Reflections .....	33
Family and Tribal Engagement.....	34
Intergenerational Trauma.....	34
Family Engagement.....	35
Worksheet: Relational Worldview Model.....	36
Questions and Reflections .....	37
Notice to Tribes.....	38
Requirement to Provide Notice .....	38
Handout: Requirement to Provide Notice.....	39
Handout: Tribal Contact Information .....	40

Questions and Reflections .....	45
Engaging Families through Family-Centered Practice .....	46
Activity: What Does Engagement Mean to You?.....	46
Debrief .....	47
Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families.....	48
Learning Objectives .....	48
Activity: Brown Paper Lunch Bag .....	49
Defining Family-Centered Practice.....	50
Cornerstones for Family-Centered Practice: Our Values .....	51
Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families .....	52
Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families Learning Lab.....	53
Activity: Do Families Heal Best Together? .....	53
Debrief .....	54
Key Elements of Family-Centered Practice.....	55
Key Takeaways.....	56
Questions and Reflections .....	56
Week Two, Day Two Agenda.....	57
Welcome.....	58
Engaging Families through Family-Centered Practice (continued) .....	59
Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families.....	59
Handout: Our Beliefs About Change and Client Engagement.....	59
Worksheet: Ten Beliefs of Family-Centered Practice.....	61
Impact of Family-Centered Practice .....	62
Handout: Family-Centered Practice .....	63
Key Takeaways.....	64
Questions and Reflections .....	64
Using a Strengths-Based Perspective .....	65
Learning Objectives .....	65
Strengths-Based Approach .....	66
Interviewing Strategies.....	67
Identifying Strengths .....	68
Using a Strengths-Based Perspective Learning Lab .....	69
Activity: Skills Practice .....	69
Questions and Reflections .....	70

Courageous Conversations .....	71
Learning Objectives .....	71
Video: What is Cultural Humility? .....	72
Reflection of Personal Bias .....	73
Activity: Visualization Exercise .....	73
Three Tenets of Cultural Humility .....	74
Culture and Potential Conflict .....	75
Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations .....	76
Questions and Reflections .....	77
Creating a Safe Space .....	78
Creating Effective Dialogue .....	79
Activity: Strategies for Effective Verbal Communication .....	80
Worksheet: Strategies for Effective Verbal Communication .....	80
Strategies for Effective Nonverbal Communication .....	81
Nonverbal Communication and Potential Conflict .....	82
Questions and Reflections .....	83
Full Disclosure .....	84
Full Disclosure and Investigative and Family Assessments .....	84
Full Disclosure and In-Home Services .....	85
Full Disclosure and Permanency .....	85
Questions and Reflections .....	86
Key Takeaways .....	87
Courageous Conversations Learning Lab .....	88
Courageous Conversations and Engagement .....	89
Activity: Courageous Conversations in Action .....	90
Creating a Plan for Difficult Conversations .....	91
Questions and Reflections .....	92
Conflict Resolution .....	93
Learning Objectives .....	93
What is Conflict? .....	94
Benefits of Managing and Resolving Conflict .....	95
Managing Conflict .....	96
Questions and Reflections .....	97
Conflict Management Modes .....	98

Handout: The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI).....	98
Strategies for Managing and Resolving Conflict .....	101
Activity: What a Bunch of Characters.....	102
Debrief .....	103
Questions and Reflections .....	104
Key Takeaways.....	104
Week Two, Day Three Agenda .....	105
Welcome.....	106
Engaging Families through Family-Centered Practice .....	107
Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives.....	107
Learning Objectives .....	107
Facts About Engaging and Involving Fathers.....	108
Engaging Teen Fathers.....	109
Engaging Fathers Learning Lab .....	110
Activity: Father Engagement – The Letter.....	110
Worksheet: Father Engagement Scenario .....	111
Debrief .....	113
Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives.....	114
Engaging Non-Resident Parents and Relatives .....	114
Engaging Incarcerated Parents Learning Lab .....	115
Video: The Marshall Project – Inside Tutwiler Prison.....	115
Worksheet: Tutwiler Prison .....	116
Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives.....	121
Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives: Policy Requirements .....	121
Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives: Engagement Strategies.....	122
Handout: Keys to Building Strong Relationships with Fathers .....	123
Video: Strengthening Families – Father Engagement.....	124
Debrief .....	124
Key Takeaways.....	125
Questions and Reflections .....	125
Child and Family (CFT) Meetings .....	126
Learning Objectives .....	126
Key Activities of Family-Centered Practice .....	127
Handout: CFT Meetings .....	128

Handout: CFT Meetings Timelines Policy ..... 131

Activity: Developing Support Systems..... 133

Debrief ..... 134

Preparing for and Participating in CFT Meetings..... 135

Handout: Preparing for and Participating in CFT Meetings ..... 136

Achieving Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes ..... 138

Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings Learning Lab ..... 139

Video: A Sacred Circle – Family Group Conferencing ..... 139

Debrief ..... 140

Activity: Child and Family Voice ..... 141

Worksheet: Child and Family Team Meetings..... 141

Key Takeaways..... 144

Questions and Reflections ..... 144

Bibliography of References ..... 145

Appendix: Handouts ..... 1

LGBTQIA+ Community – Terms and Definitions ..... 2

Placement Preferences ..... 5

Requirement to Provide Notice ..... 6

Tribal Contact Information ..... 7

Our Beliefs About Change and Client Engagement..... 11

Family-Centered Practice ..... 12

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)..... 13

Keys to Building Strong Relationships with Fathers..... 16

CFT Meetings ..... 17

CFT Meetings Timelines Policy ..... 19

Preparing for and Participating in CFT Meetings ..... 21

## Instructions

This course was designed to guide child welfare professionals through the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to engage with families in need of child protection services. The workbook is structured to help you engage in the lesson through reflection and analysis throughout each week of training. Have this workbook readily available as you go through each session to create a long-lasting resource you can reference in the future.

If you are using this workbook electronically: Workbook pages have text boxes for you to add notes and reflections. Due to formatting, if you are typing in these boxes, blank lines will be “pushed” forward onto the next page. To correct this when you are done typing in the text box, you may use delete to remove extra lines.

## Course Themes

The central themes of the Pre-Service Training are divided across Foundation Training and Core Training topics.

### Foundation Training

- Pre-Work e-Learning
- Introduction to the Child Welfare System
- Identification of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Introduction to Child Development
- Historical and Legal Basis of Child Welfare Services
- Ethics and Equity in Child Welfare
- Key Issues in Child Welfare: Substance Use, Family Violence, and Mental Health
- Overview of Trauma-Informed Practice

### Core Training

- Pre-Work e-Learning
- Child Welfare Overview: Roles and Responsibilities
- Introductory Learning Lab
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias
- Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
- Engaging Families Through Family-Centered Practice
- Engaging Families Learning Lab
- Quality Contacts
- Overview of Child Welfare Processes: Intake and CPS Assessments
- Intake and CPS Assessments Learning Lab
- Overview of Child Welfare Processes: In-Home Services
- In-Home Services Learning
- Overview of Child Welfare Processes: Permanency Planning Services
- Permanency Planning Services Learning Lab
- Key Factors Impacting Families and Engaging Communities
- Documentation



- Documentation Learning Lab
- Self-Care and Worker Safety

## Training Overview

Training begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. If a holiday falls on the Monday of training, the training will begin on Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. This schedule is subject to change if a holiday falls during the training week or other circumstances occur. The time for ending training on Fridays may vary and trainees need to be prepared to stay the entire day.

Attendance is mandatory. If there is an emergency, the trainee must contact the classroom trainer and their supervisor as soon as they realize they will not be able to attend training or if they will be late to training. If a trainee must miss training time in the classroom, it is the trainee's responsibility to develop a plan to make up missed material.

### Pre-Work Online e-Learning Modules

There is required pre-work for the North Carolina Child Welfare Pre-Service Training in the form of online e-Learning modules. Completion of the e-Learnings is required prior to attendance at the classroom-based training. The following are the online e-Learning modules:

1. Introduction to North Carolina Child Welfare Script
2. Child Welfare Process Overview
3. Introduction to Human Development
4. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
5. History of Social Work and Child Welfare Legislation
6. North Carolina Worker Practice Standards

### Foundation Training

Foundation Training is instructor-led training for child welfare new hires that do not have a social work or child welfare-related degree. Staff with prior experience in child welfare or a social work degree are exempt from Foundation Training. The purpose of this training is to provide a foundation and introduction to social work and child welfare. After completing Foundation training, new hires will continue their training and job preparation with Core Training. Foundation Training is 28 hours (4 days) in length.

### Core Training

Core Training is required for all new child welfare staff, regardless of degree or experience. This course will provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of a child welfare social worker in North Carolina, including working with families throughout their involvement with the child welfare system. The course will provide opportunities for skills-based learning labs. Core Training includes 126 hours (18 days) of classroom-based training, completed over six consecutive weeks.

Throughout the pre-service training, learners may have required homework assignments to be completed within prescribed timeframes.

In addition to classroom-based learning, learners will be provided with on-the-job training at their DSS agencies. During on-the-job training, supervisors will provide

support to new hires through the completion of an observation tool, coaching, and during supervisory consultation.

### **Transfer of Learning**

Transfer of learning means that learners apply the knowledge and skills they learned during the training back to their daily child welfare work at their DSS agencies. During the pre-service training, learners will complete a transfer of learning tool at various points:

- Pre-training
- During training
- Post-training

The transfer of learning tool will enable learners to create a specific action plan they can use to implement the training content on the job. A key component of successful child welfare practice is the involvement of supervisors in the reinforcement of new knowledge and skills. Supervisors will assist new workers in the completion and review of their transfer of learning tool and will support workers to apply what they have learned in training to their child welfare roles and responsibilities through action planning. Completion of the transfer of learning tool is required to complete the training course.

### **Training Evaluations**

At the conclusion of each week of training, learners will complete a training evaluation tool to measure satisfaction with training content and methods. The training evaluation tool is required to complete the training course. Training evaluations will be evaluated and assessed to determine the need for revisions to the training curriculum.


**All matters as stated above are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances and with approval.**

## Week Two, Day One Agenda

### Pre-Service Training: Child Welfare in North Carolina

I.	Welcome	9:00 – 9:45
	<b>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias (continued)</b>	
II.	Considerations for Children and Youth in the LGBTQIA+ Community	9:45 – 10:30
	<b>BREAK</b>	10:30 – 10:45
	<b>Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)</b>	
III.	Placement Preferences	10:45 – 11:15
IV.	Cultural Considerations	11:15 – 12:15
	<b>LUNCH</b>	12:15 – 1:15
V.	Family and Tribal Engagement	1:15 – 1:35
VI.	Notice to Tribes	1:35 – 2:00
	<b>Engaging Families through Family-Centered Practice</b>	
	<b>Break</b>	2:00 – 2:15
VII.	Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families	2:15 – 2:50
VIII.	Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families Learning Lab	2:50 – 3:20
IX.	Wrap-Up	3:20 – 4:00

## Welcome



- How are people feeling today?
- What was your main “takeaway” from last week?
- Is there any clean-up we need to do?
- Review agenda and learning objectives for the day

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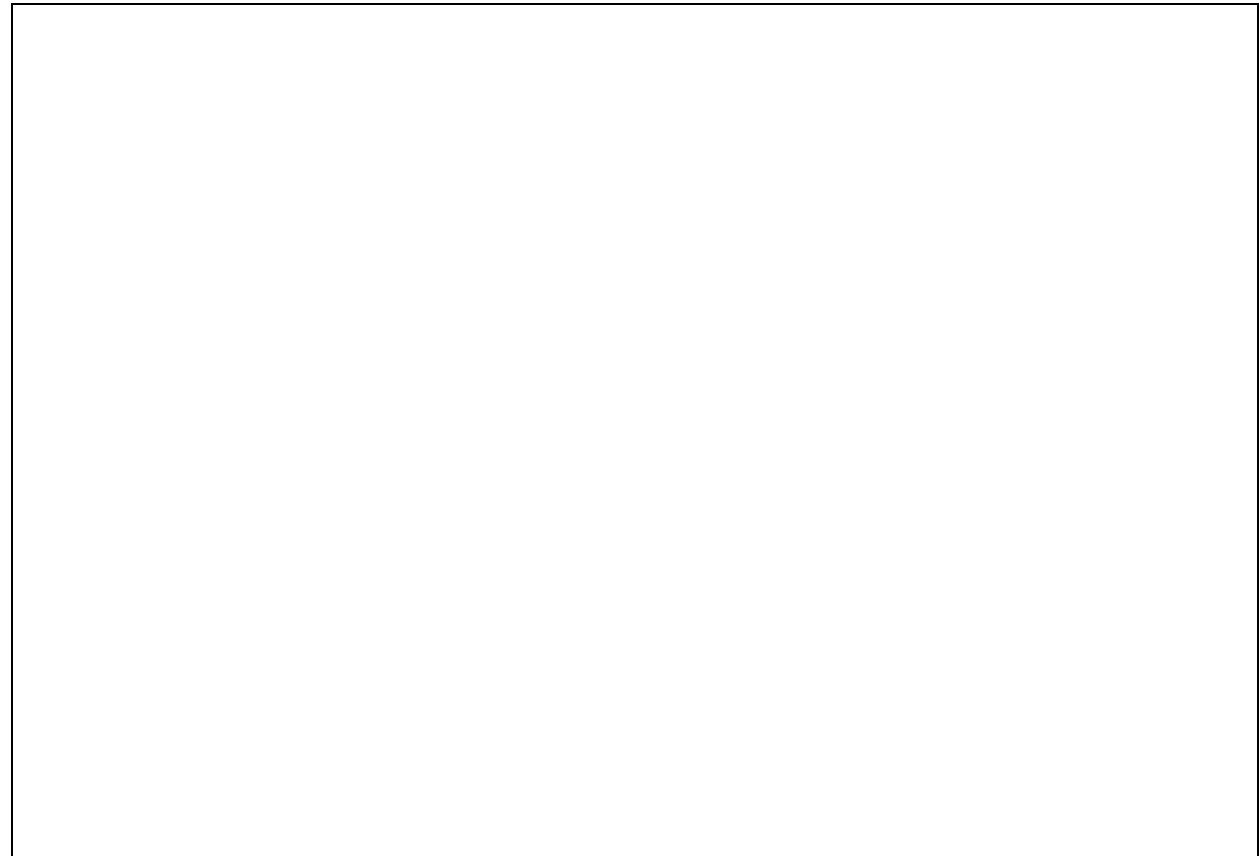
**Use this outlined space to record notes.**

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias (continued)

### Considerations for Children and Youth in the LGBTQIA+ Community

#### Learning Objectives

- Explain the unique service needs and considerations for children and youth in the LGBTQIA+ community.



## Handout: LGBTQIA+ Community – Terms and Definitions

<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/lgbtq-youth/key-terms-and-concepts>

**2/Two-Spirit:** An inclusive term created specifically by and used by some Native American communities. It refers to American Indian/Alaskan Native individuals who express their gender, sexual orientation, and/or sex/gender roles in Indigenous, non-Western ways, using tribal terms and concepts, and/or who define themselves as LGBTQ+, questioning, and intersex in a Native context. Often a person's spiritual experiences or cultural beliefs are core to the formation of their two-spirit identity.

**Agender:** Individuals who do not identify as any gender.

**Ally:** A term relating generally to individuals who support marginalized groups. In the LGBTQ+ community, this term is used to describe someone supportive of LGBTQ+ individuals and the community, either personally or as an advocate. Allies include heterosexual and cisgender individuals (i.e., those who identify with the sex assigned to them at birth).

**Asexual:** Individuals who do not experience sexual attraction. An individual can also be aromantic, meaning that they do not experience romantic attraction.

**Bigender:** Individuals who identify as a person whose gender identity encompasses two genders (often man and woman, but not exclusively), or is moving between two genders.

**Bisexual:** An individual who has the capacity to form enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to those of the same gender or those of another gender.

**Coming Out:** The process through which youth identify, acknowledge, express, and share with others information about their sexual orientation and gender identity. This experience can be an affirming one, resulting in a sense of belonging, but it can also create stress in the life of youth and put them at risk for negative outcomes as a result of LGBTQ+ -related stigma and the responses and behaviors of others. This process includes coming out over time to oneself, to friends and other peers, at school, to family, at work, and in one's community.

**Gay:** Individuals whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex.

**Gender Identity:** Our internal sense of being male, female, or another identity. Because gender identity is internal, it is not necessarily visible to others. "Cisgender" describes youth whose gender identity/expression does not differ from that typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. For example, a young person who was born male and identifies as a man may be considered cisgender. In contrast, "transgender" (or "trans") describes people whose gender identity/expression is different from that typically

associated with their assigned sex at birth. A relatively small percentage of gender-variant children develop an adult transgender identity, but most adolescents with a gender-variant identity develop an adult transgender identity.

**Gender Expression:** How youth represent their gender to others. For example, individuals may express their gender through mannerisms, clothes, and personal interests. Our understanding of gender and what it means to be “masculine” and “feminine” is influenced by how we were socialized. For example, families, schools, and the media influence our understanding of gender. Research shows that children as young as two years old can identify a person’s sex based on how they present their gender, that by age three they can begin to see themselves as either male or female, and that around age nine they understand gender roles. For most youth, internal gender identity is reinforced by the reactions that others have to our gender expression. Other terms are sometimes used to describe one’s gender. For example, “gender fluid” or “gender creative” reflect a more flexible range of gender expression.

**Genderqueer:** Individuals who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman.

**Gender Variant:** Individuals who do not follow gender stereotypes.

**Intersex:** An umbrella term used to describe people with differences in reproductive anatomy, chromosomes, or hormones that don't fit typical definitions of male and female.

**Lesbian:** A woman who has romantic and/or sexual orientation toward women. Some nonbinary individuals also identify with this term.

**Nonbinary:** Individuals who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as outside of the male-female gender binary.

**Pangender:** An individual whose gender identity and/or gender expression is numerous, either fixed (many at once) or fluid (moving from one to another, often more than two).

**Pansexual:** An individual who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions.

**Queer:** Historically, this has been a pejorative term used to describe LGBTQ+ people, but is now used by some people, particularly younger people, whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual. Some people may use queer, or more commonly genderqueer, to describe their gender identity and/or gender expression.

**Questioning:** A term used to describe young people who are unsure about their sexual and/or gender identity.



**Sex:** Genetic and anatomical characteristics with which youth are born, typically labeled “male” or “female.” Some youth are born with a reproductive/sexual anatomy that does not fit typical definitions of “male” or “female.” This is sometimes referred to as “intersex.”

**Sexual Orientation:** A youth’s emotional, sexual, and/or relational attraction to others. For some, this attraction is to people of the opposite sex/gender (heterosexual), the same sex/gender (gay/lesbian), both sexes/genders (bisexual), or people in general independent of their sex/gender (pansexual or omniseual). The term can also refer to low or non-existent attraction to any sex/gender (asexual).

**Transgender:** People whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Many transgender people will transition to align their gender expression with their gender identity; however, a person does not have to transition to be transgender.

**Transitioning:** Transgender youth “transition” to express their gender identity through various changes, such as wearing clothes and adopting a physical appearance that aligns with their internal sense of gender. Transitioning may or may not include medical or surgical treatment and depends on a variety of factors, including age, access to and affordability of services, overall health, and personal choice. For transgender youth, transitioning is an important part of affirming their identity.

Video: [Learning About Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression](#)

Visit: [Learning About Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression](#) for more details on terms and definitions used within the LGBTQIA+ community.

Use this space to record notes.

**What was one thing you heard for the first time in this video?**

**Were there things in the video that surprised you?**

Video: [Experiences of LGBTQIA+ Youth in Child Welfare](#)

Visit: [Darryn's Story](#) for a personal perspective on self-discovery and acceptance.

Use this space to record notes.

**What do you think made the difference for Darryn to help him have a positive experience in foster care?**

**What do you think caseworkers can do to support youth in the LGTBQIA+ community while they are in the child welfare system?**

**What can we do?**



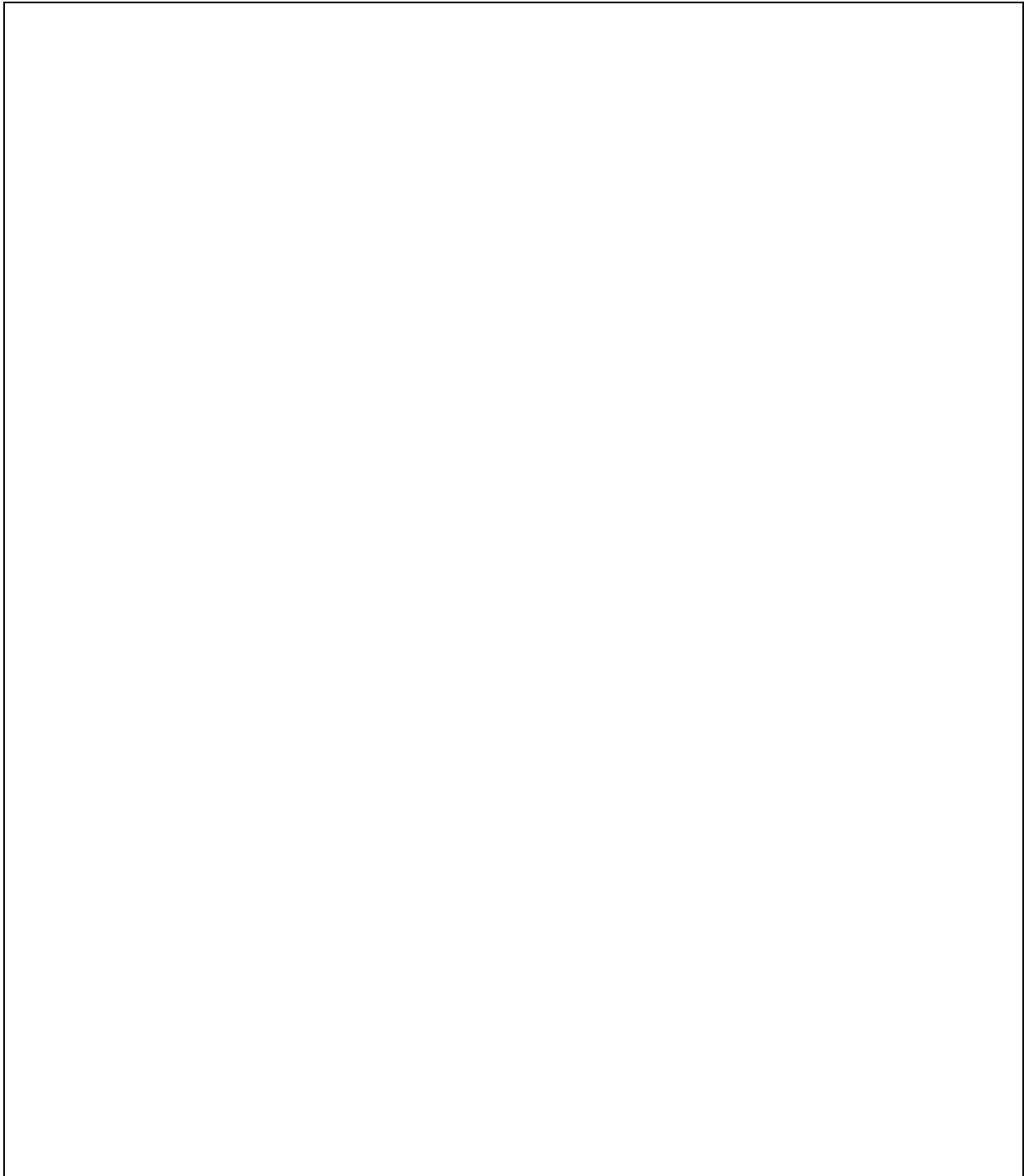
- Let me tell my own story
- Ask me what I need to feel safe
- Help me find a safe and stable place to live
- Help me express myself
- Get my permission

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**What else can we do to help minimize trauma and increase safety for LGBTQIA+ youth in child welfare?**

Questions and Reflections

**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**

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Debrief: Supporting LGBTQIA+ Youth

**Write down a few things that you are excited to do and are motivated to do with the children and families you'll work with.**

**Write down the things you're most proud of in these last two days.**

**Did you push yourself outside your comfort zone to talk about something that makes you uncomfortable?**

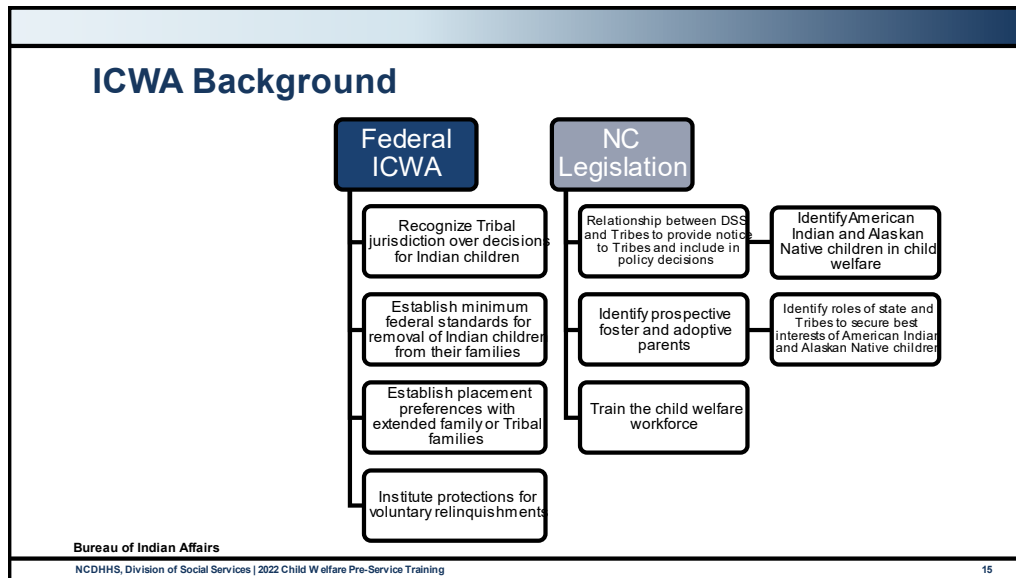
**Did you keep an open mind to learn something new?**

**Did you support your fellow learners through a tough moment?**

## Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)

### Placement Preferences

#### ICWA Background



ICWA governs state custody proceedings in several ways, including:

- Recognizing Tribal jurisdiction over decisions for Indian children
- Establishing minimum Federal standards for the removal of Indian children from their families
- Establishing placement preferences for Indian children with extended family or other Tribal families
- Instituting protections to ensure that the child's parents' voluntary relinquishments of their children are truly voluntary

ICWA applies to any state child custody proceeding involving an Indian child, and a child is considered an "Indian child" only if:

- The child is a member of a federally recognized Tribe, or
- The child's parent is a member of a federally recognized Tribe, and the child is eligible for membership

While North Carolina has not codified ICWA into state law, we do have legislation aimed at facilitating improved outcomes for American Indian and Alaskan Native children in North Carolina. This legislation has led to policy changes and training for DSS social workers, including information on notice to tribes, which we'll talk about a little later in this section of the training. The legislation states that DSS will work in collaboration with the Commission of Indian Affairs, the Department of Administration, and the North Carolina Directors of Social Services Association to develop an effective process to:

- Establish a relationship between DSS and tribes, that will enable tribes to receive reasonable notice of identified Indian children who are being placed in foster care or adoption or who will be in the child welfare system, and to be consulted on policies and other topics pertinent to the placement of Indian children in foster care or adoption
- Agree on a process by which North Carolina American Indian/Alaskan Native adults may be identified and recruited to become foster and adoptive parents
- Agree on a process by which the cultural, social, and historical perspective and significance associated with Indian culture and tradition may be taught to the child welfare workforce and to foster and adoptive parents
- Identify or form Indian child welfare advocacy, placement, and training entities with which DHHS might contract or partner with the intent of implementing ICWA
- Develop a process to identify American Indian and Alaskan Native children within the child welfare system
- Identify the appropriate roles of the state and of tribes, organizations, and agencies in securing the best interests of American Indian and Alaskan Native children



## Handout: Placement Preferences

For **foster care placements**, the placement preferences are, in order:

1. A member of the child's extended family
2. A foster home licensed, approved, or specified by the child's Tribe
3. An Indian foster home licensed or approved by an authorized non-Indian licensing authority
4. An institution approved by a Tribe or operated by an Indian organization that has a program suitable to meet the child's needs

For **adoptive placements**, the placement preferences are, in order:

1. A member of the child's extended family
2. Other members of the child's Tribe
3. Other Indian families

For both foster and adoptive homes, Tribes can assign a different order of placement that supersedes ICWA. In addition, the court must, where appropriate, consider any placement preferences of the child or their parent.

Further, for foster care or pre-adoptive placements or changes in placement of American Indian or Alaskan Native children, the child must be placed in the least restrictive setting that:

- Is the most family-like setting, considering sibling attachment
- Allows the child's special needs, if any, to be met
- Is in reasonable proximity to the child's home, extended family, or siblings

Active Efforts

**Active Efforts**

- Actions to maintain or reunify an American Indian or Alaskan Native child with their family
- Supporting the child's parents
- Tailored to each child and family's needs
- Required for any foster care or TPR proceeding
- Consistent with social and cultural Tribal traditions

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**What are some examples you can think of that would be considered active efforts?**

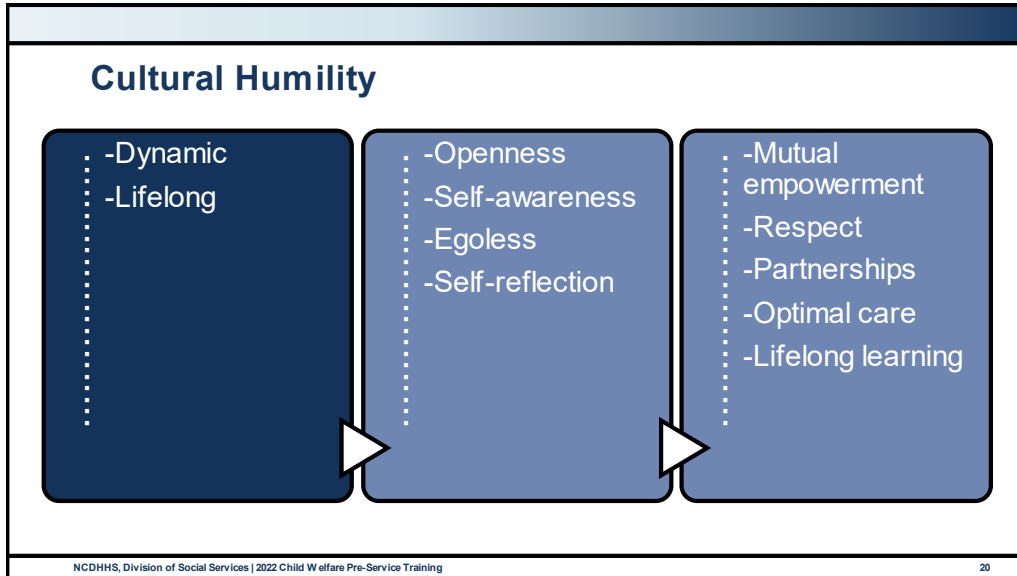
Questions and Reflections

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## Cultural Considerations

### Cultural Humility



**How do you think cultural humility impacts our interactions with Tribes and with American Indian and Alaskan Native children and families?**

### Cultural Considerations

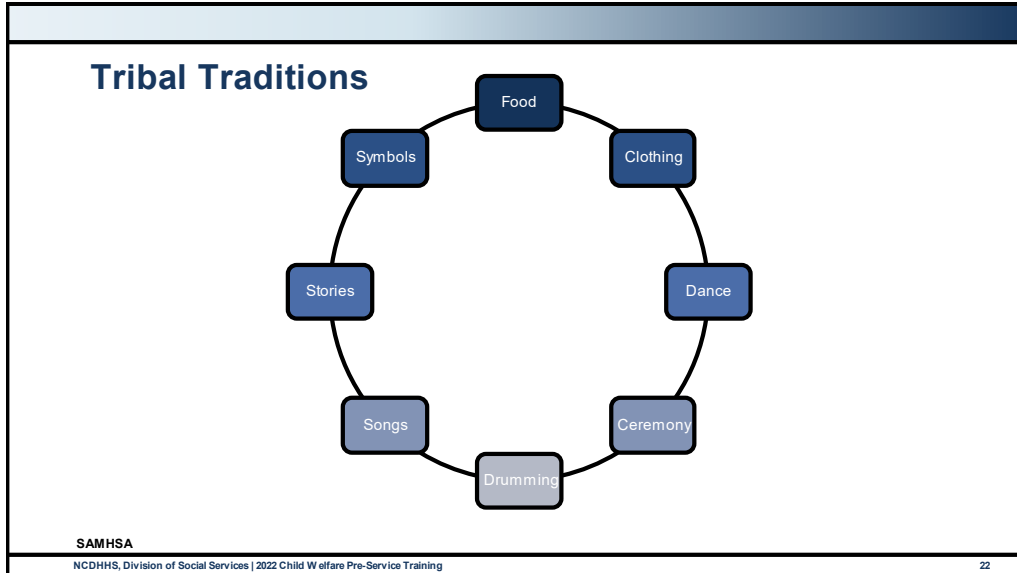
- Cultural identity
- Spirituality
- Communication styles
- Storytelling
- Historic distrust
- Community Strengths
- Self-awareness
- Etiquette

SAMHSA

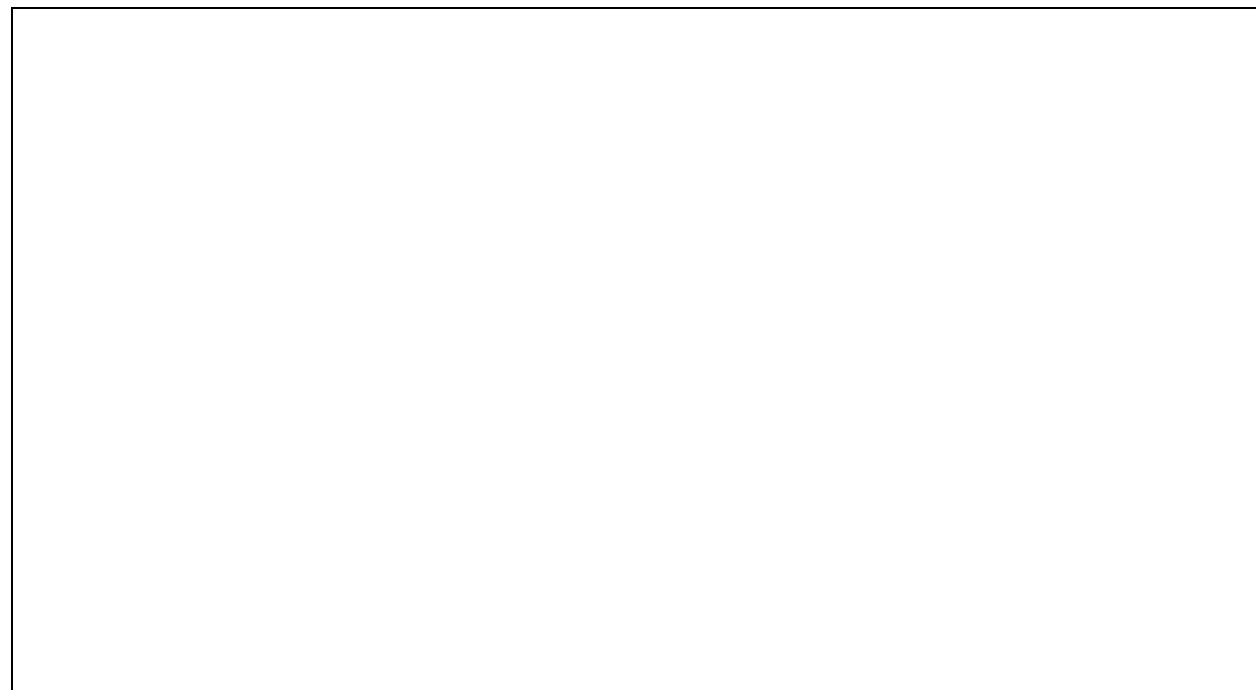
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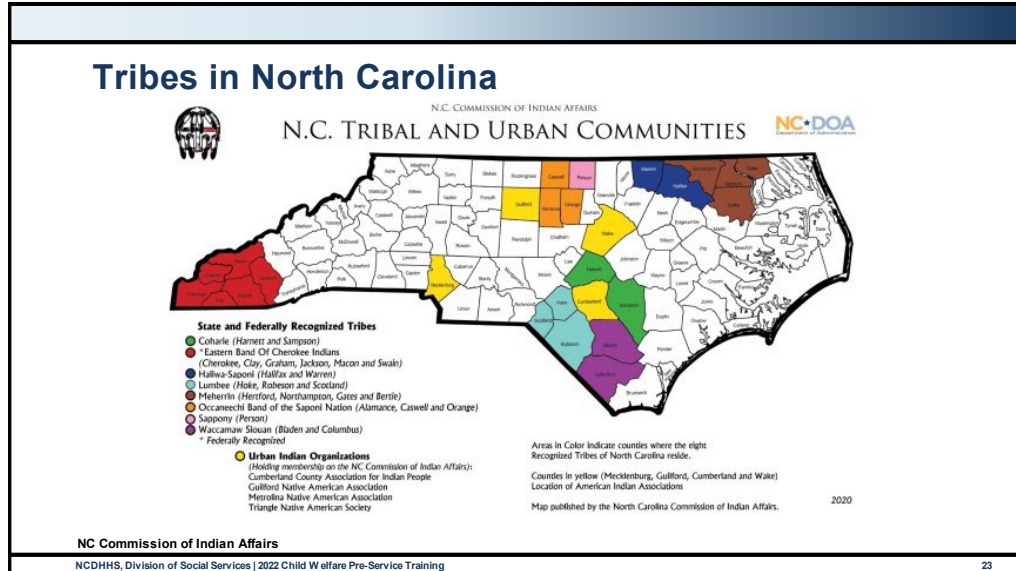
Tribal Traditions



North Carolina is home to the largest population of American Indians east of the Mississippi River, with almost 100,000 individuals living here (as of the 2000 US Census), between eight state-recognized tribes (one of which is also federally recognized). With this many American Indians and Alaskan Native individuals living in the state, there will be many variations in these traditions between communities and tribes. It is important to ask for information and education on what traditions are most important to members of each family, community, and tribe.



## Tribes in North Carolina



The eight state-recognized tribes in North Carolina are:

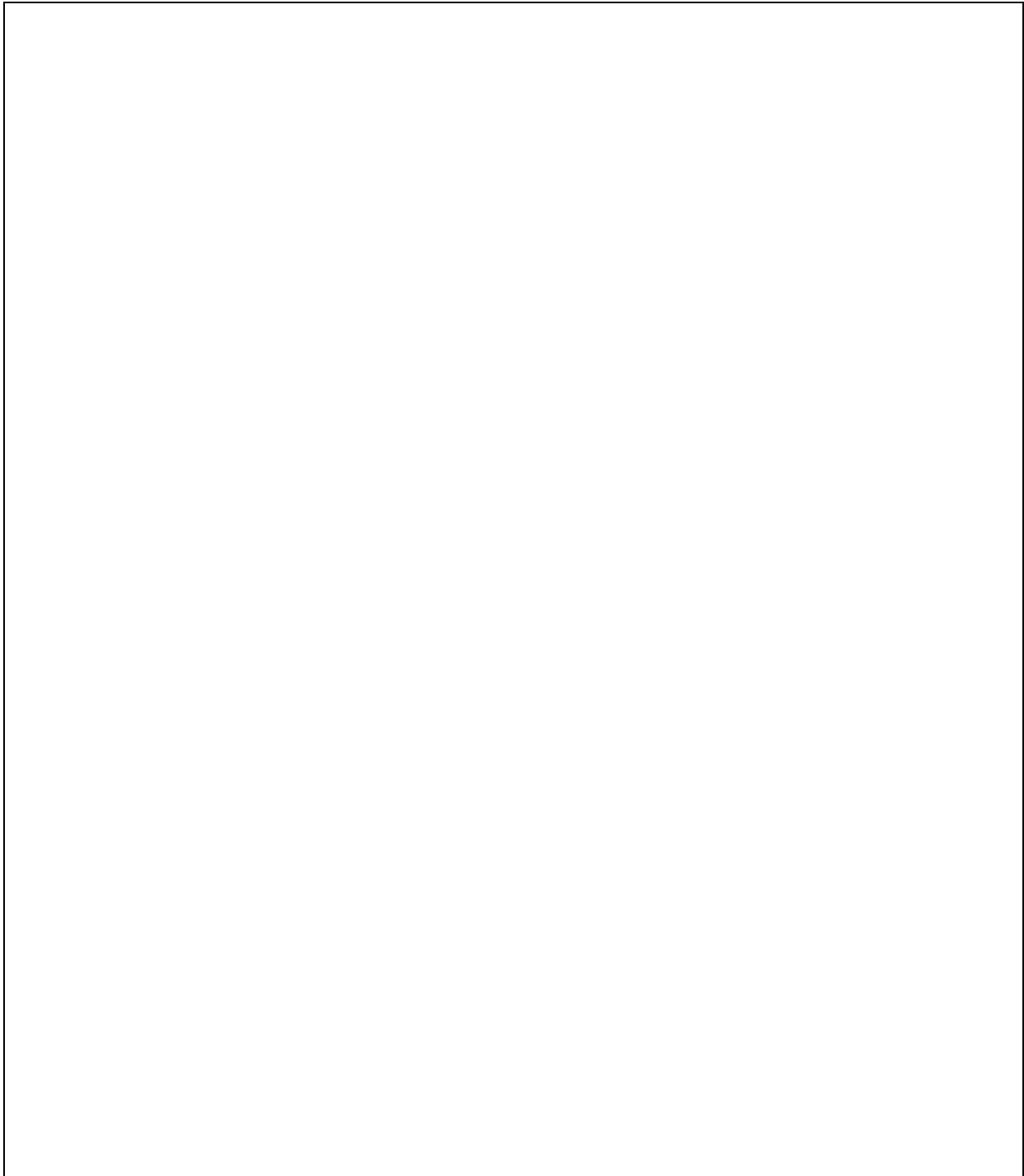
- The Coharie (Co-hair-e), is headquartered in Clinton and mostly located in the southeastern region of the state, in Harnett and Sampson counties. The Coharie community includes four settlements: Holly Grove, New Bethel, Shiloh, and Antioch. The Coharie has approximately 2,700 members, and about 20 percent of the members live outside the tribal communities.
- The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (which is federally recognized), whose home is the 56,000-acre Qualla Boundary next to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. There are over 16,000 enrolled members, and 60 percent of them live on the Boundary.
- The Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe (Ha-li-wa Sa-pony), whose members are direct descendants of the Saponi, Tuscarora, Tutelo, and Nansemond Indians. The Haliwa-Saponi tribe has 3,800 members, the third-largest tribe in the state, who mostly live in “The Meadows”, which takes up most of the southwestern part of Halifax County and the southeastern part of Warren County.
- The Lumbee (Lum-bee) Tribe of North Carolina (which has partial federal recognition) is the largest tribe in the state, the largest tribe east of the Mississippi River, and the ninth largest in the nation. The over 55,000 members live mostly in Robeson, Hoke, Cumberland, and Scotland counties.
- The Meherrin (Me-hair-in) refer to themselves as “people of the water”, and they share language, traditions, and culture with the Nottoway and other Haudenosaunee Nations. The Meherrin is the only non-reservation Indians in North Carolina who still live on their original Reservation lands, near Como.

- The Sapony (Sa-pony) tribe includes seven core families (or clans), whose 850 members live in the High Plains along the North Carolina and Virginia border, in Person County (and partially in Halifax County, Virginia).
- The Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation (O-ka-knee-chi Band of the Sa-pony) is located in Alamance, Caswell, and Orange Counties, with Tribal Grounds in the Little Texas Community. The Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation has over 1,100 members.
- The Waccamaw Siouan (Wa-ka-maw Sioux-an) moved from northeast of Charleston, South Carolina, to the swamplands of North Carolina, and the Tribal Office is in Columbus and Bladen Counties. The community has over 2,000 citizens.



Questions and Reflections

**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**

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## Family and Tribal Engagement

### Intergenerational Trauma

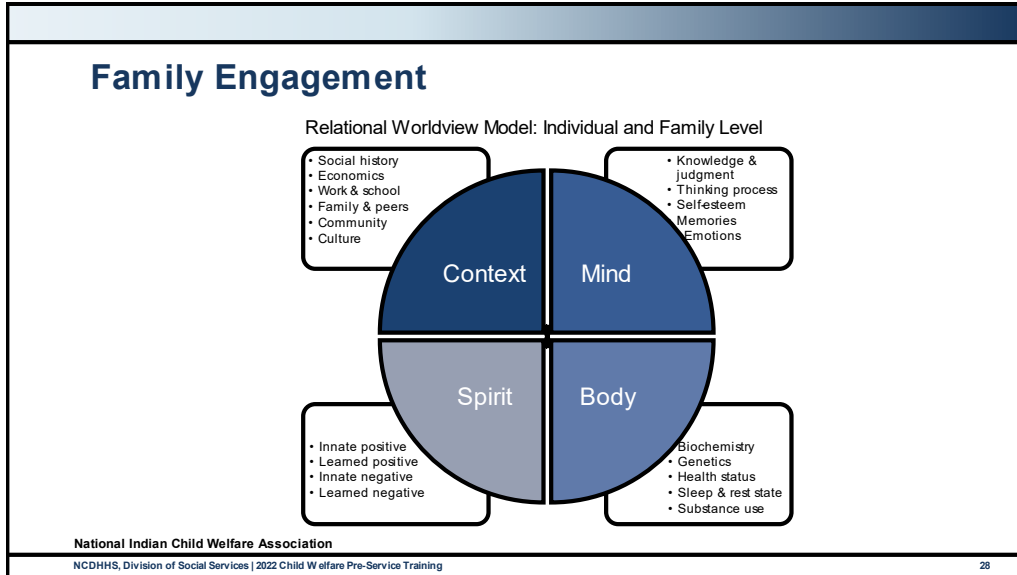
The concept of intergenerational trauma is the “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including one’s lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma.” This level of trauma is one of the most significant obstacles to engaging American Indian and Alaskan Native families, as our role in the child welfare system can trigger these wounds in families despite our best efforts and intentions.

We need to understand the impact of this trauma so that we can appropriately engage and support American Indian and Alaskan Native children and families. We need to understand how these wounds were inflicted and how they impact individuals today, hundreds of years later. When we are engaging American Indian and Alaskan Native families, we must:

- Educate ourselves about intergenerational trauma. You can learn more by visiting the National Indian Child Welfare Association’s website ([www.nicwa.org](http://www.nicwa.org)).
- Understand that this trauma has impacted each tribe, community, and family differently
- Approach families in a strengths-based way, and focus on what has happened rather than what is wrong
- Provide space for families to share their stories in their way and in their time
- Listen and reflect without judgment
- Address and mitigate your biases to avoid families who are still processing their trauma



Family Engagement



Worksheet: Relational Worldview Model

**Scenario:** You're working with the Fletcher family, which includes Stephanie, the mom, and two young children, Jeremy and Abby. As you have worked with the family, Stephanie has shared with you that she struggles with using meth and is trying to stop using it. You have also received reports from Jeremy and Abby's schools that both children have missed a significant amount of school over the last quarter.

**Use the *Relational Worldview Model* to determine some action steps to take with the Fletcher family.**

**Context Quadrant** - focusing on social and environmental factors. Action steps you could take include:

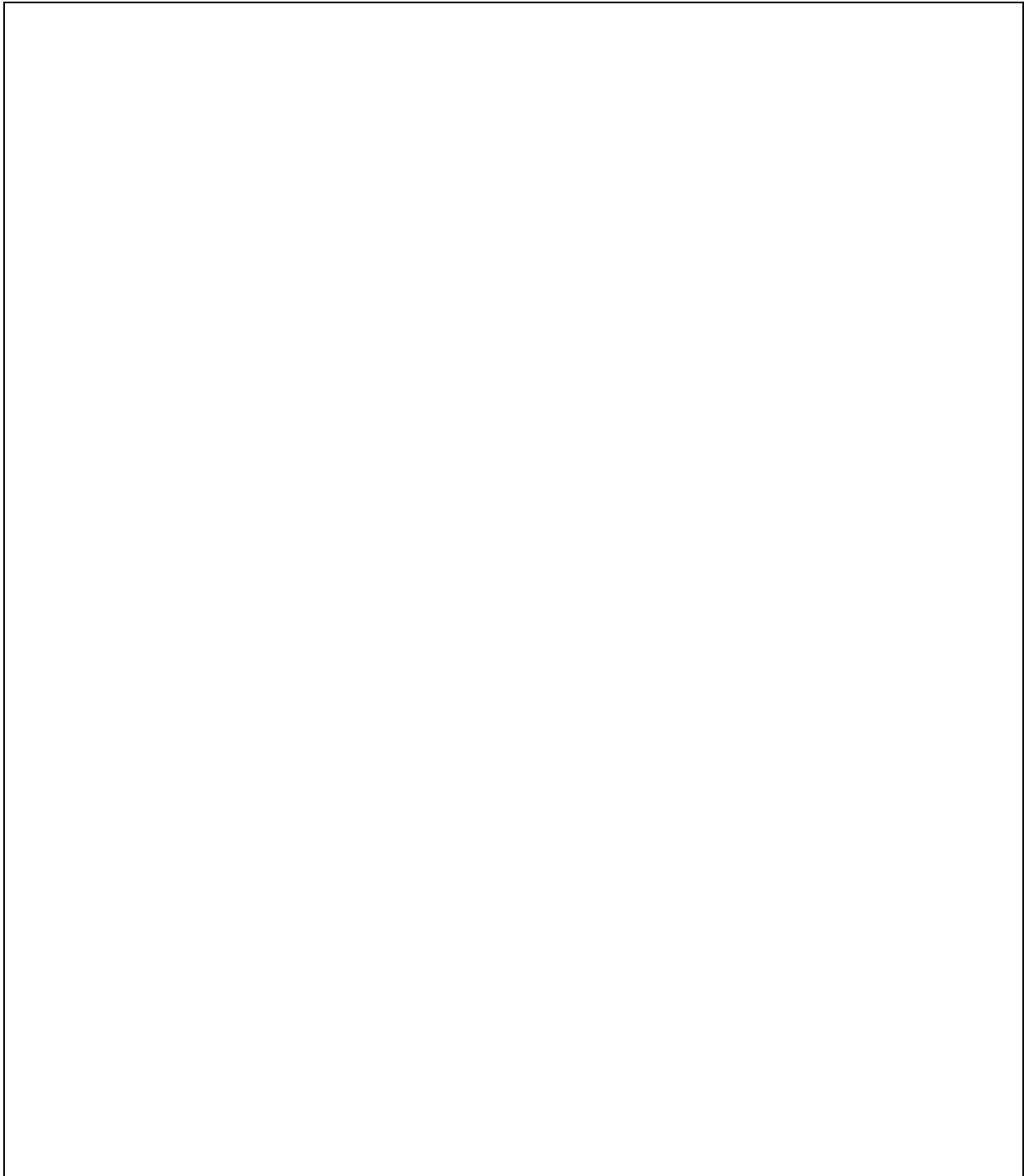
**Mind Quadrant** - focusing on communication with the family. Action steps you could take include:

**Spirit Quadrant** - focusing on tribal customs. Action steps you could take include:

**Body Quadrant** - focusing on genetic and health factors. Action steps you could take include:

Questions and Reflections

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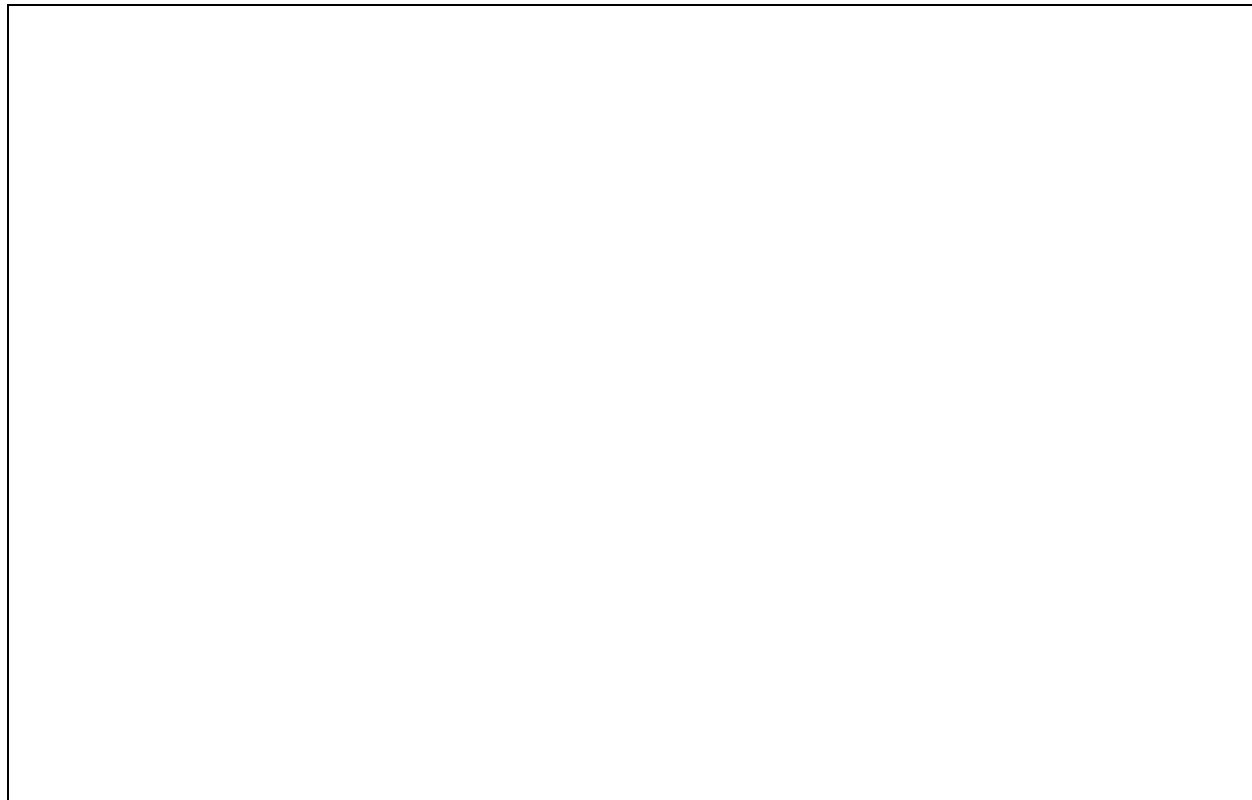
## Notice to Tribes

### Requirement to Provide Notice

#### Requirement to Provide Notice

- Notice is required for:
  - Involuntary foster care placements
  - Termination of parental rights proceedings
- NC requires notice to:
  - Tribal authorities
  - Adult relatives of Indian children

US Department of the Interior  
NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 31



## Handout: Requirement to Provide Notice

When an Indian child is removed from their homes to be placed into foster care, the child welfare agency is required to notify the child's tribe. Remember from an earlier section of this training that an Indian child is defined as "any unmarried person under the age of 18 who is either a member of a **federally** recognized Indian Tribe or the biological child of **a member of** a federally recognized Indian Tribe and is **eligible for membership** in a federally recognized Indian Tribe."

The federal Indian Child Welfare Act requires notice to tribes for:

- Involuntary foster care placements
- Termination of parental rights proceedings

ICWA does not require notice to tribes:

- For voluntary placements (including when there is no threat of removal by the state child welfare agency or when the child's parent or Indian custodian can regain custody on demand)
- If both the parent and child are not members of a federally-recognized tribe
- If the child is not eligible for tribal membership in a federally-recognized tribe
- For Tribal court proceedings
- For proceedings regarding a criminal act committed by a minor
- For awards of custody in divorce proceedings

ICWA does **not** require notice to tribes prior to emergency removals, but state child welfare agencies must immediately take action to comply with ICWA if it is applicable.

North Carolina policy requires that county DSS workers notify:

- Tribal authorities when taking custody of a tribal child or earlier with parental permission, and
- Adult relatives of Indian children being placed in foster care for possible placement preferences

An ICWA notice should include:

- The birth name, birthplace, date of birth, Tribal enrollment information, and number (if applicable) for the child, birth parents, grandparents, and other direct lineal ancestors
- A copy of the relevant child-custody proceeding documents or petition, and the date, time, and location of any scheduled hearing

An ICWA notice should be sent to:

- The child's parents
- The child's Indian custodian, if applicable
- The ICWA Designated Agents of each Tribe in which the child is or may be enrolled. The ICWA Designated Agent for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians can be found on the Bureau of Indian Affairs website.
- The appropriate BIA Regional Director

The ICWA notice must be sent by **registered or certified mail with a return receipt requested**, with a copy sent to the appropriate BIA Regional Director. The appropriate Regional Director can also be found on the BIA website.

Handout: Tribal Contact Information

Contact Information			
	Coharie Tribe		Meherrin Indian Tribe
	Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation		Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation
	Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe		Sappony
	Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina		Waccamaw Siouan Tribe

North Carolina Department of Administration  
NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 22

Each Tribal government has a Tribal Office (or offices), and the contact information generally includes the:

- Tribal Chief or Chairperson
- Executive Director or Tribal Administrator
- Tribal Enrollment Specialist

Reference the sources below and the following handout for contact information.

- NC DOA page with contact information: <https://ncadmin.nc.gov/public/american-indians/nc-tribal-communities>
- BIA page on Notice: <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois/dhs/icwa/icwa-notice>



**Current as of September 2022**, contact information can be found on the NC DOA page: <https://ncadmin.nc.gov/public/american-indians/nc-tribal-communities>

Each Tribal government has a Tribal Office (or offices), and the contact information generally includes the:

- Tribal Chief or Chairperson
- Executive Director or Tribal Administrator
- Tribal Enrollment Specialist



Coharie Tribe

Ammie Gordon "Gordie", Chief

Greg Jacobs, Executive Director - [greg\\_jacobs53@yahoo.com](mailto:greg_jacobs53@yahoo.com)

JaNella Williams, Tribal Enrollment Officer - [cohariegurl@hotmail.com](mailto:cohariegurl@hotmail.com)

**Address:**

7531 N U.S. Hwy 421

Clinton, NC 28328

**Phone:** 910-564-6909

**Fax:** 910-564-2701



Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation

Richard G. Sneed, Principal Chief

Alan B. Ensley, Vice Chief

Richard French, Chairman

Albert Rose, Vice Chairman

Ashleigh Stephens, Chief of Staff - [ashlstep@ebci-nsn.gov](mailto:ashlstep@ebci-nsn.gov)/Phone: 828-359-7029

**Address:**

PO Box 1927

Cherokee, NC 28719

**Phone:** 828-359-7000

**Fax:** 828-497-7000



Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe

Jamie Oxendine, Tribal Administrator - [joxendine@haliwa-saponi.com](mailto:joxendine@haliwa-saponi.com)

Tosha Silver, Enrollment Clerk - [toshasilver@haliwa-saponi.com](mailto:toshasilver@haliwa-saponi.com)

Dr. Ogletree Richardson, Chief

Gideon Lee, Chairman

**Physical Address:**

39021 N.C. Hwy 561

Hollister, NC 27844

**Mailing Address:**

PO Box 99

Hollister, NC 27844

**Phone:** 252-586-4017

**Fax:** 252-586-3918



Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina

**Mr. John Lowery, Tribal Chairman** - [johnlowery1@yahoo.com](mailto:johnlowery1@yahoo.com)/**Phone:** 910-522-5474

**Tammy Maynor, Administrator** - [tmaynor@lumbeetribe.com](mailto:tmaynor@lumbeetribe.com)/**Phone:** 910-522-2221

**Camera Brewer, Admin. Assist. to Chairman** -

[cbrewer@lumbeetribe.com](mailto:cbrewer@lumbeetribe.com)/**Phone:** 910-522-2190

**Reena Locklear, Enrollment Director** - [roxendine@lumbeetribe.com](mailto:roxendine@lumbeetribe.com)

**Mailing Address:**

PO Box 2709

Pembroke, NC 28372

**Physical Address:**

6984 NC Hwy 711 West

Pembroke, NC 28372

**Main:** 910-521-7861

**Fax:** 910-521-7790

**Fax-Adm:** 910-521-2278

**Website:** [www.lumbeetribe.com](http://www.lumbeetribe.com)



Meherrin Indian Tribe  
Jonathan Caudill, Jr., Chief  
Vacant, Tribal Administrator - [bmeherrin@yahoo.com](mailto:bmeherrin@yahoo.com)

**Mailing Address:**

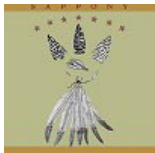
PO Box 274  
Ahoskie, NC 27910  
**Phone:** 252-904-1517



Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation  
**Mr. W.A. "Tony" Hayes, Tribal Chair** - [tony.hayes@trancasnc.com](mailto:tony.hayes@trancasnc.com)  
**Ms. Vickie Jeffries, Tribal Administrator** - [vickiejeffries@yahoo.com](mailto:vickiejeffries@yahoo.com)/**Phone:** 336-421-1317

**Mailing Address:**

PO Box 356  
Mebane, NC 27302  
**Phone:** 919-304-3723  
**Email:** [obsntribe@gmail.com](mailto:obsntribe@gmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.obsn.org](http://www.obsn.org)



Sappony  
**Mr. Otis K. Martin, Chief**  
**Mr. Dante Desiderio, Executive Director** - [dante@nafoa.org](mailto:dante@nafoa.org)  
**Mrs. Dorothy Yates, Tribal Chair** - [dorothysyates@gmail.com](mailto:dorothysyates@gmail.com)

**Physical Address:**

4281 Virgilina Rd.  
Virgilina, VA 24598  
**Mailing Address:**  
PO Box 3265  
Roxboro, NC 27574  
**Email:** [sappony@msn.com](mailto:sappony@msn.com)  
**Website:** [www.sappony.org](http://www.sappony.org)



Waccamaw Siouan Tribe

**Rev. Mike Jacobs, Chief** - revmdjacobs@gmail.com/**Phone:** 910-619-3967

**Ms. Pamela Young Jacobs, Chairperson** - nativesongpj@yahoo.com/ **Phone:** 910-234-1294

**Mrs. Brenda Moore, Housing Coordinator** - brendamoore50@aol.com

**Leslie Jones, Tribal Enrollment Specialist** - leslie.jones@waccamaw-siouan.com/

**Phone:** 910-655-8778

**Mailing Address:**

PO Box 69

Bolton, NC 28423

**Physical Address:**

7275 Old Lake Rd

Bolton, NC 28423

**Phone:** 910-665-8778

**Fax:** 910-655-8779

**Email:** siouan@aol.com

**Website:** www.waccamaw-siouan.com

Questions and Reflections

**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**

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## Engaging Families through Family-Centered Practice

Activity: What Does Engagement Mean to You?

Think about the word *engagement* as you walk around the room and add one symbol, picture, or word to represent engagement on the respective flip charts posted around the room.

Consider the total of the words, pictures, and symbols; what message do you receive?

What does it mean to engage with family members in the area of child welfare service delivery?

What concerns or questions do you have about being open, direct, and honest?

When you think about the information that may be more difficult to share than other information, what comes to your mind?

**Read the following scenario/interaction with a parent:**

Okay, mom, I know you have shared that your boyfriend was babysitting your two-year-old and that he said your child fell from the couch and hit their head. I also remember you saying he would never hurt your child and that he has accepted your child as his own. I need to share with you this preliminary medical report we have just received and then I need us to work together to figure out what happened. I can really feel that we want the same thing. We both want your child to be okay from this injury and to be safe. We both want your child to be with you. The medical report states clearly that your child has a non-accidental injury. Clearly, the report states that there was no fall from the couch (onto the carpet). The report states (and I can show you right here) that your child has a subdural hematoma caused most likely by being shaken. Let's look at this report together and we can even call the doctor together. That's a shock to think about, I know when you thought this injury was from a fall. It's important to me that you, as the mom, have all the information that I have. I want you to know I will share all information with you.

**Debrief**

**What are your reactions to that “courageous” “tough” conversation?**

**What did that look like to you?**

**Did it look like engagement?**

**Did it look like the words on the posters?**

**If not, what else does it need? To live into our goal of engagement?**

**How did this conversation feel to you?**

## Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families

### Learning Objectives

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe and provide examples of strategies to prepare the child and family for court.</li></ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain the importance of debriefing with families after court hearings.</li></ul>               |



Activity: Brown Paper Lunch Bag

Imagine that you have a brown paper lunch bag and in that bag are tiny pieces of paper with the entire story of your life. All of it.

The bag is full of pieces of paper. Piece after piece of paper is stacked so the bag will barely close.

And now it's time to think about who in your life knows about what is on every slip of paper in that bag.

You've pulled a few pieces of paper out to read and you look puzzled at the entry on the paper. Trying to remember.

And now it's time to hand over your bag. Put those pieces of paper you pulled out back in the bag. Because when you hand the story over, it needs to be handed over completely. No exceptions.

Visualize handing the bag to a social worker you just met the day before.

They have set up a meeting to receive your story.

So, you hand it over. All of it. The meeting is over. It's time for you to leave.

The new social worker in your life is holding the bag.

You stand up to leave, but it's hard to go. You see the bag. It's empty now.

The tiny pieces of paper are all over the desk.

There's a fan blowing from the corner, creating a bit of a breeze. Some of the tiny pieces of your story blow around. A couple of pieces of paper have fallen to the floor.

Other staff have come into the office a couple of times. The door is partially open – exposing the pieces of paper scattered across the desk.

It's time for you to go. Although it feels like you shouldn't. You shouldn't go and leave your pieces there. Exposed, out of the bag, vulnerable...with a stranger and people coming in and out... and wind... and a few pieces on the floor.

But. It's time to go now. You walk away.

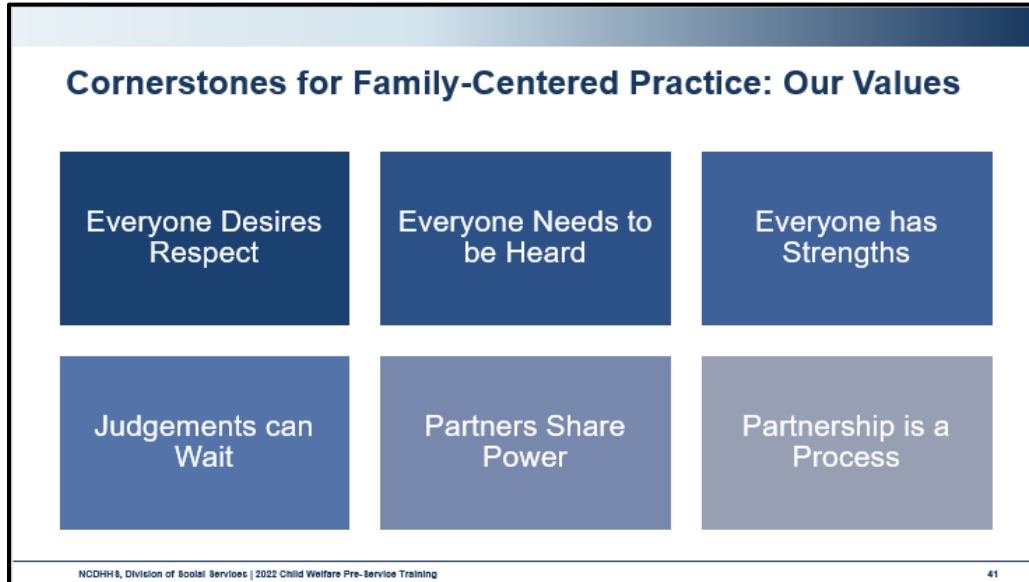
**“I am sharing the key takeaway of \_\_\_\_\_”**

Defining Family-Centered Practice

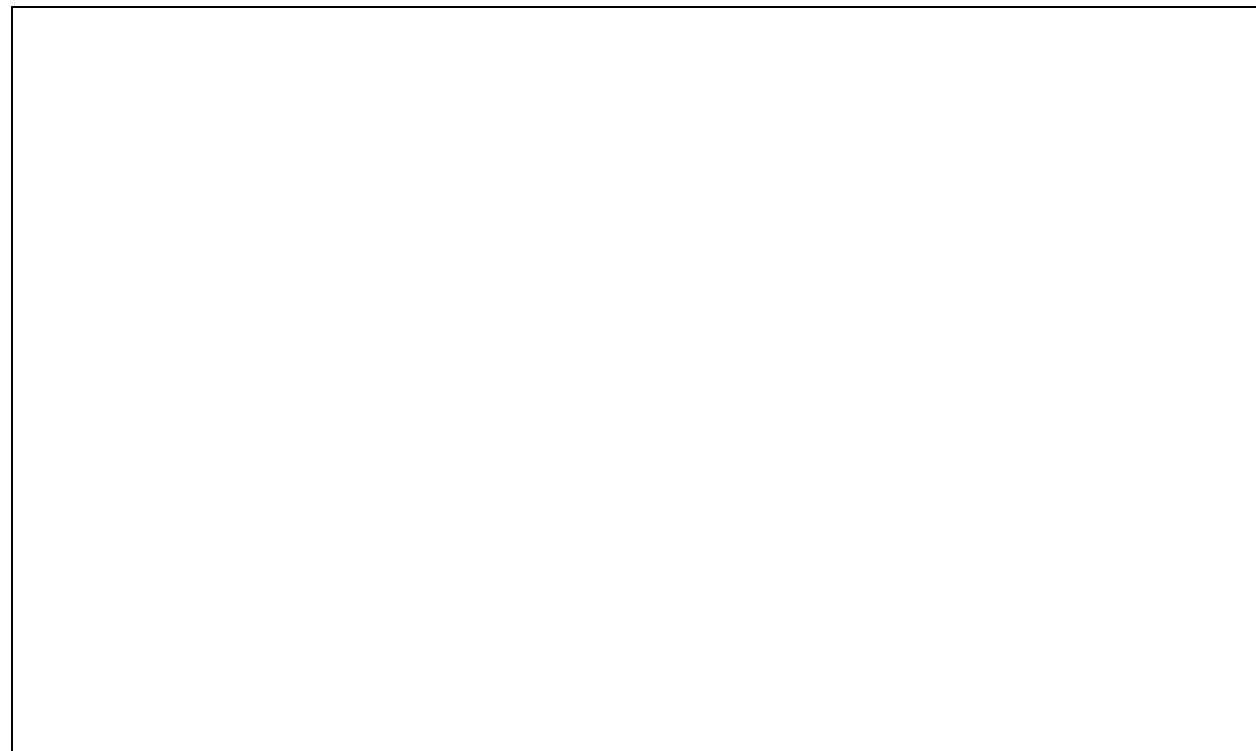
**Defining Family-Centered Practice**

- Family members as experts on their family’s needs
- Encourages active participation in services and decision-making
- Services and interventions to strengthen and enable families to find solutions consistent with their culture
- Respecting diversity, being strengths-based, and supporting the family, while focusing on safety

Cornerstones for Family-Centered Practice: Our Values



These principles are the cornerstones of family-centered practice and were written as guidelines for the relationships between social workers and families. They also serve as a foundation for all relationships in child welfare such as the worker and community resource agency, the worker and supervisor, and foster parents and the child’s parents. We must approach every interaction and every relationship using these principles.



Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families

**Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families**

- Throughout the life of a case
- Development of plans and planning
- Quality caseworker contacts
- Child and family team (CFT) meetings
- Facilitating the parent-child relationship

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 42

**When you think about the many aspects of your role as a child welfare worker, where else do you think family-centered practice with families takes place?**

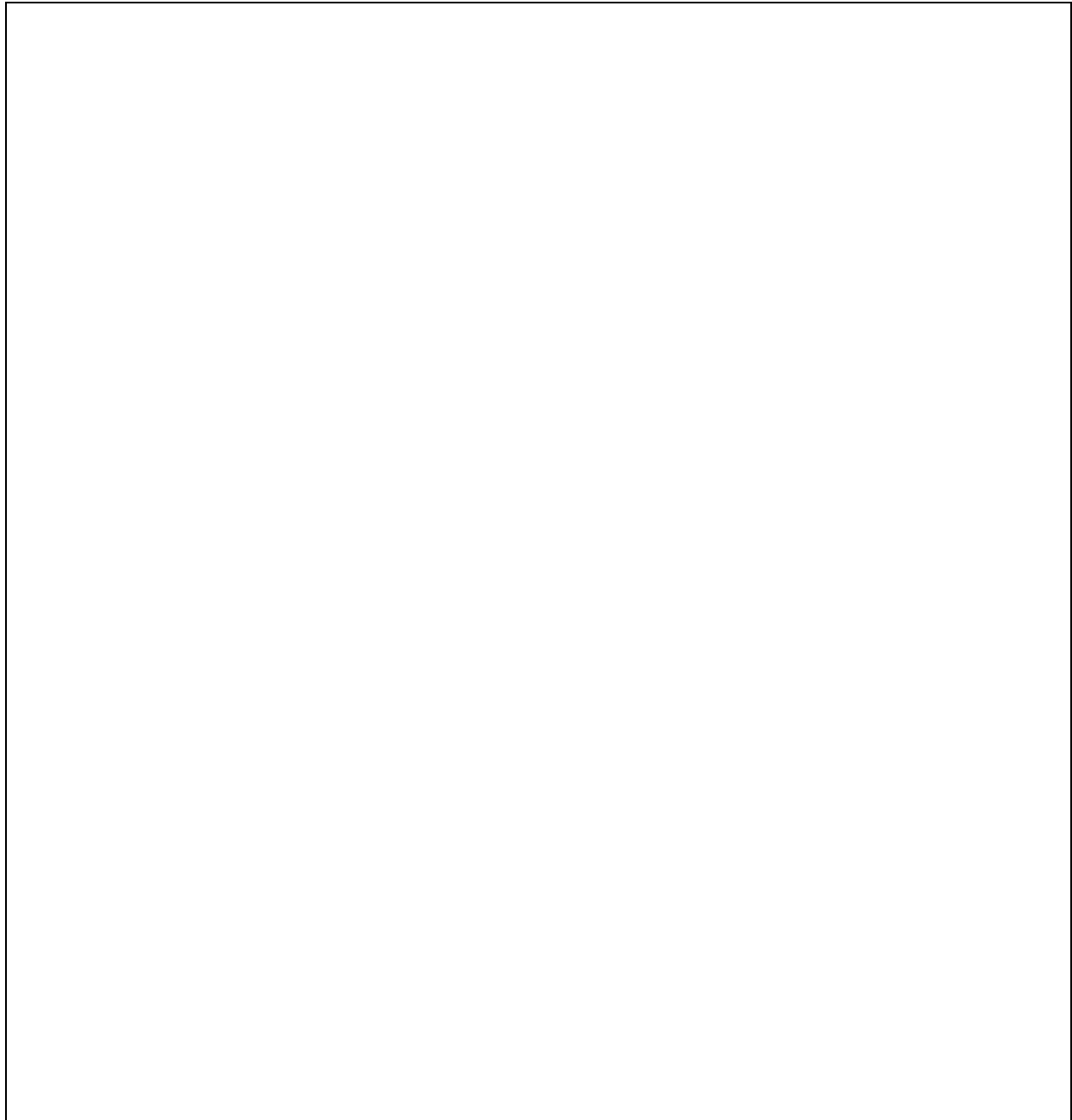
**Do we believe this statement? Families heal best together.**

## Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families Learning Lab

Activity: Do Families Heal Best Together?

**Spend a few minutes with your table group discussing the statement: *Families heal best together.***

**Use this space to record notes.**

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Debrief

**Who knows the most about your family?**

**Who knows their strengths?**

**Who knows their areas of need?**

**Who knows their hurts?**

**Who knows their joys?**

**Who would we need to engage with to learn the most about your family?**

**Would you be comfortable with me, as your social worker, deciding who was not important enough to engage with?**

**Who should decide that?**

Key Elements of Family-Centered Practice

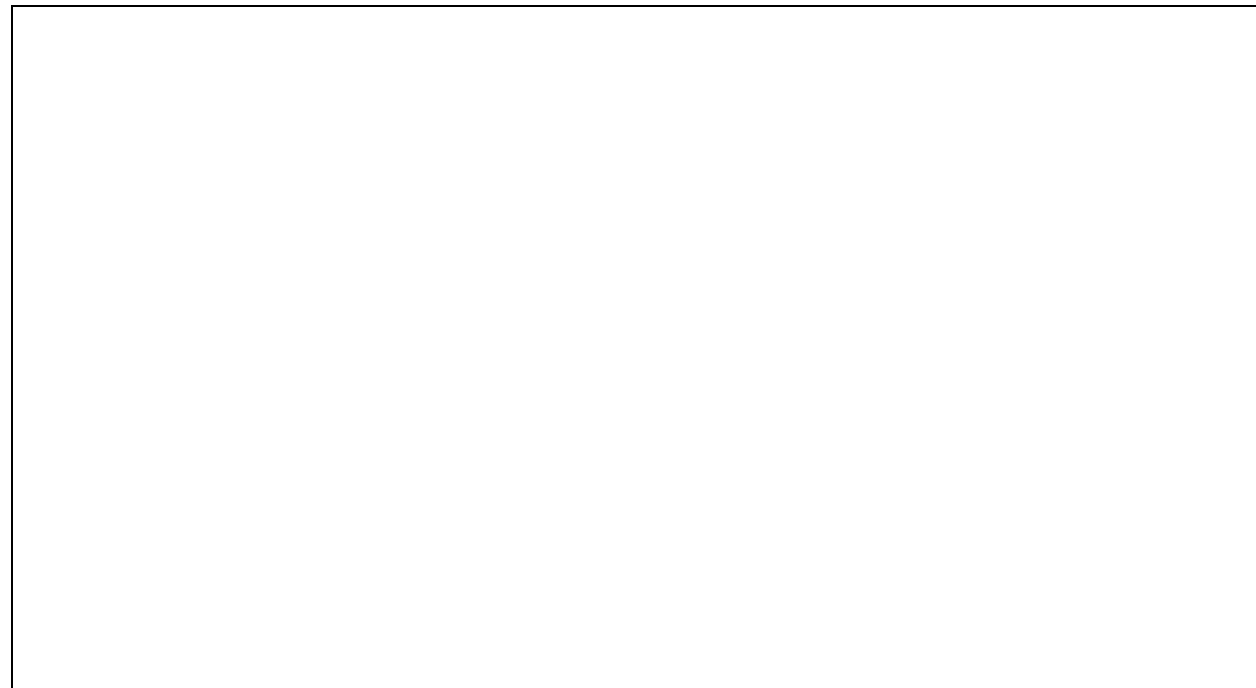
**Key Elements of Family-Centered Practice**

- Working with the family to ensure safety and well-being
- Strengthening capacity of families by focusing on solutions
- Engaging, empowering, and partnering with families
- Developing a relationship between parents and service providers
- Providing individualized, culturally responsive, flexible, and relevant services
- Linking families with collaborative, comprehensive, culturally relevant, community-based networks of supports and services
- Ongoing assessment with families

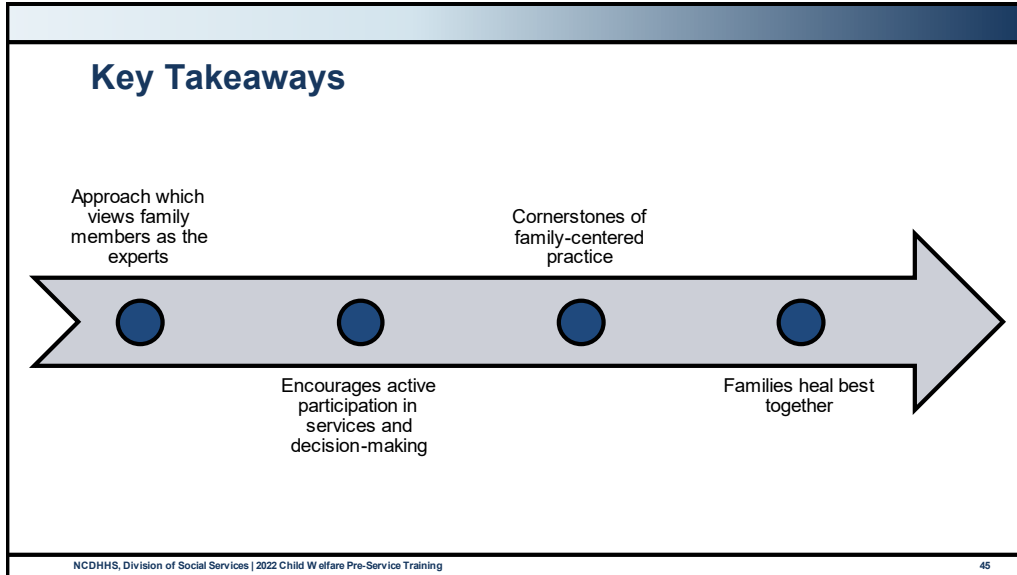
[Philosophy and Key Elements of Family-Centered Practice](#)  
NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 44

Family-centered services are based upon the belief that the best place for children to grow up is in a family and the most effective way to ensure children's safety, permanency, and well-being is to provide services that engage, involve, strengthen, and support families. Families heal best together.

Hearing the voice and choice of the family and children in case decision-making and case planning should occur throughout the life of a case.



Key Takeaways



Questions and Reflections

**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**

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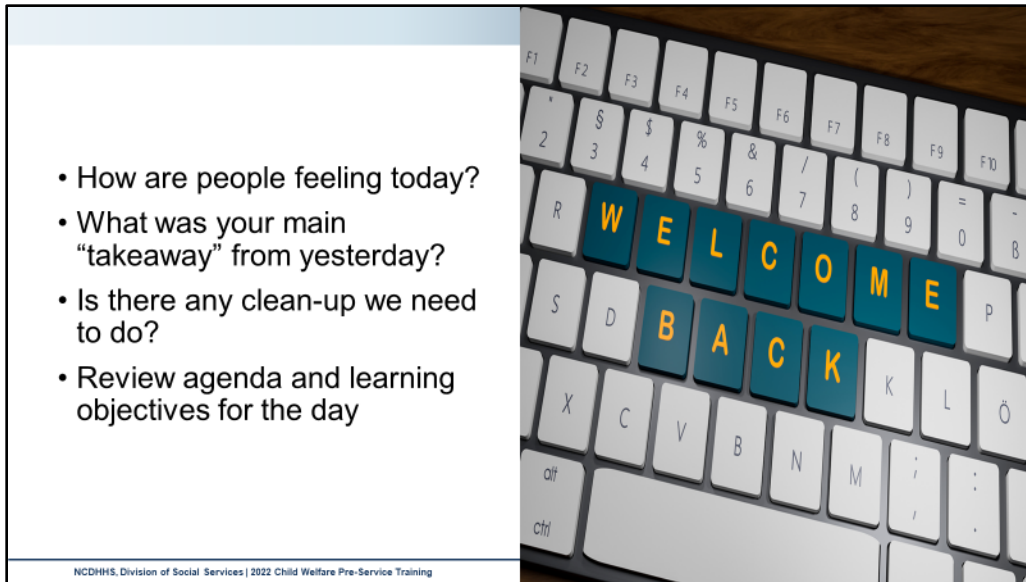


## Week Two, Day Two Agenda

### Pre-Service Training: Child Welfare in North Carolina

I.	Welcome	9:00 – 9:30
	<b>Engaging Families Through Family-Centered Practice (continued)</b>	
II.	Using Family Centered-Practice to Engage Families (continued)	9:30 – 10:00
	<b>BREAK</b>	10:00 – 10:15
III.	Using a Strengths-Based Perspective	10:15 – 10:45
IV.	Using a Strengths-Based Perspective Learning Lab	10:45 – 11:10
V.	Courageous Conversations	11:10 – 12:00
	<b>LUNCH</b>	12:00 – 1:00
	Courageous Conversations (continued)	1:00 – 1:30
VI.	Courageous Conversations Learning Lab	1:30 – 2:30
	<b>BREAK</b>	2:30 – 2:45
VII.	Conflict Resolution	2:45 – 3:45
VIII.	Wrap-Up	3:45 – 4:00

## Welcome



- How are people feeling today?
- What was your main “takeaway” from yesterday?
- Is there any clean-up we need to do?
- Review agenda and learning objectives for the day

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**Use this space to record notes.**

## Engaging Families through Family-Centered Practice (continued)

### Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families

#### Handout: Our Beliefs About Change and Client Engagement

#### **What do the social worker's beliefs have to do with the family's ability to change?**

- Instillation of hope: we cannot instill hope if the social worker does not have hope
- Self-fulfilling prophecy: your beliefs about a family or about change, can impact whether that change occurs. It can be a self-fulfilling prophecy, good or bad.
- Energy of the social worker and dedication of the social worker: your dedication and energy in working with the family will transfer to them. If you are energetic and more dedicated, the family will feel that. They will become more energetic and dedicated to working with your agency and engaged in the change process.
- Honesty, concern, and genuineness of the social worker will be evident (and the lack of will also be present)

#### **What needs to be present in the social worker to allow every family to have an equal chance for change?**

- Belief that if children can be kept safe and their needs met, they are better off with their parents. This is the importance of permanency.
- Belief that people can change.
- Belief that the social worker's skills and knowledge can help people to change.
- Belief that you must be hopeful and have the ability to instill hope in others.
- Belief that you must be nonjudgmental and non-accusatory.
- Belief that under different life circumstances the social worker could in fact be the client.
- Belief in the importance of treating every family with dignity and respect.

#### **Rules of Engagement in Family-Centered Practice Planning**

- Seek common ground
  - What can you agree on?
  - What is the common goal?
- Be respectful, honest, empathetic, concerned, and genuine
- Be explicit and understandable and give information
- Try to understand and listen empathetically
- Acknowledge the perspective of the child and family
- Allow the child and family to show feelings and ask questions
- Treat the child and family with respect, as you would want to be treated

**Why is family-centered practice important?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

Worksheet: Ten Beliefs of Family-Centered Practice

1. Safety of the child is the first concern.
2. Children have a right to their families.
3. The family is the fundamental resource for the nurturing of children.
4. Parents should be supported in their efforts to care for their children.
5. Families are diverse and have the right to be respected for their special cultural, racial, ethnic, and religious traditions: children can flourish in different types of families.
6. A crisis is an opportunity for change.
7. Inappropriate intervention can do harm.
8. Families who seem hopeless can grow and change.
9. Family members are our partners.
10. It is our job to instill hope.

**Describe your beliefs about family-centered practice and why your agency is working with the family.**

**Share your statements with a partner and then your partner will share their statements with you.** You will provide each other feedback, which should include:

- How did you receive this message as a parent? What was that like for you?
- How safe and secure did you feel in the receipt of the message?
- What engagement of the social worker did you see or feel?
- What could be improved on?

## Impact of Family-Centered Practice

### Impact of Family-Centered Practice on Outcomes: Tying it All Together

- Family preservation
- Improved interpersonal relationships
- Increased family buy-in
- Creating a sense of belonging and family connectedness
- Improved quality of caseworker visits
- Youth empowerment

Family Engagement: Partnering with Families to Improve Child Welfare Outcomes  
NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 7

Family-centered practice represents a mindset and approach that has extensive benefits, including the following:

- **Family preservation.** Involving family members early in the casework process may eliminate the need for a child to be placed outside of the home.
- **Improved interpersonal relationships.** A family's belief that all its members are respected, strengthens your relationship with the family. This creates confidence in the process which increases the chances for a successful intervention.
- **Increased family buy-in.** Families are more likely to commit to achieving goals when they help make decisions about a plan that will affect them and their children.
- **Creating a sense of belonging and family connectedness.** The inclusion of kin and extended family members in case planning expands placement and permanency options for children when in-home care is not feasible and can nurture a child's sense of belonging during what is oftentimes a tumultuous, unsettling time. Some people who play an important role may be "fictive kin"—those who may not be related, but who have an emotionally significant relationship with the family or child.
- **Improved quality of caseworker visits.** The engagement of families through empathy, genuineness, and respect leads to quality, purposeful interactions between families and social workers. In turn, quality contacts provide opportunities for social workers to make an improved assessment of the child's safety, risk, and needs so they can better support the family.
- **Youth empowerment.** There are also tangible benefits to engaging youth. These include supporting adolescent brain development, encouraging the development of leadership skills, improving self-esteem, and helping form critical social connections.

## Handout: Family-Centered Practice

### Our Beliefs:

- Children must be allowed to grow up in a safe environment free from abuse or neglect.
- If children can be kept in their own homes, we must do so by providing support and services that will eliminate the risk of harm by abuse or neglect.
- If the children must be removed, we must work toward reunification as soon as possible.
- If we can't get children back to their own homes, we must get them into a permanent family situation as soon as possible.
- Connections need to be made to kin, culture, and community.
- Children need stability, security, safety, and their needs to be met while we are working toward permanent placement.

### Reasons for Family-Centered Practice:

- Better information and more information about the family (history, functioning, characteristics, system, culture, values, beliefs, etc.) can be obtained when the family is included in the process.
- Better assessments of safety and risk of harm can be done with better information.
- Plans for change are more likely to have investment by family members when they are a part of the process.
- Individualized plans are more relevant to specific issues and needs of the family and can capitalize on the strengths of family members and the family as a whole.
- Strengths-based practice helps people to be more motivated and hopeful for change to really occur.
- Families can really change if they are a part of the change process.
- Building trust and entering into a relationship are difficult when the family is involuntarily participating. The family must be brought into the change process for real change to occur.
- The caregiver needs to be empowered to meet the child's needs and to keep the child safe.

### Principles of Family-Centered Practice

1. Family-centered practice requires that the family be viewed as a system of interrelated people and that action and change in one part of the system impacts the other.
2. Family-centered practice honors the importance of a child's emotional and spiritual attachments to his/her birth family, culture, and community. Maintaining these attachments is paramount.
3. Family-centered practice requires an understanding of the importance that kin can play in planning for and ensuring child safety and permanence. (Define the family!)
4. Family-centered practice requires that we build the strengths and capacities and resources of the family system.
5. Family-centered practice requires that we are honest with families and that we practice full disclosure.
6. Family-centered practice seeks to engage the family as partners in the identification of needs, planning for services, and assessment of service efficacy.
7. Family-centered practice requires that the case plan is clearly linked to the assessment and that the family fully understands their roles and responsibilities outlined within the case plan.
8. Family-centered practice ensures that children have permanent legal connections with adults who love them and are committed to them.

Key Takeaways

**Key Takeaways**

Our own beliefs impact a family's likelihood for change	Family-centered practice has many benefits to outcomes
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NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 8

Questions and Reflections

**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**

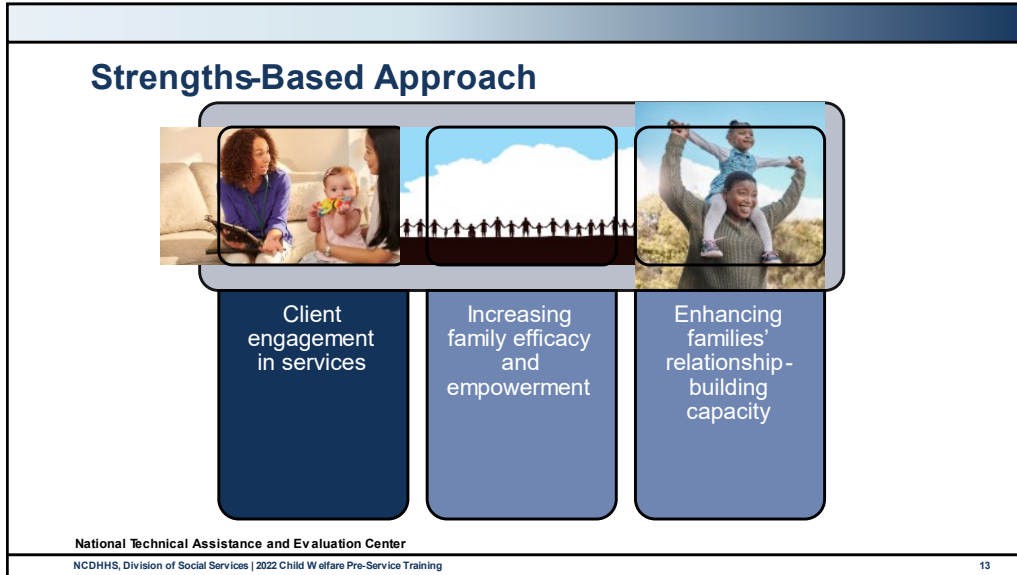


## Using a Strengths-Based Perspective

### Learning Objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the components of a strength-based perspective.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss the benefits of using a strengths-based perspective.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate techniques and strategies to discover family strengths.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give examples of how to use strengths to address a family's needs.</li></ul>

Strengths-Based Approach



A strength-based approach benefits children and families by:

- Influencing the extent of clients' engagement in services
- Increasing family efficacy and empowerment, and
- Enhancing families' relationship-building capacity and their support networks

**What other benefits can you see for focusing on strengths when we work with children, youth, and families?**

## Interviewing Strategies

**Interviewing Strategies**

- Instead of “I’ll believe it when I see it”, this principle says, “I believe, and I will see.”
- We need to focus on strengths, not labels
- The language we use with children and families creates reality
- Change is inevitable
- Positive change occurs within authentic relationships
- We all have our own story and our own reality
- People have more confidence to try new things when they can start where they are with what they know
- Building strengths and building capacity is a dynamic process.
- Collaborating with children, youth, and families is essential

Resiliency Initiatives  
NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 14

**Which of these strategies feel the most natural as we focus on building strengths? And which seems most challenging?**

Identifying Strengths

<b>Identifying Strengths</b>	
<b>Strengths-Based</b>	<b>Deficit-Based</b>
At-potential	At-risk
Strengths	Problems
Opportunity	Crisis
Empower	Control
Child and family -centered	Mandate-focused
Support	Fix
Child and family -determined	Expert and system-oriented

Resiliency Initiatives  
NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 15

**What other differences can you see in child welfare as we move from focusing on deficits to strengths?**

## Using a Strengths-Based Perspective Learning Lab

### Activity: Skills Practice

Move around the room to find a partner you have not previously paired with for other activities.

Take turns with your partner to work through the following scenario. Be sure to repeat the scenario so each of you has an opportunity to play both roles.

- When you are playing the role of the caseworker, focus on your language as you are trying to gather the necessary information to help the family to be successful.
- When you are playing the role of the parent, focus on the assistance you would like from the child welfare system and on what you need for you and your daughter.

**Scenario:** You are meeting with a parent for the first time after their 14-year-old daughter, Ashley, was placed in a foster home. Ashley has been in the foster home for a week and has told her parent that she is struggling with the rules in the foster home and doesn't want to go to school. In the past, Ashley has struggled with consistent school attendance, and her parent has dealt with mental health challenges.

**Was it easier to play the role of the caseworker or to play the parent? Why?**

**Did you catch yourself using more strengths-based or more deficit-based language?**

**Did you and your partner notice differences in language?**

**When you were playing the parent, how did it feel when the caseworker used strengths-based language?**

Questions and Reflections

**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**

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## Courageous Conversations

### Learning Objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define the different types of courageous conversations with children, families, and out-of-home care providers.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe and provide examples of the skills and behaviors that are necessary to lead courageous conversations.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain different approaches for preparing for courageous conversations.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss how family-centered practice is used during courageous conversations.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify their own biases and describe how they impact courageous conversations.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain how a family’s culture impacts courageous conversations.</li></ul>

Video: [What is Cultural Humility?](#)

Visit: [What is Cultural Humility](#) for an explanation of cultural humility and its importance in our ability to interact with diverse populations.

Use this space to record notes.



## Reflection of Personal Bias

As part of our work in the DEIB module, we talked about cultural humility and strategies for broadening our cultural awareness.

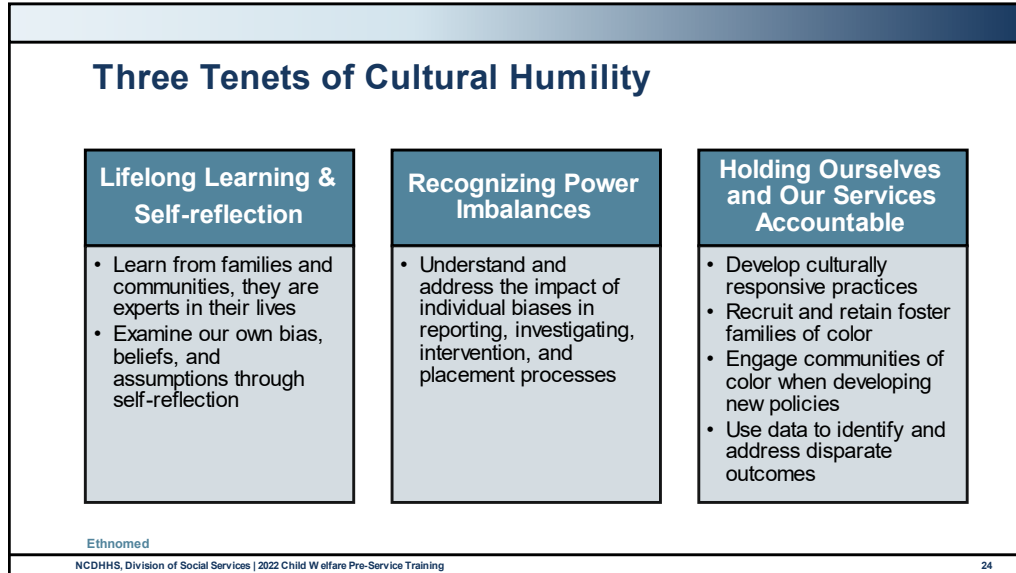
We also talked about Project Implicit and the Harvard Implicit Association Test, or IAT, and you had an opportunity to take one of the association tests as part of the pre-work for that module. This type of self-exploration is critical to building our capacity to have courageous conversations. It is also important to remember that using this type of tool is an initial step toward self-discovery.

### Activity: Visualization Exercise

Source: [How to Outsmart Your Own Unconscious Bias](#)

- **As you envisioned the administrative assistant, did you see a man or a woman?**
- **Was the challenging parent a man or a woman? Were they White, Black or Asian, or another ethnicity?**
- **As you visualized the Judge, was the Judge a man or a woman? Younger or older? What ethnicity?**
- **Were there any a-ha moments anyone would like to share? Was anyone particularly surprised by their visualization?**

## Three Tenets of Cultural Humility



Recall from the DEIB module, there are three tenets of cultural humility:

Lifelong learning and self-reflection - We must desire and continually be open to curiosity and learning from families and communities. It also means being willing and open to examining our own biases, beliefs, and assumptions through self-reflection.

Recognizing power imbalances - Families of color are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system and are more likely to experience negative outcomes compared to white families. A culturally humble approach helps us understand and address the impact of individual biases in reporting, investigating, intervention and placement processes.

Holding ourselves and our services accountable- To truly address disproportionality and disparities in child welfare systems, we must work toward developing culturally responsive practices, recruiting and retaining foster families of color, engaging communities of color when developing new policies, and using data to identify and address disparate outcomes.

Culture and Potential Conflict

**Culture and Potential Conflict**

- Culture is an essential part of conflict and conflict resolution.
- Cultures are more than language, dress, and food customs.
- Cultures are always changing, and they relate to the symbolic dimension of life.
- Cultures are embedded in every conflict because conflicts arise in human relationships.

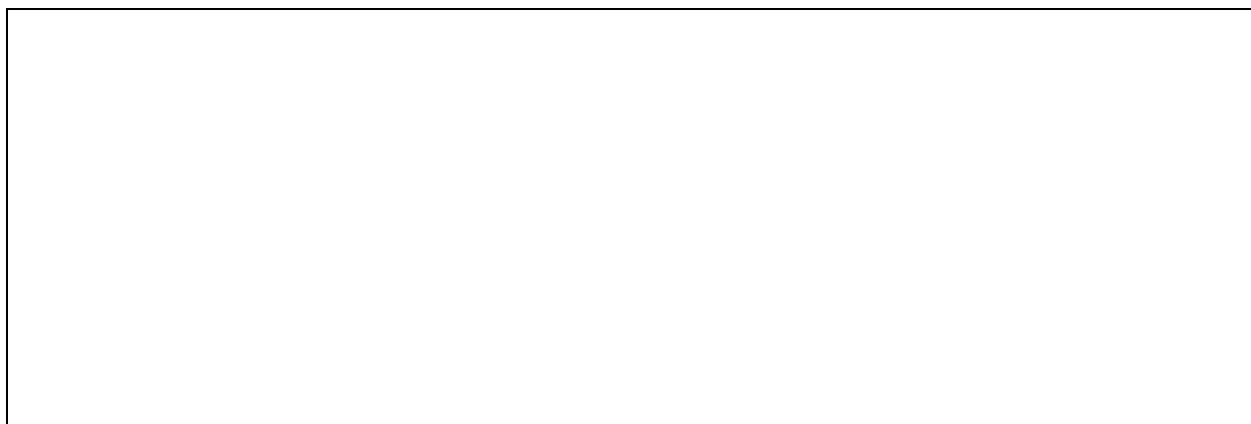
Culture and Conflict | Beyond Intractability

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 26

Unless we develop comfort with culture as an integral part of conflict, we may find ourselves tangled in its net of complexity, limited by our own cultural lenses. Cultural fluency is a key tool for disentangling and managing multilayered, cultural conflicts.

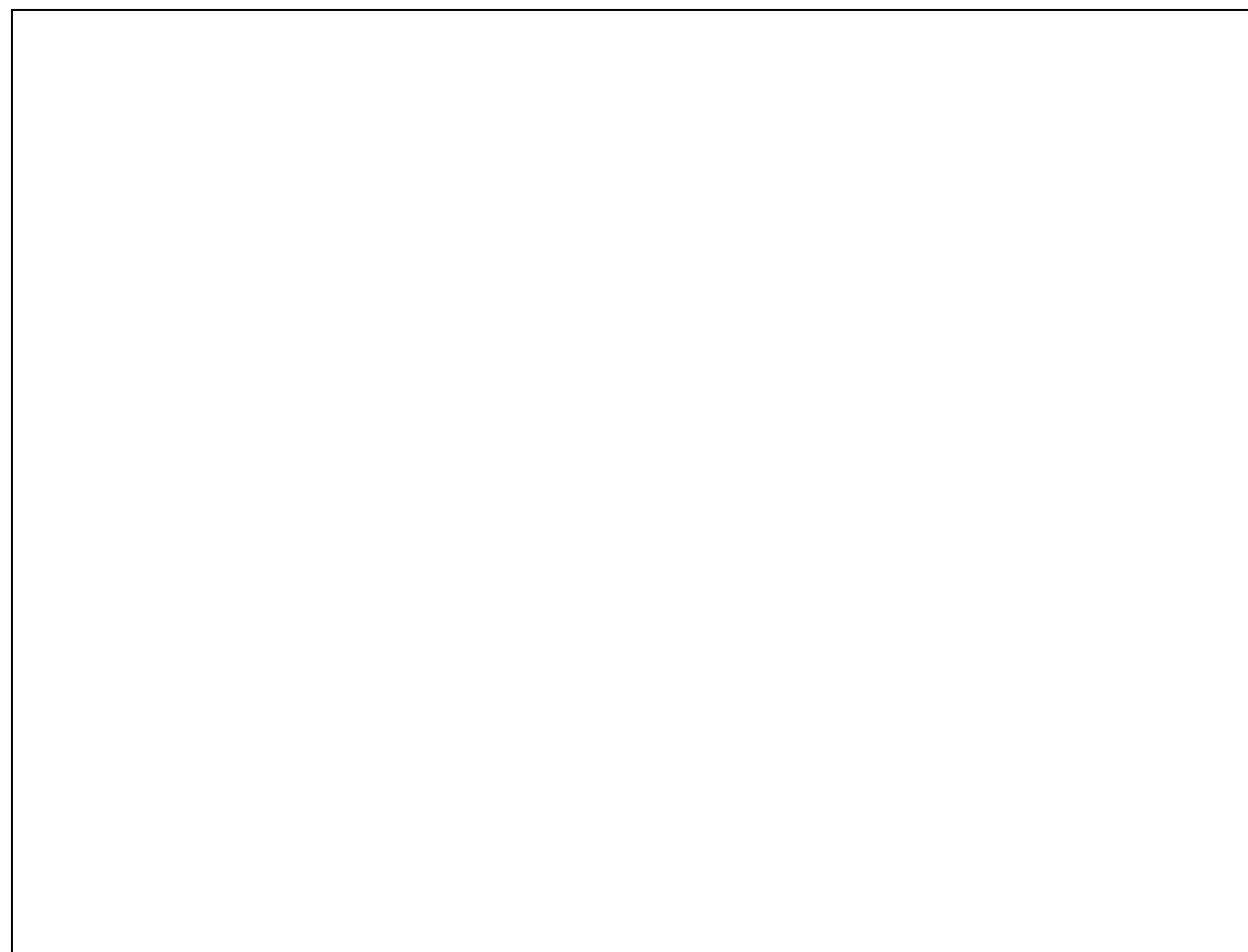
Cultural fluency means familiarity with cultures: their natures, how they work, and ways they intertwine with our relationships in times of conflict and harmony. Cultural fluency means awareness of several dimensions of culture, including:

- Communication
- Ways of naming, framing, and taming conflict
- How people interpret the meaning of their experiences
- Identities and roles



### Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations

Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations			
<b>Stay Engaged</b>	<b>Experience Discomfort</b>	<b>Speak Your Truth</b>	<b>Expect and Accept Non-closure</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discomfort is inevitable, especially, in dialogue about race.</li><li>• Make a commitment to bring issues into the open.</li><li>• Not talking about these issues creates divisiveness. Healing and change begin through dialogue, even when uncomfortable.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be open about thoughts and feelings.</li><li>• Not just saying what you think others want to hear.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Hang out in uncertainty."</li><li>• Do not rush to quick solutions, especially in relation to racial understanding.</li><li>• Requires ongoing dialogue.</li></ul>
<small>Adapted from Glenn E. Singleton &amp; Curtis Linton, <i>Courageous Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools</i>. 2006. pp.5865. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.</small>			
<small>NCDHHS, Division of Social Services   2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training <span style="float: right;">26</span></small>			

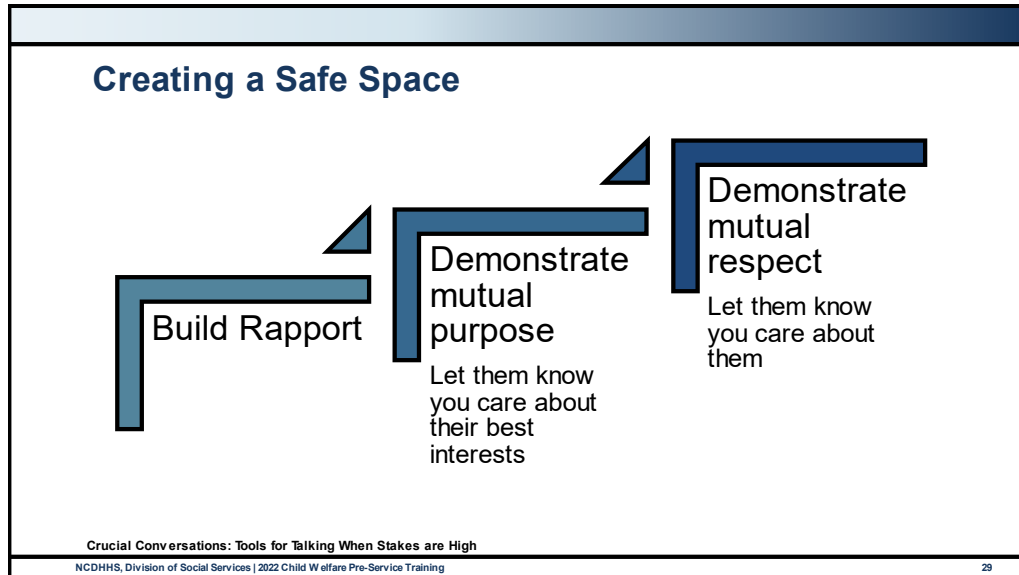


Questions and Reflections

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Creating a Safe Space



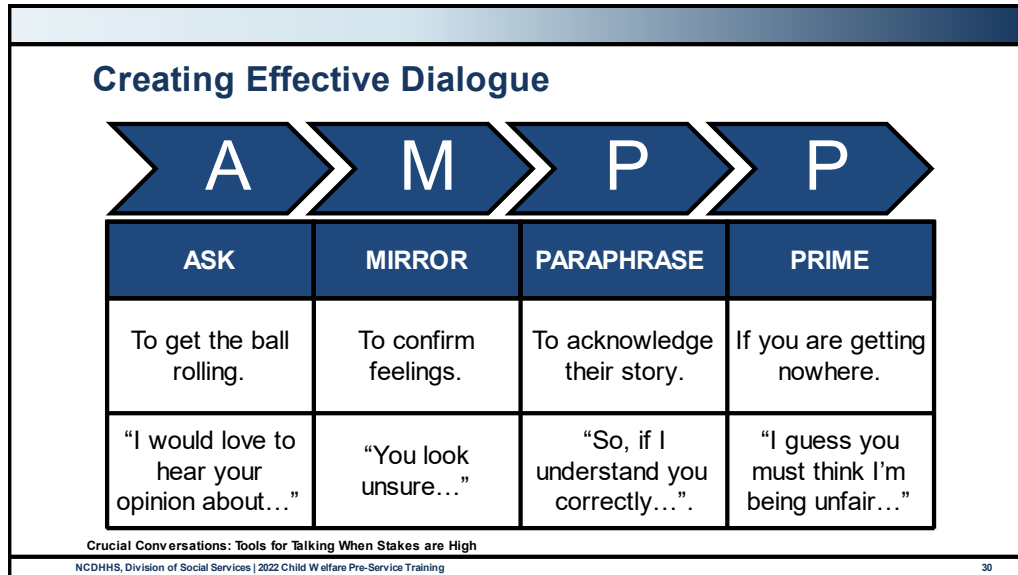
To have a successful courageous conversation, you must first create a safe space and build rapport. When things go wrong in crucial conversations, we assume the content of our message is the problem, so we begin to water it down or avoid it altogether. But, if your intent is pure and you learn how to make it safe for others, you can talk to almost anyone about almost anything.

The key is to make the other person feel safe. To do this, there are two things the person needs to know.

1. They need to know that you care about their best interests and goals. This is called mutual purpose.
2. They need to know that you care about them. This is called mutual respect.

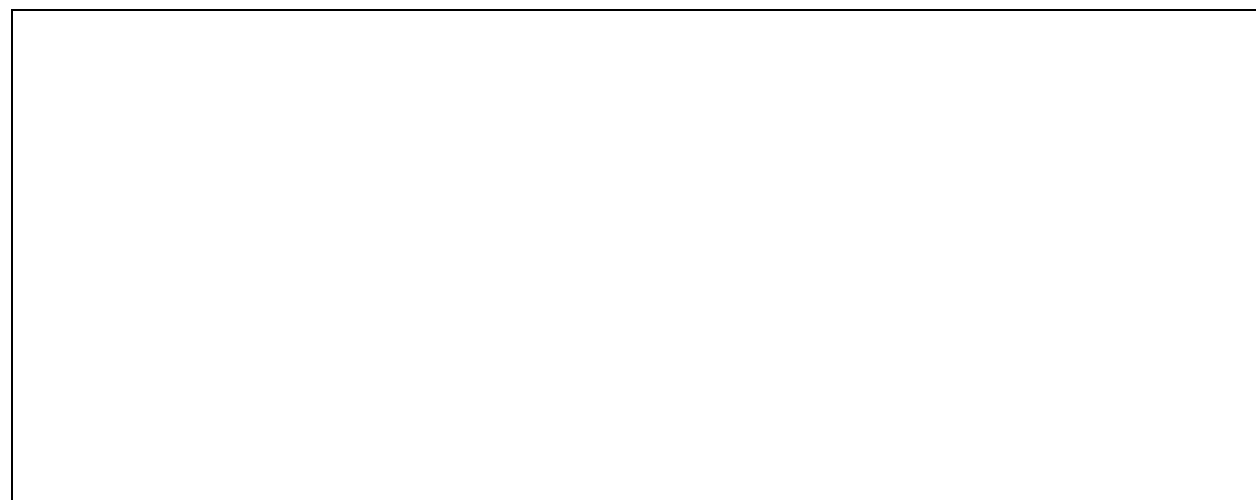


Creating Effective Dialogue



The four steps to creating effective dialogue are illustrated in the AMPP acronym which represents Ask, Mirror, Paraphrase, and Prime.

1. **Ask** (to get the ball rolling) Start by saying things like “I would love to hear your opinion about...”
2. **Mirror** (to confirm feelings) Saying things like “You look unsure...”. Explain to them what you sense from the situation, in a calm and understanding tone.
3. **Paraphrase** (to acknowledge their story) Acknowledging by saying things like this will be “So if I understand you correctly...”. Use this to understand how they feel.
4. **Prime** (if you are getting nowhere) If someone clams up, we might need to encourage them to speak by suggesting what we think they might be feeling. “I guess you must think I’m being unfair...”



Activity: Strategies for Effective Verbal Communication

Worksheet: Strategies for Effective Verbal Communication

***North Carolina Worker Practice Standards for Communication***

**Ensure Clarity when communicating.**

**Adapt communication to family needs and preferences and provide consistent information to all family members who need it.**

**Allow time to enhance two-way communication with families through questions and checks for understanding.**

**Speak to families and youth in a non-judgmental, respectful manner.**

**Clearly and openly express to youth and families what is expected from them and what they can expect from Child Welfare.**

**Consistently tell the truth during difficult conversations in a way that promotes dialogue.**

**Diligently respect confidentiality while sharing information when necessary and appropriate.**



## Strategies for Effective Nonverbal Communication

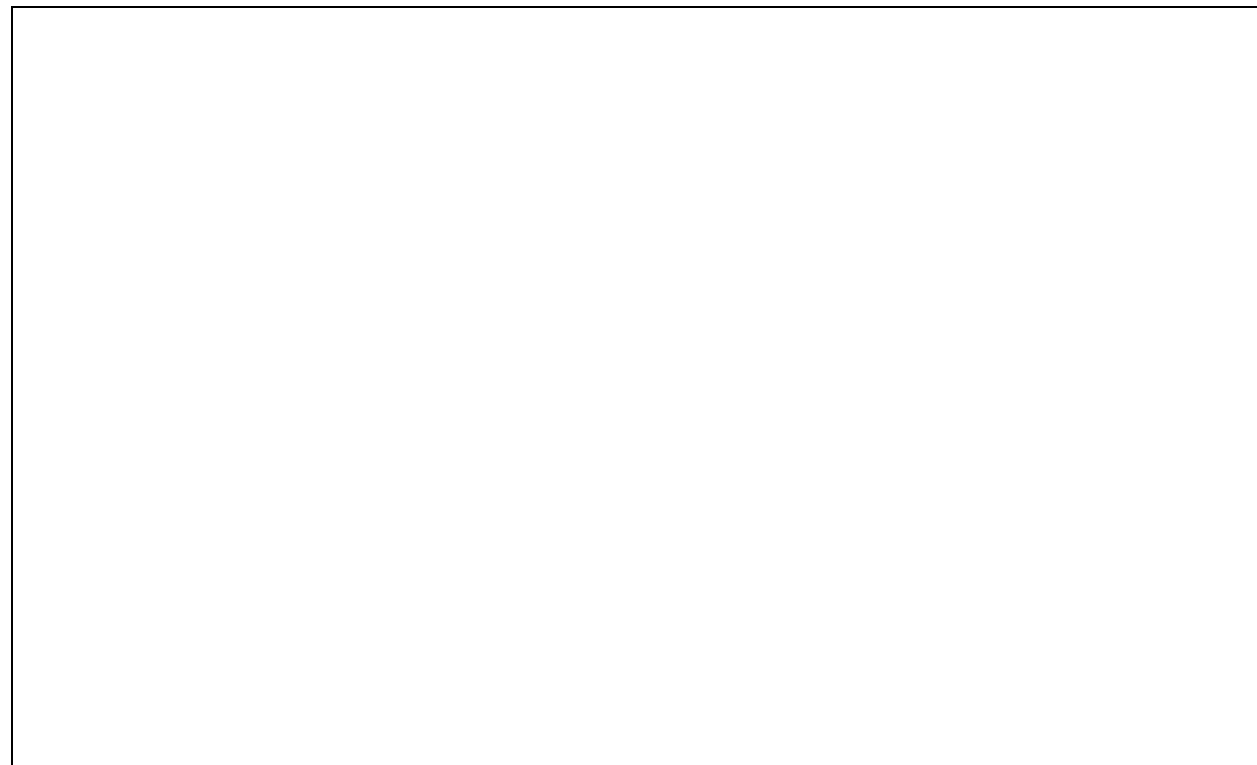
**Strategies for Effective Nonverbal Communication**

- Use calm body language
- Position yourself strategically
- Give the person enough physical space
- Get on the other person's physical level
- Pay attention and avoid multitasking
- Do not stand or sit in a challenging stance
- Do not glare or stare. It may be perceived as a challenge.

<https://familyandcommunityimpact.org/nonverbal-cues-carry-as-much-information-as-words/>

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Nonverbal communication actually has a higher impact on how our messages are received than verbal communication. In fact, only 10% of our message is understood through the words we use; 55% of our communication is conveyed through body language and 35% through our tone of voice.



Nonverbal Communication and Potential Conflict

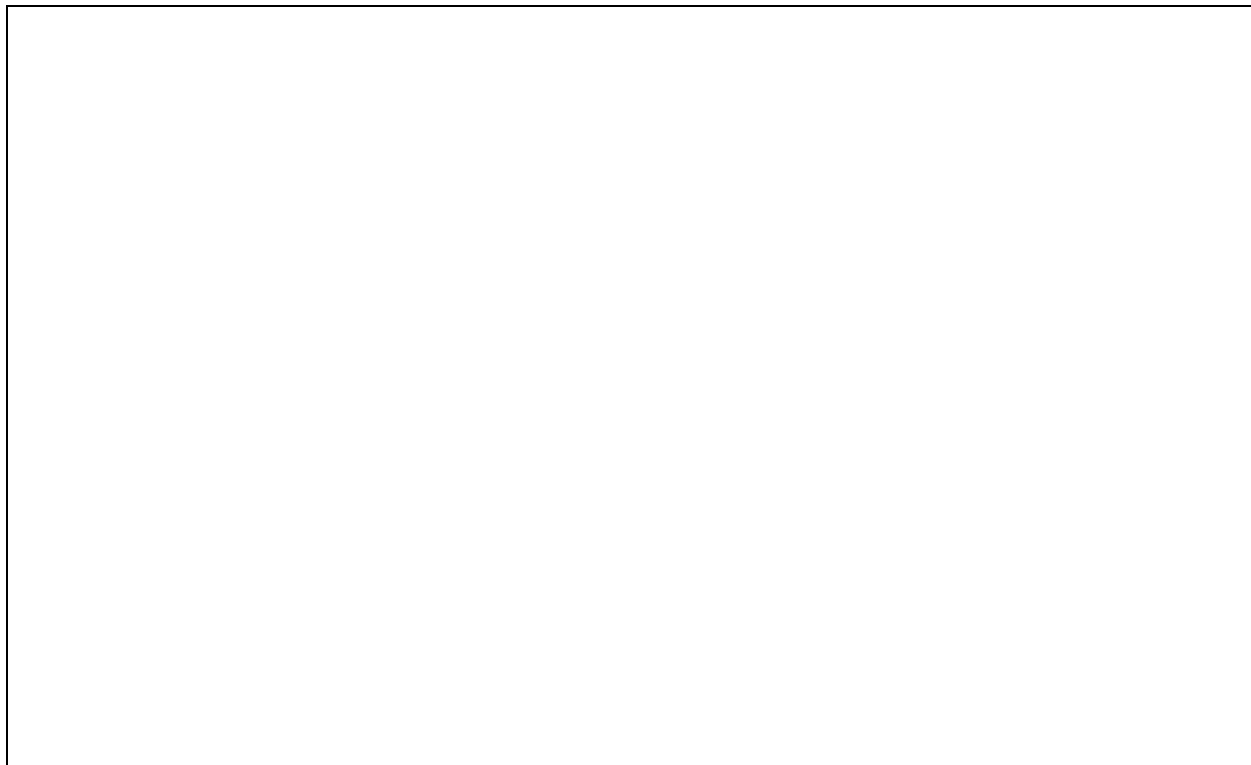
**Nonverbal Communication and Potential Conflict**

- Pay attention to facial expressions, posture, gestures, and tone of voice.
- Develop your own emotional awareness.
- Do the words match the body language for you and the other person?

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/conflict-resolution-skills.htm>

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Your ability to accurately read another person depends on your own emotional awareness. The more aware you are of your own emotions, the easier it will be for you to pick up on the wordless clues that reveal what others are feeling. Think about what you are trying to communicate to the other person, and if what you say matches your body language.



Questions and Reflections

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Full Disclosure

### Full Disclosure

Information provided to the family by the child welfare agency regarding the steps in the intervention process,

the requirements of the case plan,

the expectations of the family,

the consequences if the family does not fulfill the expectations,

and the rights of the parents to ensure that the family completely understands the process.

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/search/?822E98A70CACF462191B3E33F9A34910-78FC63494EB69782A9B6CBD6521519FDCD3099F3&addsearch=full+disclosure>

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 35

Full Disclosure and Investigative and Family Assessments

### Full Disclosure and Investigative and Family Assessments

Explaining that	Informing	Providing information about	Discussing	Informing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>child safety is paramount.</li> <li>the agency wants to keep children with their families if child can remain safely in the home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>parents about the specific allegations made against them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the parents' rights and responsibilities:</li> <li>participation in the investigative process.</li> <li>participation in the case planning process.</li> <li>the importance of searching for, and consideration of, relatives who may provide information and/or a safe home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the child safety and risk concerns.</li> <li>the support services available to help the family.</li> <li>the urgency to make necessary changes to provide for the safety of the child and to reduce risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the parents about the consequences of not making changes to keep their children safe and following through with the case plan.</li> </ul>

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Full Disclosure and In-Home Services

### Full Disclosure and In-Home Services

Explaining that	Providing and sharing information about	Providing and sharing information about	Discussing	Informing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the purpose of in-home services is to safely maintain children in their own home.</li> <li>mitigating safety and reducing future risk of harm is the ultimate goal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the parents' rights and responsibilities:</li> <li>sharing information about the child's needs.</li> <li>the importance of involving family members to provide support to the family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participation in the Family Services Agreement process and possible involvement of the court system if family is not cooperating with DSS.</li> <li>what changes in the family are necessary to keep the children safe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the support services available to help the child and parents.</li> <li>the urgency to make changes so that children can remain home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the parents about the consequences of not following through with the Family services Agreement that could lead to out-of-home care.</li> </ul>

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Full Disclosure and Permanency

### Full Disclosure and Permanency

Explaining that	Providing and sharing information about	Providing and sharing information about	Discussing	Informing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>foster care is temporary, and it is not good for children to grow up without permanent parent(s).</li> <li>developmental and emotional harm can result from a child placed in foster care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the parents' rights and responsibilities:</li> <li>sharing information about the child's needs.</li> <li>A search for, and consideration of, relatives who may be able to care for the child.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About participation in the case planning process and involvement of the court system.</li> <li>About the goals of concurrent planning, time frames, and permanency options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The support services available to help the child's parents.</li> <li>The urgency to get the child out of foster care, either through reunification with the parent(s) or into a legally permanent home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The parents about the consequences of not following through with the case plan.</li> </ul>

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/search/?822E98A70CACF462191B3E33F9A34910-78FC63494EB69782A9B6CBD6521519FDCD3099F3&addsearch=full+disclosure>

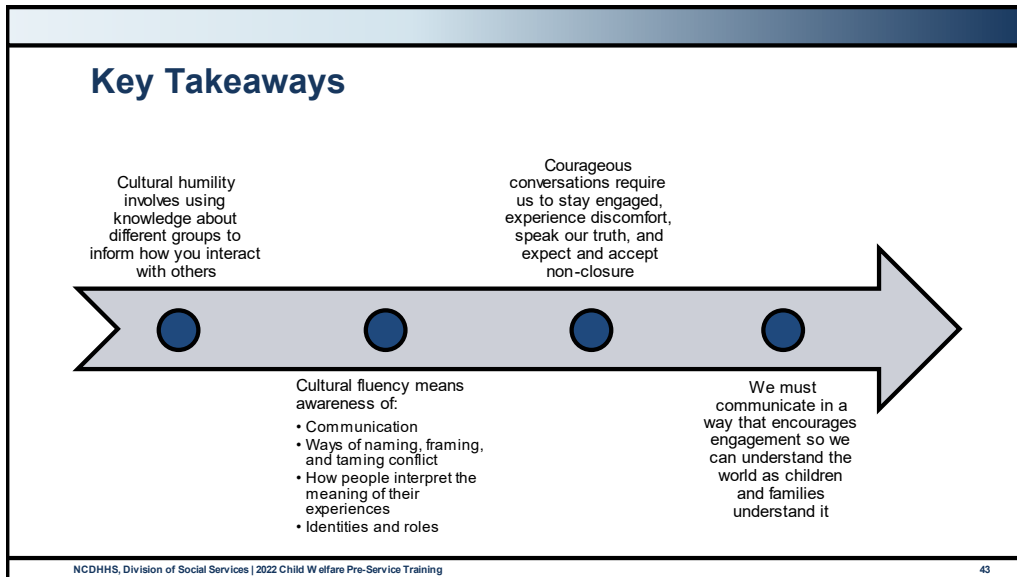
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Questions and Reflections

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### Key Takeaways



## Courageous Conversations Learning Lab

Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations			
Stay Engaged	Experience Discomfort	Speak Your Truth	Expect and Accept Non-closure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Discomfort is inevitable, especially, in dialogue about race.</li><li>Make a commitment to bring issues into the open.</li><li>Not talking about these issues creates divisiveness. Healing and change begin through dialogue, even when uncomfortable.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Be open about thoughts and feelings.</li><li>Not just saying what you think others want to hear.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>"Hang out in uncertainty."</li><li>Do not rush to quick solutions, especially in relation to racial understanding.</li><li>Requires ongoing dialogue.</li></ul>
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Keep these four agreements of courageous conversations in mind as we practice having courageous conversations with children and families.



## Courageous Conversations and Engagement

### Courageous Conversations and Engagement

- Our service looks like engagement.
- We show respect by being prepared for each interaction – whether that interaction is individual or group.

Engagement happens often in the context of courageous conversations.

Activity: Courageous Conversations in Action

**Scenario:**

- You are on the porch at a home to initiate a new physical abuse investigation.
- The report alleges mom’s boyfriend left bruises on her 3-year-old.
- Reportedly “potty-training” abuse – bruises noted by anonymous caller.
- Boyfriend provides care while mom works. Mom is a good mom and loves her child. Caller has never seen mom act harshly or inappropriately. Boyfriend was observed jerking child in and out of the car and has heard child screaming while mom is at work.

**As a large group, brainstorm what you might say to each of the family members listed on the flip charts posted around the room. The trainer will record your responses on each corresponding flip chart.**

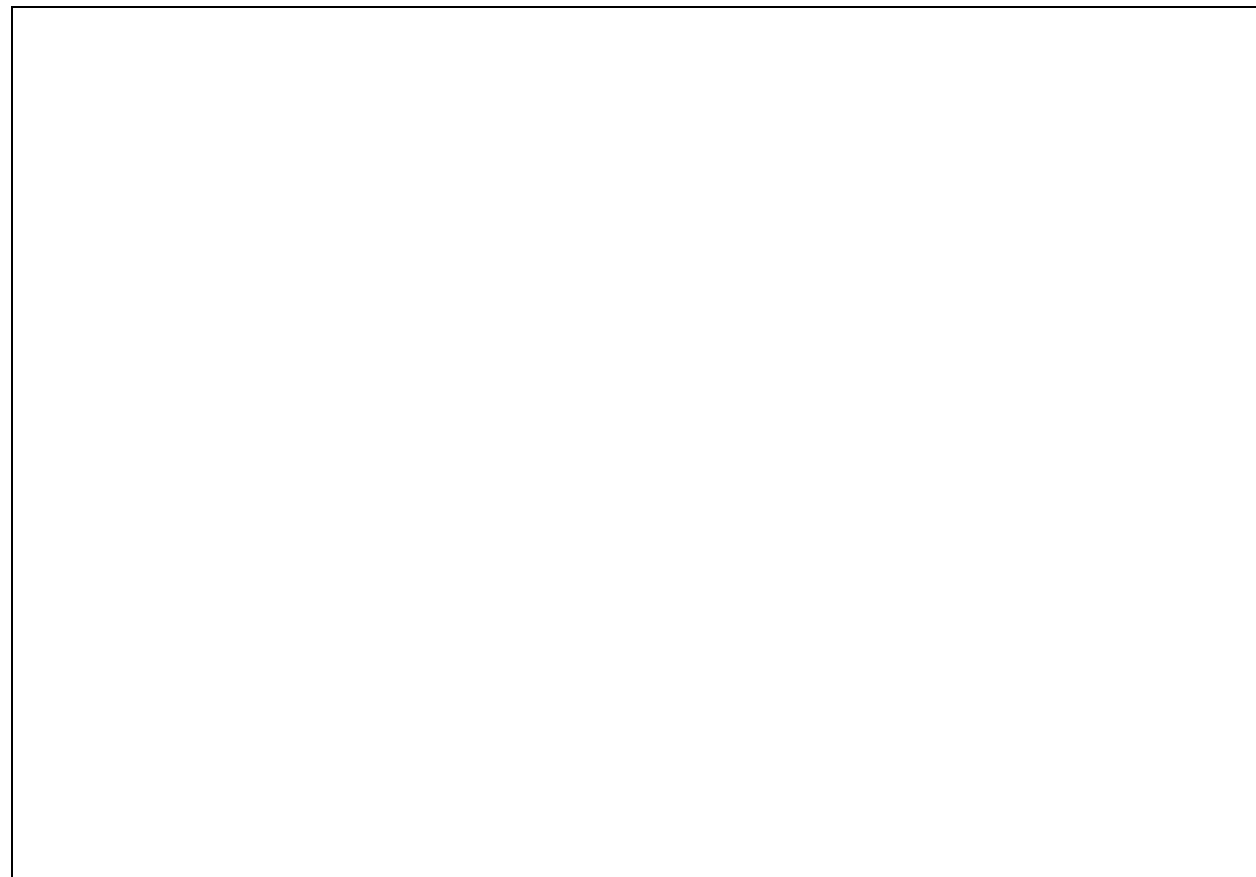
**As a large group, come to a consensus about which example listed on each flip chart would be the most difficult to talk about with that family member. Discuss and record *why* these examples would be difficult conversations to engage in with each family member.**

## Creating a Plan for Difficult Conversations

### Creating a Plan for Difficult Conversations

- Use your supervisor**
  - ALWAYS talk through the possible responses and reactions to the topic in advance of your meeting with the family.
  - Role play it out. Talk about your possible reactions as well as their possible reactions.
- Be rested**
  - Think about clearing your mechanism.
  - Think about the fact that they are human, and you are human.
- Think about and OWN**
  - I don't have to have all the answers.
  - A lot depends on how I AM with the family member – even more so than what I say.
- Think about responses**
  - You now have tools/skills to pull from – think about what you've learned.
  - TRANSFER your learning from the classroom to the meeting space and then to the personal space you and the family member will share in conversation.

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 46



Questions and Reflections

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## Conflict Resolution

### Learning Objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the signs of conflict and prepare for anticipated conflict.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand how a person’s culture impacts how they express conflict, interpret conflict, and respond to proposed solutions.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain how managing your own emotions, behaviors, and reactions during conflict impacts the outcome.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain why it is important to pay attention to the feelings being expressed, as well as the words, during conflict.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify different strategies to problem-solve and identify solutions during conflict.</li></ul>

## What is Conflict?

### What is Conflict?

- A conflict is more than just a disagreement
- Conflicts continue to fester when ignored
- We respond to conflicts based on our perceptions
- Conflicts trigger strong emotions
- Conflicts are an opportunity for growth

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/conflict-resolution-skills.htm>

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 50

**A conflict is more than just a disagreement:** It is a situation in which one or both parties perceive a threat (whether or not the threat is real).

**Conflicts continue to fester when ignored:** Because conflicts involve perceived threats to our well-being and survival, they stay with us until we face and resolve them.

**We respond to conflicts based on our perceptions** of the situation, not necessarily to an objective review of the facts. Our perceptions are influenced by our life experiences, culture, values, and beliefs.

**Conflicts trigger strong emotions:** If you aren't comfortable with your emotions or able to manage them in times of stress, you won't be able to resolve conflict successfully.

**Conflicts are an opportunity for growth:** When you're able to resolve conflict in a relationship, it builds trust. You can feel secure knowing your relationship can survive challenges and disagreements.

## Benefits of Managing and Resolving Conflict

### Benefits of Managing and Resolving Conflict

- Increased understanding
- Better group cohesion
- Improved self -knowledge
- Stronger relationships
- Reduced tension
- Increased problem solving

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 54

**Increased understanding:** The discussion needed to resolve conflict expands people's awareness of the situation, giving them an insight into how they can achieve their own goals without undermining those of other people.

**Increased group cohesion:** When conflict is resolved effectively, family members and social workers can develop stronger mutual respect and a renewed faith in their ability to work together.

**Improved self-knowledge:** Conflict pushes individuals to examine their goals in close detail, helping them understand the things that are most important to them, sharpening their focus, and enhancing their effectiveness.

**Stronger Relationships:** Poorly managed conflict often causes friction and can damage relationships. By learning how to resolve conflicts in a professional, respectful manner, relationships can be strengthened.

**Reduced Tension:** Conflict can cause tension if you don't know how to handle the situation. A disagreement that stays unresolved causes that tension to build and often spreads to other people who weren't originally involved. This can result in people choosing sides and pitting themselves against one another.

**Problem Solving:** When social workers demonstrate skills that manage and resolve conflict, family members learn that problems can be solved in healthy ways and are more likely to engage in problem-solving rather than blaming or denial of the situation.

Managing Conflict

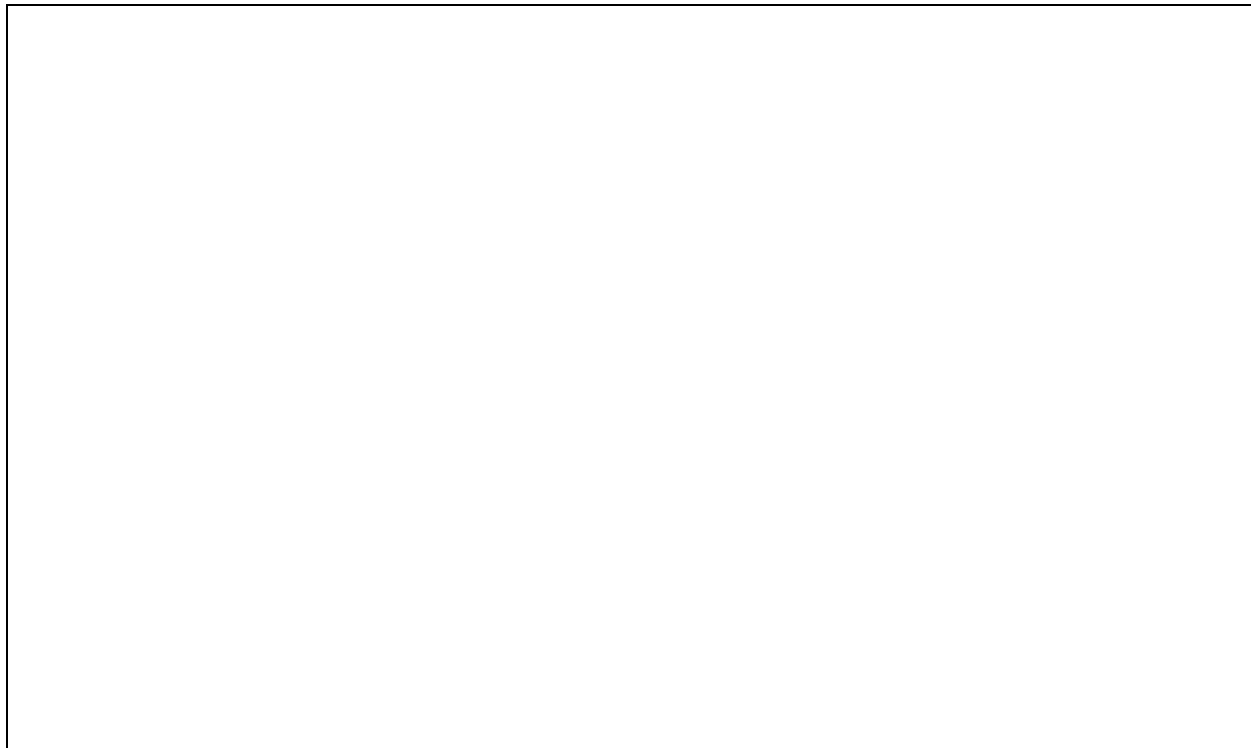
**Managing Conflict**

S	T	A	T	E
<b>Sharing the facts</b>	<b>Telling your story</b>	<b>Asking for other's paths</b>	<b>Talking tentatively</b>	<b>Encouraging testing</b>
Give the facts, and not your story.	Tell your story and share the assumptions you made.	Let them tell their story.	Remind yourself that your assumptions are not facts.	Encourage the other person to tell their viewpoint.

Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 52

The five skills that help us share our tough messages can be easily remembered with the acronym STATE.





Questions and Reflections

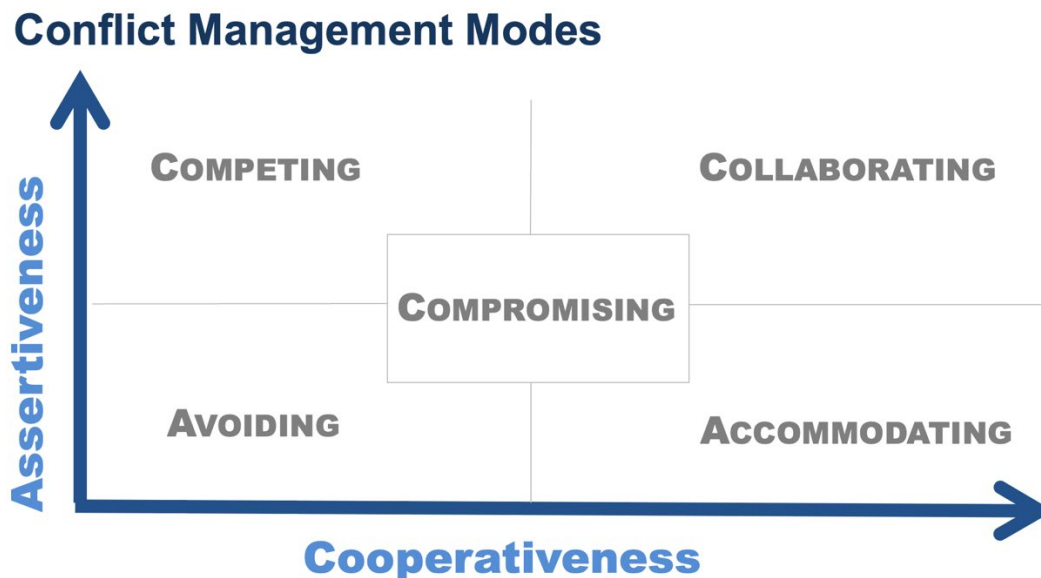
**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**

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## Conflict Management Modes

## Handout: The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) assesses an individual's behavior in conflict situations—that is, situations in which the concerns of two people appear to be incompatible. In conflict situations, we can describe a person's behavior along two basic dimensions: (1) assertiveness, the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy their own concerns, and (2) cooperativeness, the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy the other person's concerns.

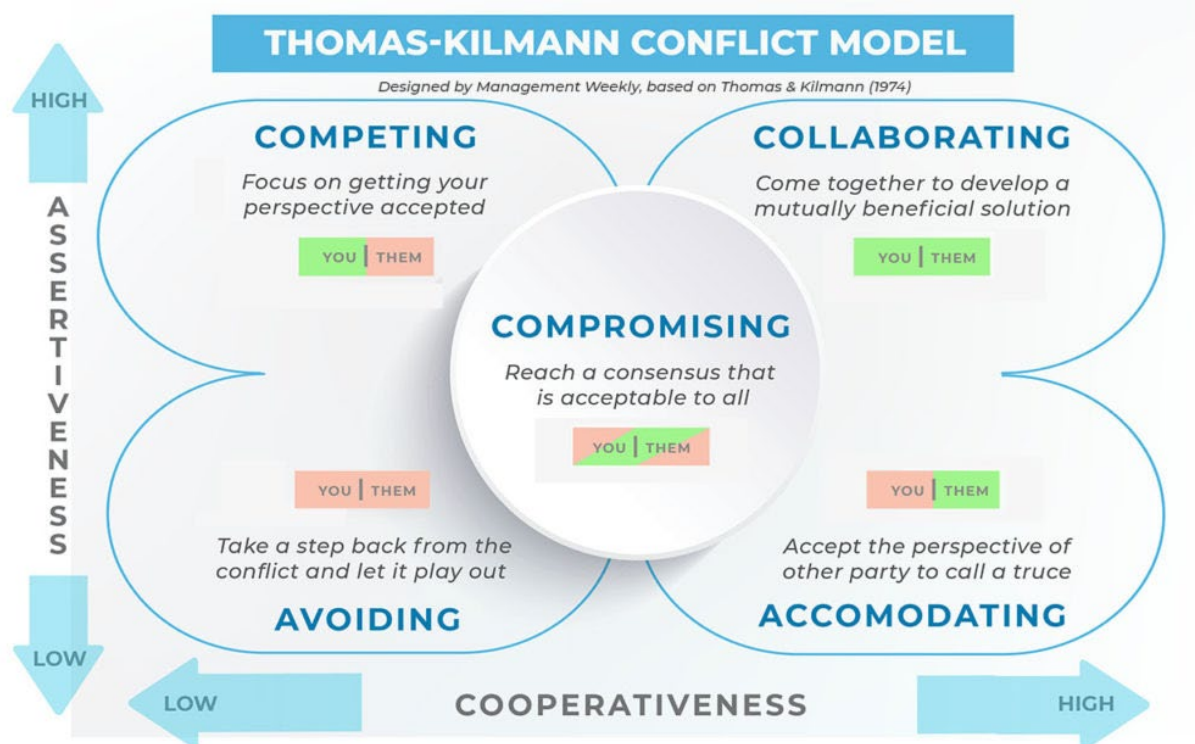


These two dimensions of behavior can be used to define five methods of dealing with conflict. In the case of conflict-handling behavior, there are no right or wrong answers. All five modes are useful in some situations: each represents a set of useful social skills.

You are also capable of using all five conflict-handling modes; you cannot be characterized as having a single, rigid style of dealing with conflict. However, most people use some modes more readily than others, develop more skills in those modes, and therefore tend to rely on them more heavily.

## The Five Modes for Conflict Management

The five modes for conflict management are the core takeaway from Thomas Kilmann's conflict model. These modes are spread across the two dimensions or approaches as we have discussed earlier. Let us first place them in a chart. This will help us make a better sense of the model. Further, we shall take a deeper dive into each one of these modes.



### Competing

At the top left end of the chart, we have high assertiveness and low cooperation. We find competing right at this spot. This means that we use 'competing' as a conflict resolution strategy when we resort to being assertive. Additionally, we also become uncooperative with the opposing party. However, this strategy is not as evil as it sounds. This mode may be more appropriate when we need speedy resolution, and we are in a higher position of power. It is also imperative to use this mode when we have to take tough calls.

### Collaborating

We use collaborating mode of conflict resolution when we are on the same page as the opposing party. This is an ideal solution. It happens when both parties are sensible, have similar power and authority, and are ready to be cooperative with each other. This is easier in a decentralized organizational structure.

Typically, the first step is a detailed discussion. We need to understand each other's viewpoints. This leads to a deeper analysis of the situation. We also try to understand the expectations of each other. Finally, we reach a solution where both parties may benefit.

**Avoiding**

The avoiding mode reflects passivity in conflict management. Although, from an ideal perspective, we would agree that we should face the problems head-on. However, the most confident of us would have been in situations where confrontation was best avoided. Also, some problems are so trivial, they are not worth your time.

This approach involves shunning the conflict and withholding one's views and opinions. People also employ this approach when the cost of confrontation and resolution is far more than the cost of living with the conflict. However, avoiding does not resolve the conflict. On the downside, it just buries it below the surface and may potentially lead to future conflicts.

**Accommodating**

Now, we are gradually moving towards more amicable means of resolving conflicts. Perhaps, the accommodating mode is so considerate of the opposing party that you are ready to call it a truce at the cost of giving up your position. It may be worthwhile in situations when the conflict is a total waste of your time.

The Thomas and Kilmann Conflict Model positions this mode as high in cooperativeness and low in assertiveness. We sacrifice our own stance to make the other party happy.

**Compromising**

Finally, we arrive at the literal middle ground in the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Model. The center of the chart shows us a point where we are moderately assertive and moderately cooperative. In certain situations, we may not want to have an extended resolution. Collaborating takes time. Also, in some situations, we don't want to be too confrontational but at the same time, we want to take a stand as well.

Also, there are some conflicting situations where we know that the best potential solution would be to satisfy all the parties. In such situations, we typically approach the conflict as a compromise. Each conflicting party gets something they want. Meanwhile, they also give up something they wanted. So, it is a mixed win for all. However, some parties may get a resolution closer to their expectations while it could be a greater compromise for the other.

## Strategies for Managing and Resolving Conflict

There are several strategies we would like to highlight that can help you manage and resolve conflict.

1. **Focus strategy:** Focus on the problem, not the person: Recognize that in many cases the other person is not just "being difficult" – real and valid differences can lie behind conflictive positions. By separating the problem from the person, real issues can be debated without damaging working relationships. Be hard on the problem and soft on the person.
2. **Listen and reflect strategy:** This involves making a conscious effort not only to hear the words but also to listen to the complete message. It takes into consideration content, intent, and nonverbal communication. Reflective listening requires empathy and is not judgmental. We should also clarify and confirm what we have heard to ensure we understand what was said and intended.
3. **Express thoughts and emotions strategy:** Very often we conceal our emotions and thoughts because we do not want to come across as weak. However, it is the opposite – expression shows strength and honesty to provide a deeper understanding of the conflict. Part of expressing emotions is apologizing and taking responsibility. However, remember your family-centered principles. – express your thoughts and emotions in a way that is explicit and family-centered.
4. **Create solutions strategy:** Imagine there are two people in a kitchen. There is only one orange left and both want it. What would you expect as the solution? Compromise is one option. They might cut it in half, and each gets half. Let's assume that's what they do. One person now goes to the juicer and starts squeezing a rather small glass of orange juice. The other, with some difficulty, begins to grate the rind of the orange to flavor a cake. Had they discussed needs rather than heading straight to solutions, they could have both had the equivalent of a whole orange. Similar to our work with families, we must engage and collaborate with the family to discuss needs and identify multiple options. This is necessary for our work to create useful and effective solutions for children and families.

Activity: What a Bunch of Characters

Name of Character
Qualities
Strengths
Weaknesses
How does your character typically handle conflict?
What strengths above contribute to your character's ability to resolve conflict?
What weaknesses above hinder your character's ability to resolve conflict?
What can you learn from your character that would improve your ability to resolve conflict?
What could you teach your character to help them become more effective at resolving conflict?

Debrief

**Which characters handle conflict the most effectively? In what ways are they effective?**

**Which characters don't handle conflict well? What do they do that's ineffective?**

**What are some techniques we can learn from our characters to help us resolve conflict?**

**What are some weaknesses we can be aware of?**

**What are some things we can teach our characters?**

Questions and Reflections

Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.

Key Takeaways

### Key Takeaways

<p>Common causes of conflict include communication problems, struggles overpower, personality clashes, and cultural or ethical differences.</p>	<p>We respond to conflicts based on our perceptions.</p>	<p>Learning how to resolve conflicts in a professional, respectful manner can strengthen relationships.</p>
<p>Handling your own emotions allows you to deal with how you are feeling so that you can then assist other people involved in the conflict in managing their emotions.</p>	<p>The five main styles of dealing with conflict vary in their degrees of cooperativeness and assertiveness. Each mode represents a set of useful social skills that can be used in various situations.</p>	<p>Strategies for managing and resolving conflict include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focusing on the problem</li><li>• Listening and reflecting</li><li>• Expressing thoughts and emotions</li><li>• Creating solutions</li></ul>

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 69

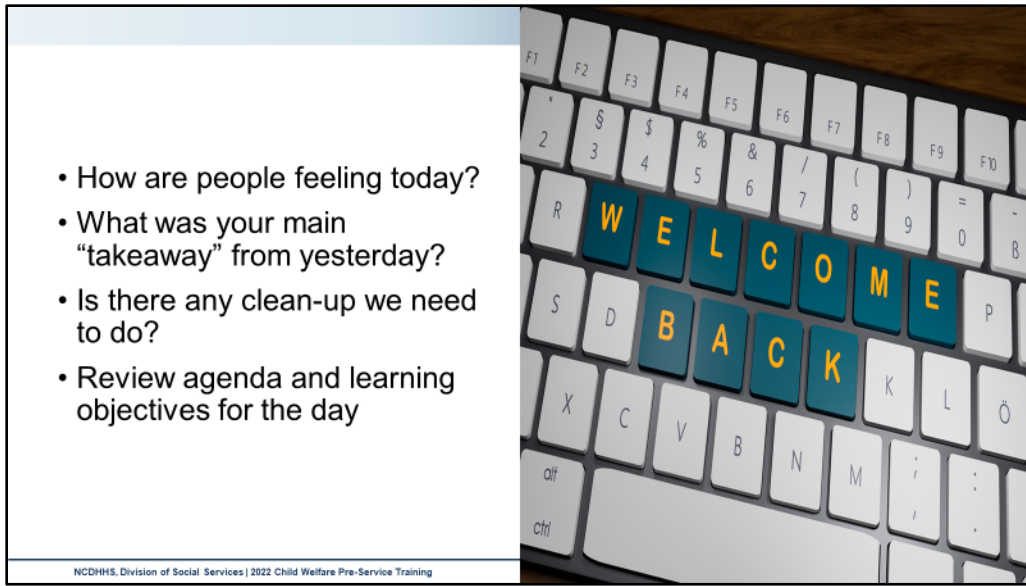


## Week Two, Day Three Agenda

### Pre-Service Training: Child Welfare in North Carolina

I.	Welcome	9:00 – 9:30
	<b>Engaging Families Through Family-Centered Practice (continued)</b>	
II.	Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives	9:30 – 9:45
III.	Engaging Fathers Learning Lab	9:45 – 10:30
	<b>BREAK</b>	10:30 – 10:45
IV.	Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives (continued)	10:45 – 10:55
V.	Engaging Incarcerated Parents Learning Lab	10:55 – 11:55
	<b>LUNCH</b>	11:55 – 12:55
VI.	Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives (continued)	12:55 – 1:30
VI.	Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings	1:30 – 2:15
	<b>BREAK</b>	2:15 – 2:30
VII.	Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings Learning Lab	2:30 – 3:50
VIII.	Wrap-Up	3:50 - 4:00

## Welcome



- How are people feeling today?
- What was your main “takeaway” from yesterday?
- Is there any clean-up we need to do?
- Review agenda and learning objectives for the day

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**Use this space to record notes.**

## Engaging Families through Family-Centered Practice

### Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives

#### Learning Objectives

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain the North Carolina policy and procedure requirements for engaging fathers, non-resident parents, and relatives.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain the importance and benefits of engaging fathers, non-resident parents, and relatives.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss and provide examples of social worker behaviors that support a collaborative relationship and increase engagement with fathers, non-resident parents, and relatives.</li></ul> |

## Facts About Engaging and Involving Fathers

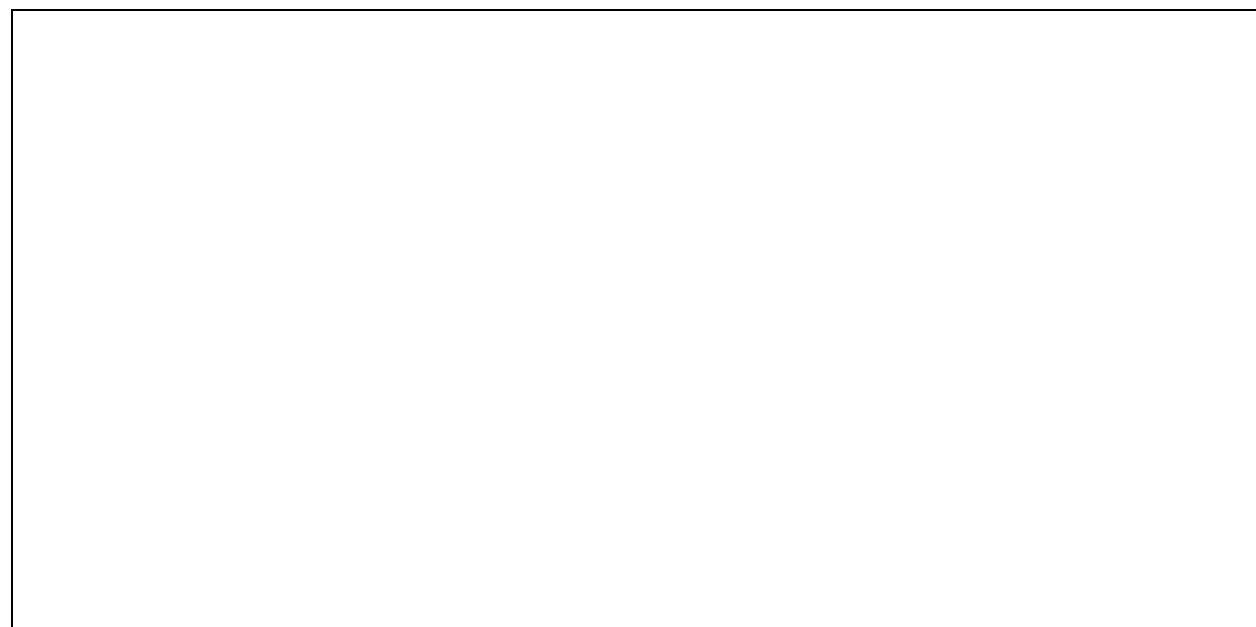
**Facts About Engaging and Involving Fathers**

- Related to positive child health outcomes in infants
- Leads to better emotional, academic, social, and behavioral outcomes for children
- Father absence hinders development from early infancy through childhood and into adulthood
- The quality of the father-child relationship matters more than the number of hours spent together
- Reduces the frequency of behavioral problems in boys while also decreasing delinquency and economic disadvantage in low-income families.
- Reduces psychological problems and rates of depression in young women.

[A Father's Impact on Child Development](#)

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Often child welfare agencies are matriarchal systems, favoring mothers. Mothers are easier to legally identify than fathers who may not be in the home. But all non-resident parents must be located and engaged, especially fathers. In our society, the father-child relationship is often secondary to the mother-child relationship. Studies have found that fathers and infants can be equally attached to mothers and infants. When both parents are involved with the child, infants are attached to both parents from the beginning of life.



## Engaging Teen Fathers

**Engaging Teen Fathers**

“Much of fatherhood engagement comes down to simply asking fathers to be involved. Fathers care about and take pride in their children, and they want to positively contribute to their children’s lives and healthy development.”  
Center for the Study of Social Policy

Changing Systems and Practice to Improve Outcomes for Young Fathers, their Children, and their Families  
NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training

Social workers can play an important role in the lives of expectant and parenting young fathers by providing them with the guidance and resources they need to become both successful parents and thriving adults. Here are some ways that agencies can change their approach to young fathers:

- Adjust language to include terms like “father and mother,” rather than just “parents” or “mothers” in agency materials;
- Display positive images of young fathers of diverse backgrounds including fathers and youth-friendly messages in photos, posters, bulletin boards, and materials;
- Recruit and hire male staff;
- Systematically seek fathers’ input through surveys and focus groups on services received;
- Provide space for fathers and children to interact in waiting areas that are appealing to young fathers;
- Include diaper-changing areas in men’s bathrooms
- Require that all resource parents create opportunities for young fathers to visit their children;
- Educate mothers on the importance of nonresident father engagement in visit services;
- Address and remove all barriers to visit for young fathers (e.g., provide support for transportation and flexible scheduling, etc.); and

Collaborate with education systems to ensure young fathers in school or vocational training are encouraged to have flexible schedules to visit with their children and ensure that schools are prepared for and encouraging young father involvement (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, PTA meetings.).

## Engaging Fathers Learning Lab

### Activity: Father Engagement – The Letter

Reference the scenario on the following page. You will have 10 minutes to write a letter to the father in the scenario to engage him to contact you and to be involved in case planning and decision-making.

In your letter, be sure to address the father formally and write four or five sentences with your goal to:

1. Get the father to read the whole letter
2. Get him to contact you
3. Engage the father in the work

At the end of the 10 minutes, we will share the letters out loud with the group. The group will pretend that they are the father. At any point while you are reading; the listener may decide to “stop reading” by giving the thumbs-down sign. At the end of the reading, the thumbs-up sign will be given by group members who believe that the letter engaged them, and they plan to contact you and become involved.

### Worksheet: Father Engagement Scenario

**Father:** Andrew Allen, age 45, African American

**Mother:** Dora Allen, Deceased, African American

**Children:** Andy Allen, age 17, African American, and Joy Allen, age 14, African American

#### Presenting Situation

Maternal grandmother, Mrs. Dees, called DSS on a Friday at 5:00 p.m. to make a CPS report about her son-in-law's home. Mrs. Dees believes her granddaughter and grandson are being abused by their father. Andy is 17 and Joy is 14. Their mother (her daughter) is deceased. Mrs. Dees reported her grandchildren spend one weekend a month in her home. They are currently with her, and she saw bruises on Joy's arms and legs. She is also concerned that Andy has bruises; however, he is wearing a long-sleeved shirt and pants and will not allow her to look. Joy and Andy will not discuss what caused the bruises. Andy said his father did get upset with him and with Joy but would not say anything further. Mrs. Dees did not want to send the children back home on Sunday afternoon. She said her son-in-law had developed a serious temper, and she is afraid he has begun to abuse the children. She said since her daughter died earlier this year, Andrew has become increasingly angry and verbally abusive toward the children even in her presence. She has not seen him hit the children, but she has heard him yelling at them.

After discussing the call with the supervisor, the on-call worker made a visit to Mrs. Dees' home. She met with Mrs. Dees, Andy, and Joy. Joy was crying and refused to speak. Andy would only say his father's temper has gotten worse since his mother's death. The worker observed several marks on Joy's arms and legs: two round-shaped marks about 1 ½ inches in diameter on both sides of her left upper arm and three marks on the back of her right calf, each about two inches in length and ½ inch in width. The worker said "You have several bruises, Joy. Can you tell me how you got them?" Joy cried harder and did not respond. The worker said, "Sometimes I talk with teenagers who are unsure about whether to talk to me."

They want their family to get help, but they don't want anyone to get in trouble." Joy continued to bow her head and cry. Andy said, "Look, just please stop asking questions; we can handle it and you're just going to make things worse." The worker explained that she and other social workers have been able to help other families before. She explained that she knew the children's mother had passed and expressed condolences. She said, "Sometimes when families are grieving, people need extra help. Maybe that is true for your family?" The children did not comment. Mrs. Dees tried to get her grandchildren to discuss their home life, but they continued to remain silent. Andy refused to show the worker his arms or legs. The on-call worker spoke with her supervisor and concluded the children needed to stay with Mrs. Dees until the father could be interviewed. The on-call worker instructed Mrs. Dees to contact her immediately if Andrew called or came to pick up the children. Mrs. Dees stated she does not hear from Andrew when she has the children, and he does not respond when

she calls. Mrs. Dees made a point to tell the worker she wants the children to be with their father but only if the children are treated well and remain safe.

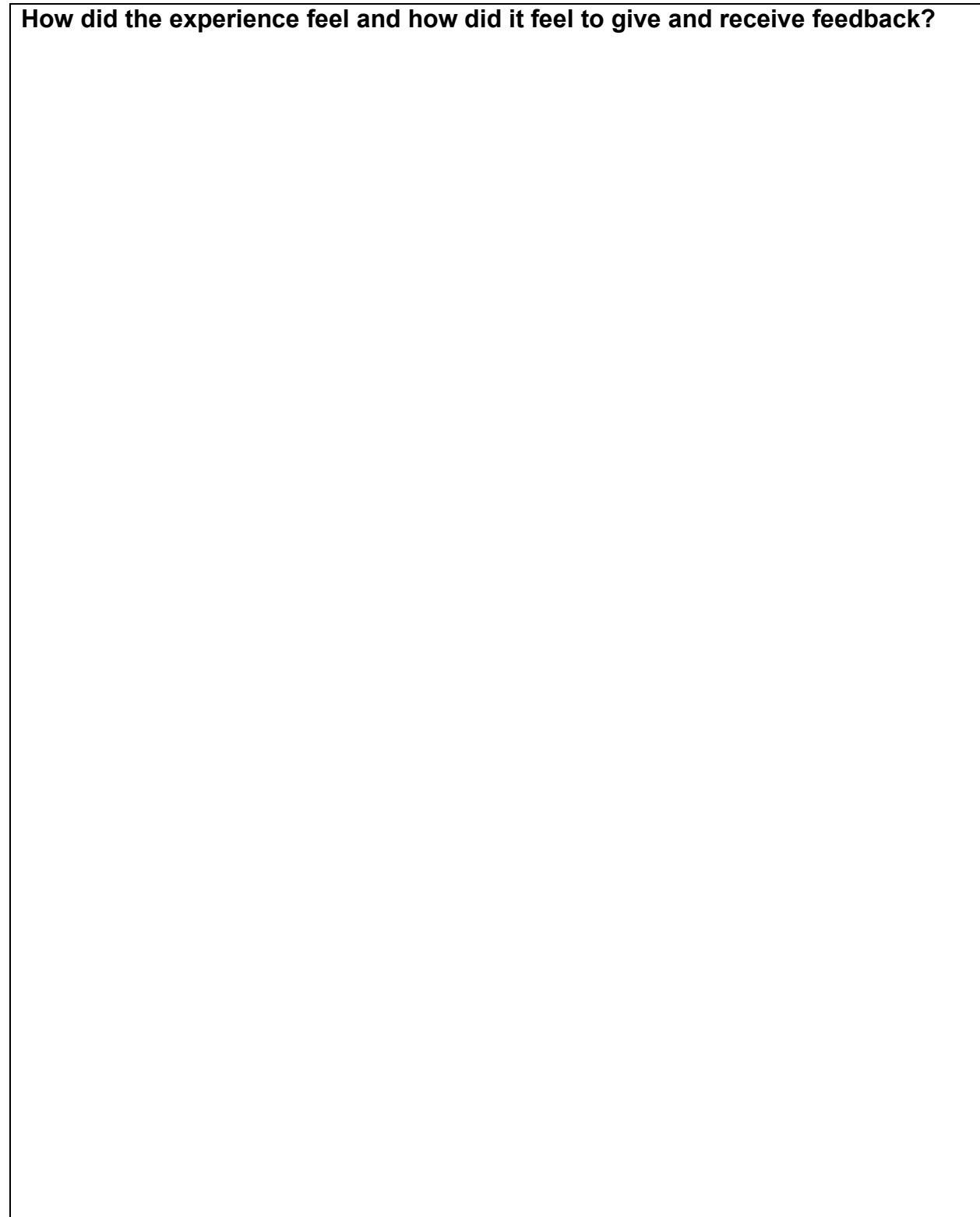
After leaving Mrs. Dees, the on-call worker tried calling the father at his home but received no answer. The on-call worker called Andrew's cell phone number was provided by Mrs. Dees. There was also no answer, and the worker left multiple messages on the voice mail. The worker continued to attempt contact with Andrew over the weekend but was never able to reach him. On Monday, the worker made several attempts to reach Andrew but was not successful. The worker contacted Mrs. Dees and arranged for the children to remain with her on a safety plan, hoping to reach Andrew soon.

**Use this space to write your letter.**



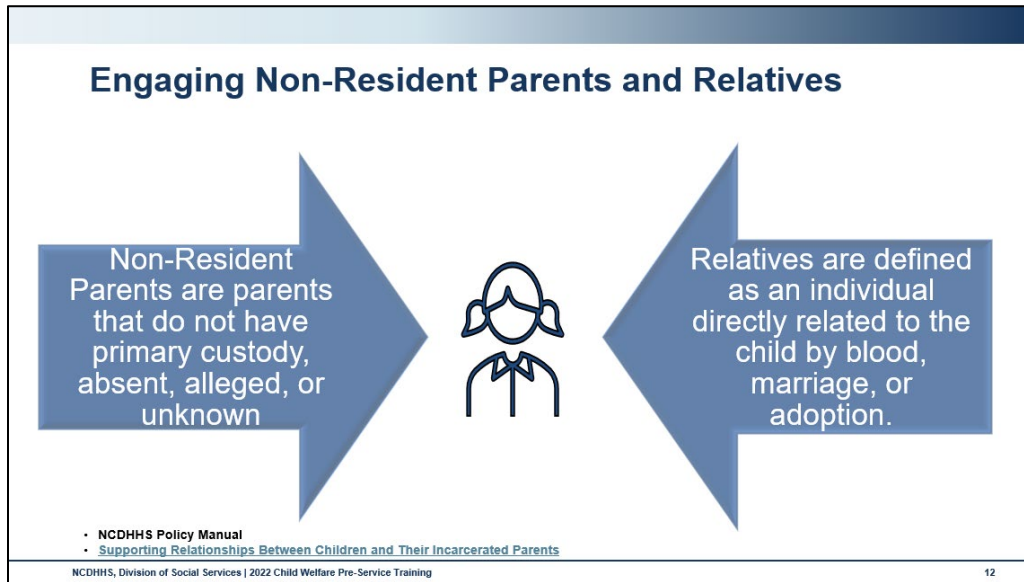
Debrief

**How did the experience feel and how did it feel to give and receive feedback?**

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## Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives

### Engaging Non-Resident Parents and Relatives



No matter the circumstances non-resident parents have a right to be involved in their children’s lives and decisions impacting their children. Every effort should be made to locate and engage non-resident parents. If there is no real safety threat in involving the parent in the child’s child welfare case, then all efforts to engage and include the parent should be exhausted and well-documented.

Relatives can provide additional information about the family, offer a different perspective, and sometimes be the voice of reason in meetings with the family. For children at risk of or already in out-of-home placements, relatives can provide a safe home for the children to live in until their parents can make the changes that need to be made for the children to come home.



## Engaging Incarcerated Parents Learning Lab

Video: [The Marshall Project – Inside Tutwiler Prison](#)

**Visit: [The Marshall Project: Inside Tutwiler Prison](#) for a short documentary about women in Tutwiler Prison who have children.**

**Use the following worksheet to capture specific thoughts from the documentary and debrief discussion.**

Worksheet: Tutwiler Prison

After watching the video, please work with your table group to complete this worksheet and record your observations and responses. The trainers will debrief as a large group afterward.

1. Misty Cook interview - What engagement techniques did you note between interviewer and interviewee?

2. Classroom scene
  - a. What did you note about the classroom participants' discussion?
  - b. What did the "class participants" want to talk about?

3. Woman sharing the pictures of their children
  - a. Share your reactions to this scene.
  - b. Share your reaction to the mother who said, "I guess he's still with DSS". "I don't know where he is right now."
  - c. Share your reaction to the women's responses to each other. What did you note?

- 4. Christy talking about the breast feeding program
  - a. Describe what this mom was saying about keeping her focus.
  - b. What did this mom share about her story?
  - c. What is your response to the mom asking for help?

- 5. Women in the dorm talking about how they view themselves
  - a. How do these women feel about themselves?
  - b. Did the women's reactions surprise you?

- 6. Clean and Sober Celebration in classroom
  - a. Describe the interaction of the women.
  - b. Describe the engagement of the class facilitators. What messages did they share with the participants?

- 7. Brittany talking about substance use
  - a. What did this mom share about her story?
  - b. What did she want to know?

- 8. Jennifer talking about how to manage after birth
  - a. Your reaction to: "I don't want to come outside for a year."
  - b. Your reaction to this statement "When I think I want to do this, this is what I'll do instead."
  - c. Your observation of the "goal setting" conversation.

- 9. Moms reading books to their unborn children
  - a. Note your reactions to the moms reading the books to their children.
  - b. What messages were the moms sending to their children?

10. Moms talking about their newborns

- a. Your reaction to the comment, “We’re scared.”
- b. Your reaction to, “What I wonder about”
- c. What questions do the moms have about their children?

11. Misty on her way to hospital for delivery

- a. Your reaction to why you “don’t want to give birth.”
- b. Your reaction to “You feel so empty.”
- c. Your reaction to “Locked up your whole pregnancy – just you and the baby.”

12. Misty returning to prison after delivery

- a. Your reaction to Misty returning to Tutwiler following the birth of her child.
- b. Your observations of the reactions of the other moms to Misty’s return to Tutwiler following the delivery of her child.

**Now that we have processed through this documentary, we want to look a little deeper, moving the learning from the classroom to practice.**

13. Question: Who are these women? Jot down the first responses that come to your mind.

**We want you to think into the future – about the little girls who may be in your caseloads.**

14. How can we intervene early, deliberately, and with purpose, in a trauma-informed and trauma-responsive way that is targeted to stop the possibility of incarceration?

**Consider the following:**

What if we don't intervene?

What if we do?



## Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives

### Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives: Policy Requirements

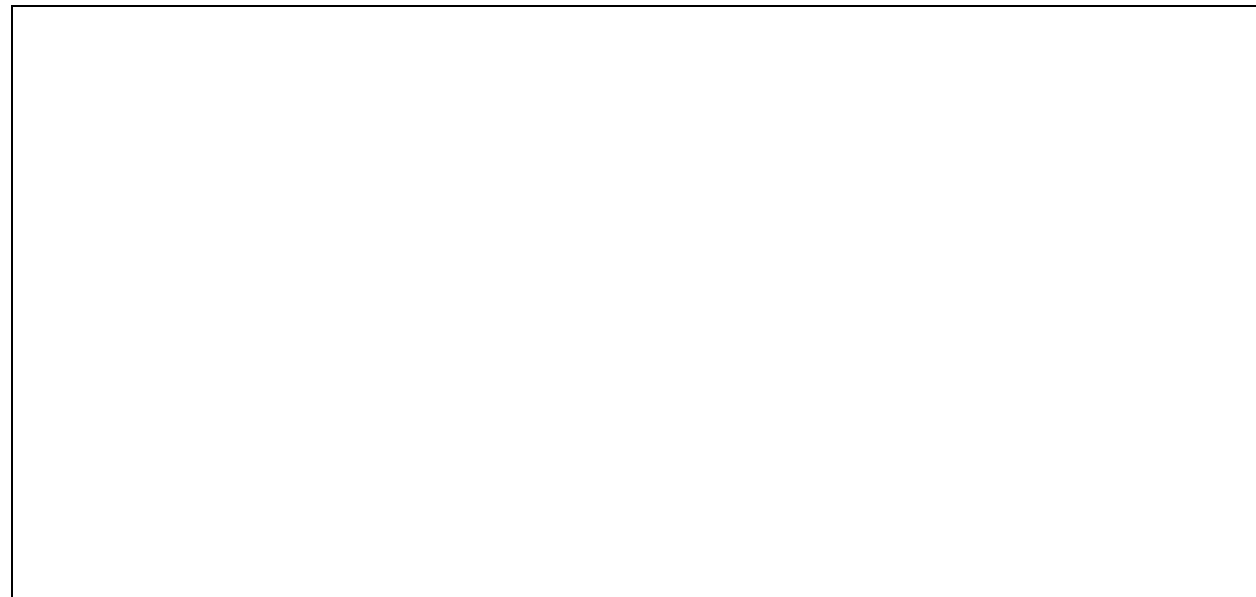
**Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives: Policy Requirements**

- Both parents must be involved in all aspects of child welfare
- Absent parents must be involved in the CFT meeting unless there is a valid conflict or safety issue
- Make diligent efforts to locate and contact all parents
- Incarcerated parents must be contacted to determine if they can assist in the child welfare case
- Make diligent efforts to identify and locate extended maternal and paternal family members

NCDHHS Policy Manual  
NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 16

At least once a month throughout the case, social workers must inquire with parents and children about extended family members to include:

- Knowledge of names and when they last had contact;
- Location including address, phone number, and/or email address;
- Contact through social media platforms such as Facebook; or
- Relationships, including their history with that relative, support that relative may be able to provide, etc.



## Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives: Engagement Strategies

**Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives: Engagement Strategies**

- Be intentional
- Build on strengths
- Acknowledge their role
- Be patient
- Be flexible and considerate

“The biggest thing I hate (is when people say) ‘Oh you’re babysitting your kids’ They’re my kids. I can’t babysit my kids. How do you babysit what you brought into this world”

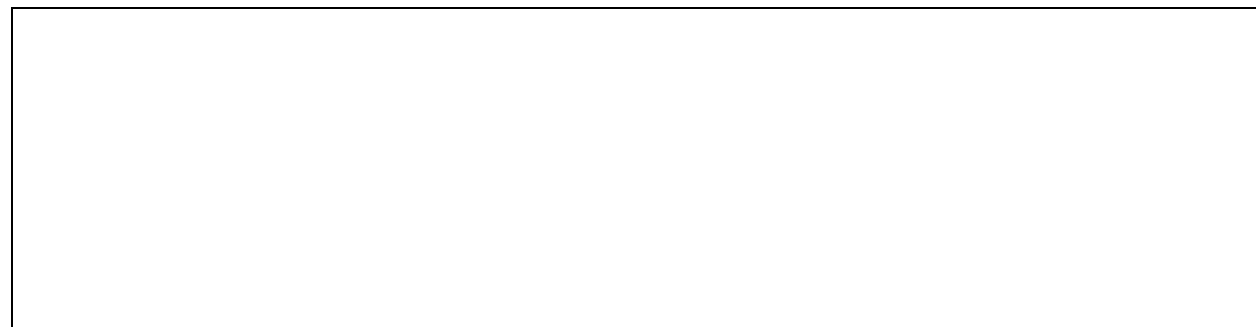
Damien, Dallas  
Zero to Three, National Parent Survey Report (2016)

- [NCDHHS Policy](#)
- [Effective Communication Strategies to Engage Fathers](#)
- [Child Welfare Practice With Families Affected by Parental Incarceration](#)

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 18

Things to ask or consider when working with fathers or non-resident parents:

- How can the agency obtain the non-resident parent’s involvement?
- If the parents have a tenuous relationship, consider facilitating separate meetings between each parent.
- If one parent is unable to travel a long distance for a meeting, consider facilitating a phone conference call or web meeting to begin developing a relationship with the parent
- If a non-resident parent is not involved in the planning, ask what it would take to become involved, as well as if any relatives may be a resource in supporting the child.
- Conduct a record review. Closely review the case record to identify and record names.
- Interview all known family members, maternal and paternal, including children, fictive kin, and close friends, to help identify important people within the family system



## Handout: Keys to Building Strong Relationships with Fathers

**Keys to Building Strong Relationships with Fathers**

- 1. Demonstrate interest in the whole family**
  - a. Get contact information of fathers on all intake/enrollment forms.
  - b. When talking to mothers, ask also about the fathers: what do they do for a living, their work schedules, areas of concern, hobbies, and interests, etc.
- 2. Initiate programs and activities that appeal to fathers**
  - a. Have workshops on topics such as Family Economic Success, How to Write a Resume, How to Fill Out Job Applications, Job Training Resources, Affordable or Low-Income Housing Resources, How to Start a Small Business, etc.
  - b. Organize outdoor events, support groups, and parenting classes that require the participation of fathers.
- 3. Encourage mothers to make room for father involvement**
  - a. Help mothers to see the importance of fathers supporting their children's development by having quality one-on-one time with them.
  - b. Reassure mothers that there will be adequate staffing to support fathers in activities that are father-child specific.
- 4. Get to know fathers in your program and activities**
  - a. Make a special effort to personally greet and thank fathers who attend activities.
  - b. Strike up casual conversations with fathers and listen attentively.
- 5. Follow up with the fathers**
  - a. Call fathers after the activity to get their feedback and assess their interest in further involvement in your program and activities.
  - b. Invite fathers for a relational visit at your center or visit them at their homes.
- 6. Offer opportunities for fathers to get involved in the program's functioning**
  - a. Create a list of volunteer opportunities at the center for fathers. Make sure the list covers a variety of activities, such as physical tasks, technology support, and planning events and activities.
  - b. Recruit fathers to become members of the advisory committee or event planning committees at your center. Help them develop leadership and collaborative skills during their tenure.
- 7. Value the contribution of fathers in your program and activities.**
  - a. Regularly and publicly praise them for their dedication, setting them as examples for other fathers.
  - b. Seek their feedback and take it seriously.

Video: [Strengthening Families – Father Engagement](#)

Visit: **Father Engagement Strengthens Families** for a video about the direct link between positive father involvement and child well-being.

As you watch the video, take note of themes and information that has been covered about working with fathers and non-resident parents:

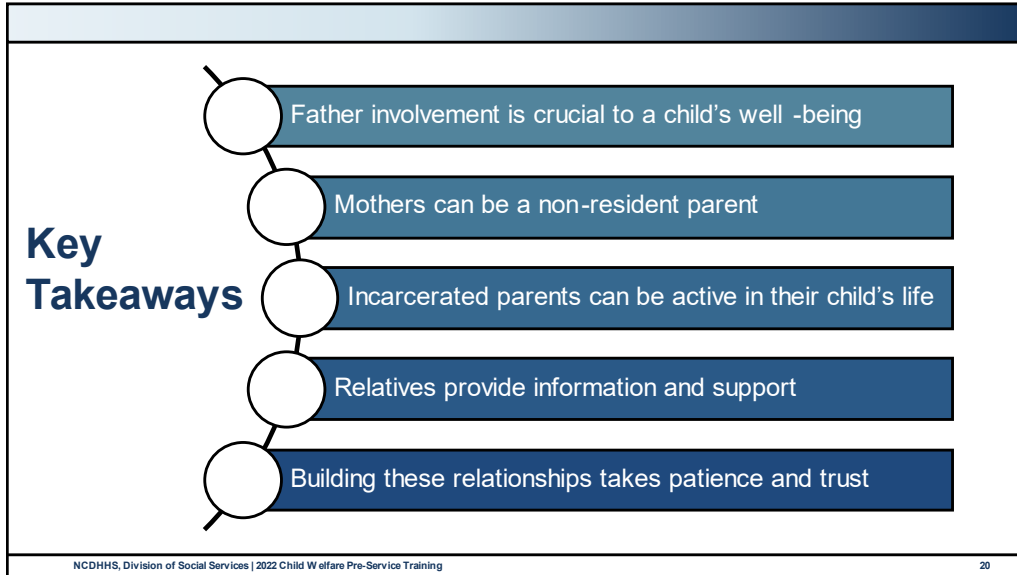
Debrief

**What were some of the common themes and information you heard in the video that we talked about today?**

**How did hearing the fathers talk make you feel?**

Key Takeaways



Questions and Reflections

**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**

## Child and Family (CFT) Meetings

### Learning Objectives

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain the role of CFT meetings in achieving safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.</li></ul>                               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe and provide examples of how to ensure child and family voice is present before, during, and after CFT meetings.</li></ul> |

Key Activities of Family-Centered Practice

### Key Activities of Family-Centered Practice

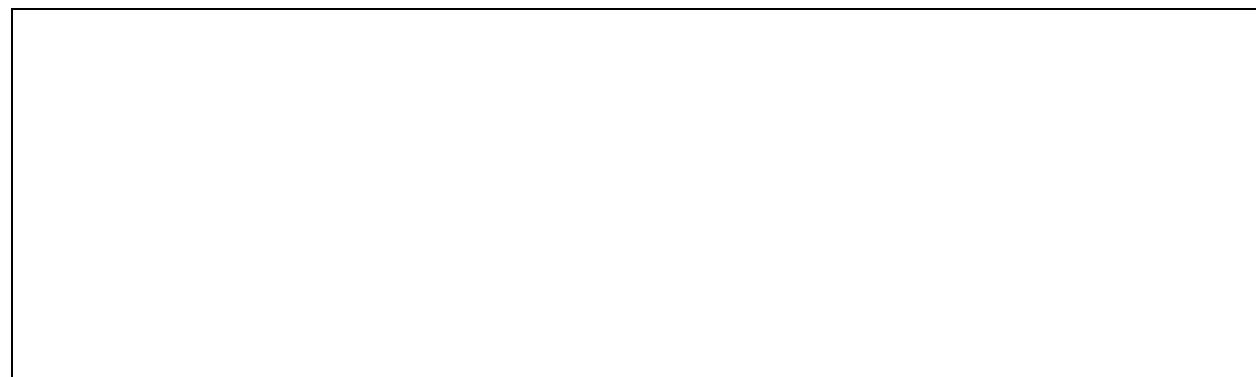
Active listening and empathy	Engaging and involving families in assessments	Developing plans with the family
Quality caseworker contacts	Facilitate the parent-child relationship	Child and Family Team meetings

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 24

### Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings

Genuineness	Empathy	Respect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be yourself</li><li>• Be clear about concerns</li><li>• Non-defensive</li><li>• Be aware of non-verbal behavior and verbal responses</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attempt to understand the experience of their world</li><li>• Communicate your understanding of their experiences</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Value everyone separate from their behavior</li><li>• Treat each family member as worthwhile</li><li>• Anticipate their capabilities</li></ul>

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 25



## Handout: CFT Meetings

A CFT meeting is a way to engage and partner with all the people who surround a family and to support the family in building a support network that will eventually sustain it after the case is closed. A CFT meeting is a way for county child welfare agencies to share responsibility for protecting children with their families and the community. CFT meetings are structured, guided discussions with the family, their natural supports, and other team members about family strengths, needs, and problems and the impact they have on the safety, permanence, and well-being of the family's children. The meetings share the following components:

- A clear but open-ended purpose. All CFTs must have a clear purpose and provide an opportunity for the family to be involved in decision-making and planning.
- An opportunity for the family to be involved in decision-making and planning. The county child welfare worker and/or the facilitator must ensure that the ideas of the family and its natural supports are considered with the same weight as those of the professionals in the room.
- Options for the family to consider and decisions for the family to make. The team will develop a Family Services Agreement that is created using the best ideas of the family, informal, and formal supports that the family believes in, the agency approves of, and lessens risk and heightens safety for the child/youth and family.
- The family's involvement in the development of specific safety or permanent plans and the development of services and support. The team will reach an agreement on which identified child welfare issues will be addressed and how they will be addressed throughout the life of the case and will create a plan for how all participants will take part in, support, and implement the Family Services Agreement developed by the team.
- The outcome of the meeting will be reflected in the development or revision of a Family Services Agreement. The primary focus must always be the safety and well-being of the children.

### **CFT meeting membership:**

- ALWAYS the family, including non-resident parents
- Anyone significant to the family
- The child
- Safety resources/support system
- Social worker
- Facilitator
- Relevant service providers
- Foster parents, if the child is placed in out-of-home care



**Child and Family Team Meetings are grounded in the Three Core Helping Conditions:**

1. Genuineness – Be yourself. Be clear about concerns and be non-defensive. Be aware of your non-verbal behavior, tone of voice, and verbal responses.
2. Empathy – Attempt to understand the experience of the child or family's world and then communicate your understanding of and compassion for their experiences.
3. Respect – Value everyone and their potential separate from any evaluation of their behavior. Treat each family member as worthwhile and anticipate their capabilities, strengths, and abilities.

**Outcomes:**

- A group can sometimes be more effective in making good decisions than an individual.
- Families are the experts on themselves. You must engage the experts.
- When families are included in decision-making, they are capable of identifying their own needs and strengths and are much more committed to the successful completion of the plan.
- Members of the family's community add value to the process by serving as natural allies to the family and as experts on the community's resources.

**Preparatory meeting with the family prior to the CFT meeting:**

- Discuss the purpose of the meeting with parents/caregivers.
- Provide the family with a description of what a CFT meeting looks like. Include a description of what the CFT meeting might feel like.
- Find out who the family wants to engage in the process. The participants do not necessarily have to be blood or legally related.
- Decide who will give the invitation and talk about how to explain the meeting and what will be shared with those being asked to attend.
- Help the family establish ground rules that will be used during the CFT meeting.
- Share with them that notes will be taken during the meeting, but that you will review the notes with them following the meeting to check for accuracy.
- Explain to the family that a service plan, such as the Family Services Agreement, will be developed at the CFT and that this plan is a road map toward their goals.
- Prepare families with examples of questions they may be asked and help them explore the information they may want to share.
- Talk about tasks and goals. Explain that even their family support members will be assigned tasks, that the agency will have tasks, and the family will have tasks.

**Purpose of the meeting:**

- Prevent removal by identifying natural supports that the family has available or services that can be used to create a safe environment for the child.
- Establish a relationship between the social worker and family members.
- Engage the family and secure an investment in the partnership and working together.
- Explore family needs and appropriate services to address the needs.

- Learn about family strengths, resources, and protective capacities.
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved.
- Discuss what could happen in the case, like court hearings and placement, if the child is not protected from abuse or neglect.
- Allow for everyone to have the same information and to be clear about the plan of action for the protection of children and for their needs to be met.

## Handout: CFT Meetings Timelines Policy

**Child and Family Team Meetings: Required Timeframes  
Throughout the Life of a Child Welfare Case****During the Assessment Phase**

- To explore safety arrangements and possible placements if the children must be removed
- Prior to filing a petition
- Initial planning for a CFT is initiated even if a CFT is not held during the assessment phase

(NC Child Welfare Policy: CPS Assessments, Required Timeframes)

**During In-Home Services**

- To review the Temporary Parental Safety Agreement (TPSA)
- For quarterly reviews of the IH-FSA
- To update the Family Services Agreement to address safety or high-risk concerns, including, but not limited to:
  - Identification of a new safety threat
  - High-risk “stuck cases”
- When requested by the family
- At critical decision points, to include possible out-of-home placement
- When a child is placed with a TSP and the parent cannot be located and/or there is no parent to make decisions regarding the child
- Six months after the development of the In-Home Family Services Agreement:
  - There is a lack of progress as indicated by no activities completed nor any behavioral changes demonstrated that mitigate risk; or
  - The child(ren) in the care of a TSP is unable to return home
- Prior to and within 30 days of case closure in cases that are repeat recipients of CPS In-Home or received Permanency Planning services to specifically address the plan the family will follow to prevent repeat maltreatment.

(NC Child Welfare Policy: In-Home Services, Review of Services/Family Services Agreements)

**During Permanency Planning and Adoption**

- Any time there is a change in the permanent plan
- Any time there is a need to change the placement
- Any time there is a significant change in the case, including a school change
- Any time the family requests a meeting

(NC Child Welfare Policy: Permanency Planning Services, Required Timeframes)

### **Non-Resident Parents are Family, Too Involving Non-Resident Parents in CFT Meetings**

Non-Resident parents (who may or may be non-custodial parents) must be involved in the CFT meeting unless there is a valid conflict or safety issue, and this must be clearly documented in the case record. The agency shall use alternate methods to involve the non-resident parent in case planning if it is determined that the parent cannot participate in the CFT meeting due to a conflict or safety issue. Some alternate methods that might be used include:

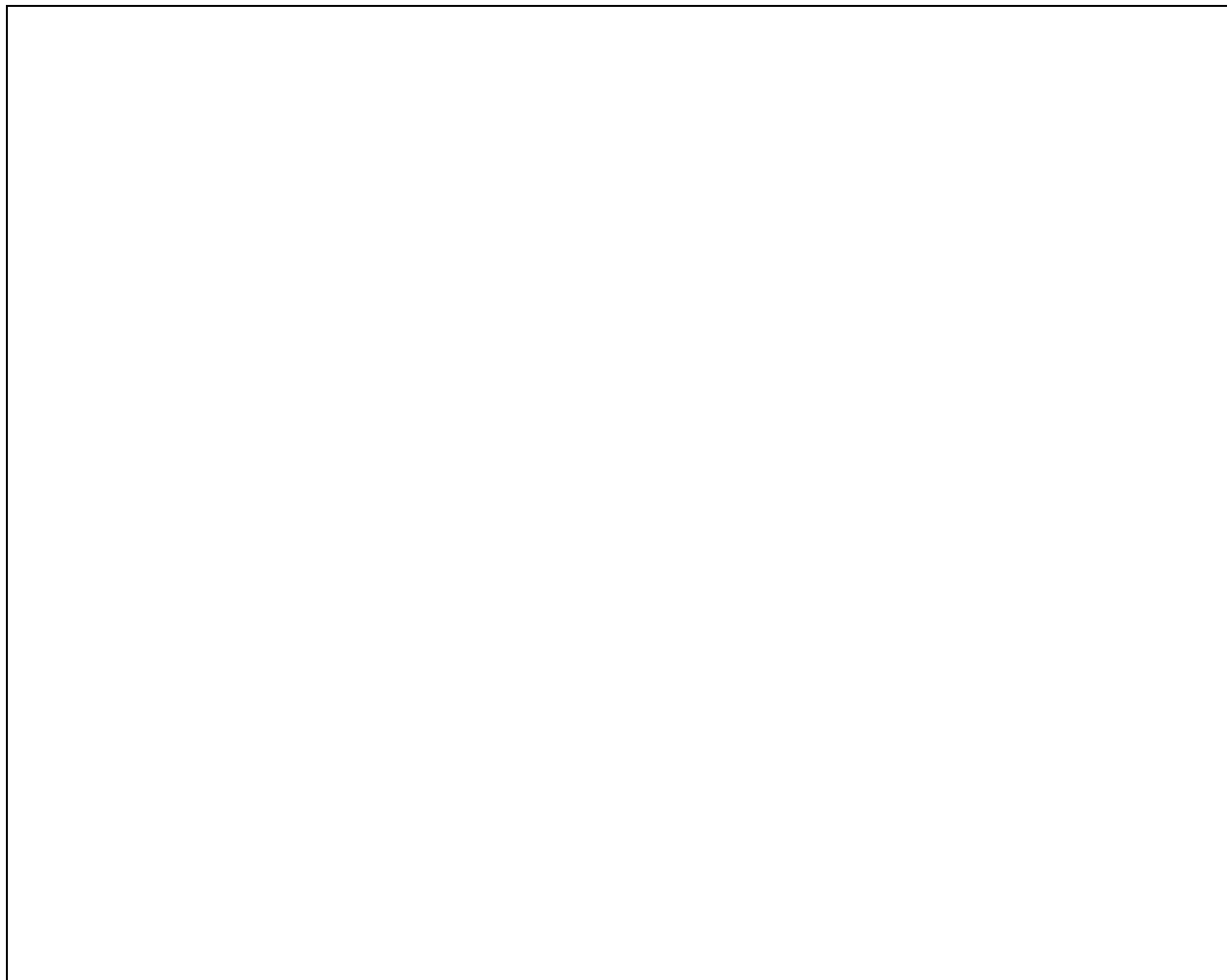
- The absent parent can participate over the phone
- The absent parent can send written concerns and ideas for case planning
- The absent parent can choose a proxy who will represent his/her concerns and wishes
- A separate plan can be completed with the absent parent
- The absent parent should be given the opportunity to share in the case planning and should be encouraged to do so throughout the life of the case.
- In cases where there are volatile relationships among family members, one strategy that has been successful in some cases is the use of meetings done in “stages”. This involves having one group of family and supports meet to discuss their ideas for addressing safety and risk, they would then be excused, and the other family group would discuss their ideas. If possible, both groups are then brought together to look at the common areas and finalize the plan.

Activity: Developing Support Systems

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of a support system is “a network of people who provide an individual with practical or emotional support.”

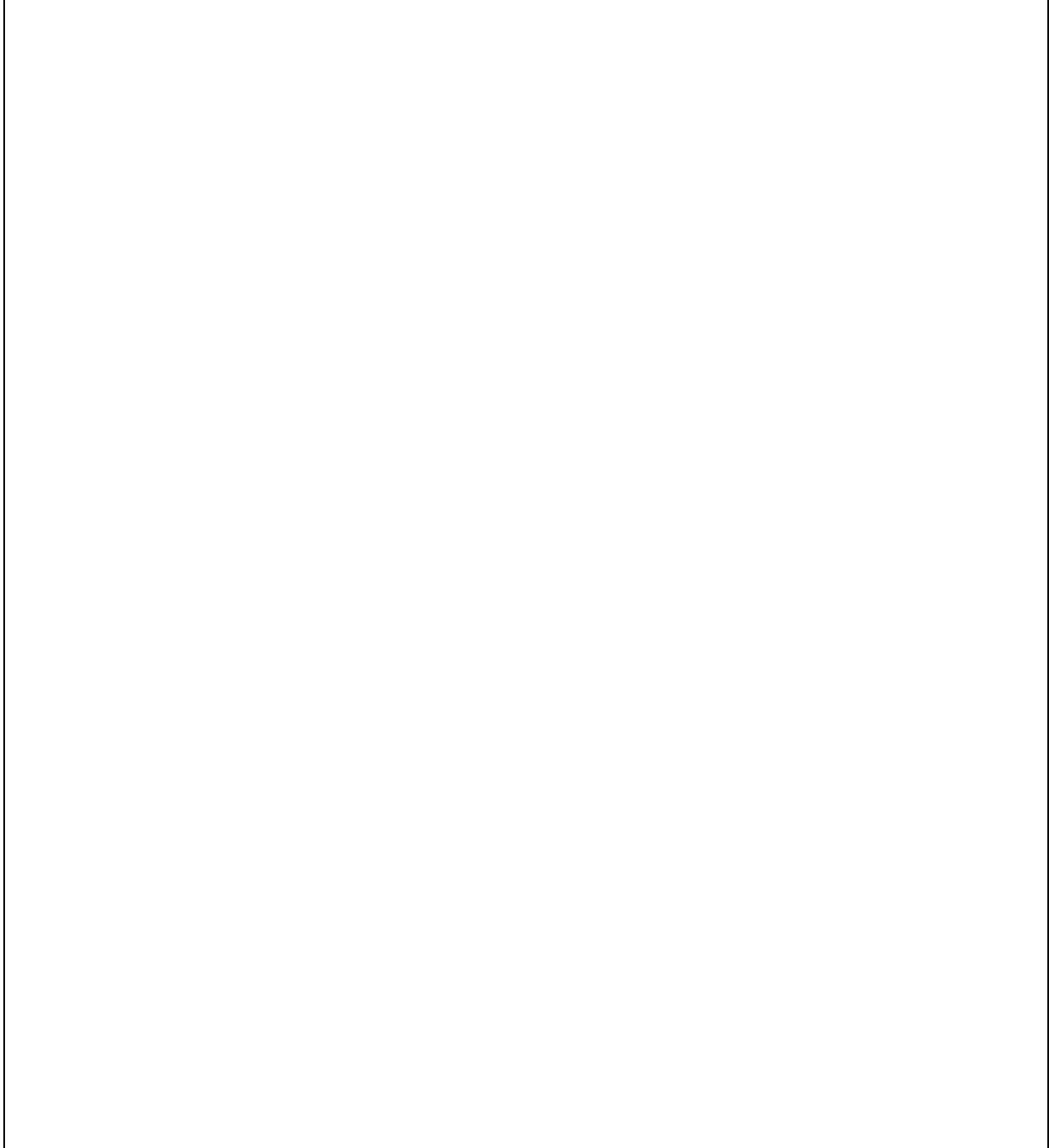
**Talk about the following questions with your partner:**

- How do we explore who is or could be (if re-engaged) a part of a family or family member's support system?
- What does this conversation look like? Work together to formulate these questions. Be creative! Come up with questions, statements, or even a tool, like a drawing of a stick person, to help families identify their support systems. Think back to some of the strategies and questions we talked about last week in your assessing and interviewing learning labs. Feel free to open your Participant Workbook to those pages for some additional guidance.
- Before you wrap up, identify your top three questions or statement of exploration to help families identify members of their support system.



Debrief

**Make note of the questions, statements, and tools that your peers have shared that you could add to your toolbox.**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for participants to take notes on questions, statements, and tools shared by peers during the debrief session.

Preparing for and Participating in CFT Meetings

**Preparing for and Participating in CFT Meetings**

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Preparing families is a crucial component to a successful CFT meeting

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Prepare both the child and the family.

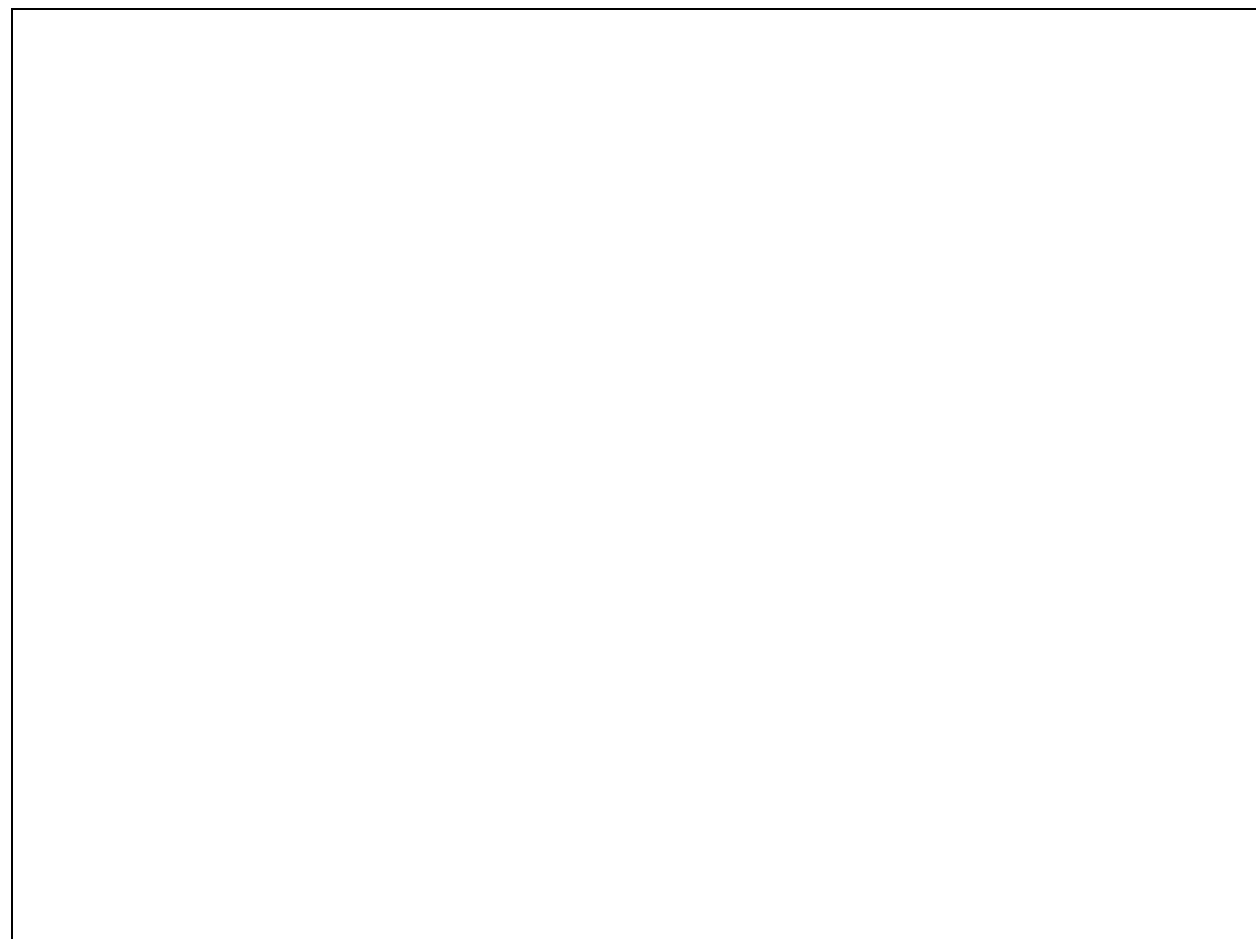
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The family needs to feel confident that this is their meeting

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Family voice and choice is the heart of the meeting

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 27



## Handout: Preparing for and Participating in CFT Meetings

- Preparing families is a crucial component of a successful CFT meeting
- Prepare both the child and the family.
- The family needs to feel confident that this is their meeting
- Family voice and choice are the heart of the meeting

The following are some strategies and ways you can prepare families for CFT meetings.

- Share with them that notes will be taken during the meeting, but that you will review the notes with them following the meeting to check for accuracy.
- Provide the family with a description of what a CFT meeting looks like. Include a description of what the CFT meeting might feel like.
- Because this is the family's meeting and their voice is at the forefront of our work with the family, remind them that they are the creators, the invitation extenders to this meeting. You can assure them that you will assist them in extending invitations on their behalf. In doing so, it's important that you reflect to the person you are inviting, that the invitation is being sent on behalf of the family.
- Review with families what happens at a CFT meeting. You do not want any elements to be a surprise and to really "own" the meeting, the family needs to know what to fully expect. Share a shell of an agenda with the family and ask them how they would like to see the agenda adjusted, changed, or added to. It is important that you also make adjustments to the agenda per the family's wishes.
- Families may have worries or fears about telling their support system about the CFT meeting and sharing their stories. You must support them in preparing their support system for the CFT meeting. For example, share with the family that it is good for them to explain to the team what has happened and that now the team needs the meeting. However, if the family feels like they cannot do this or does not feel comfortable, you can partner with them in sharing the message.
- Ask the family what they would like to get out of the CFT meeting – what do they want to see happen at the meeting.
- Help the parent or other family members prepare to tell the story of how they became involved with your agency.
- Help the family establish ground rules that will be used during the CFT meeting. Use a similar process as you did for developing the agenda. Use a template for the ground rules and provide some ideas to the family about typical ground rules, such as:
  - Show respect at all times to each other.
  - Stay strength-focused, even while addressing needs.
  - Stay solution-focused with every participant keeping in mind "how can I help?"
- Explain to the family that a Service Plan, such as the Family Services Agreement, will be developed at the CFT and that this plan is a road map toward their goals.
- Prepare families with examples of questions they may be asked and help them explore the information they may want to share.



- Talk about tasks and goals. Explain that even their family support members will be assigned tasks, that the agency will have tasks, and the family will have tasks.

Preparation of the family must also include preparing the child. Children, as well as their families, participate in CFT meetings. Preparing the child may look different than the activities listed above.

- Be sure you are using terms and language the child will understand.
- Explain the purpose of the CFT to the child and what they can expect.
- Explain what the child's role will be, including when they may be asked to share their perspective and input.
- Elicit the child's voice in all planning activities, such as asking for their input on who they would like to attend the meeting.
- Ask the child what they would like to get out of the CFT meeting – what do they want to see happen at the meeting?
- Encourage the child to speak up during the meeting and reassure them that they won't get "in trouble" for sharing their voice.
- Explain to the child that, if at any time they need a break during the CFT, the group will take a break.

Child and Family Team Meetings should be planned in advance with the family, not for the family. Children and families should be prepared in advance to fully participate in the meeting. This will require you to clearly explain that their opinions and experiences will be actively sought and discussed in a group setting.

Achieving Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes

**Achieving Safety, Permanency, and Well-being Outcomes**

- Strengthens family relationships
- Identifies and nurtures a system of family supports
- Intentionally involves fathers and paternal relatives
- Prevents unnecessary placement and placement disruption
- Encourages and empowers families to be their own champions

NCDHHS, Division of Social Services | 2022 Child Welfare Pre-Service Training 28

It is important to remember that we must recognize and honor the following:

- Recognize that families know what they need.
- Recognize that families can define their strengths.
- Recognize that healing happens through connections.
- Recognize that work needs to happen with a family throughout the life of a case – not just the week before court.
- Recognize that Family Services Agreements must be reviewed and updated WITH the family regularly – more often than required by policy.
- Recognize the strength of a child and family team.
- Recognize the importance of full disclosure. No surprises.



## Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings Learning Lab

Video: [A Sacred Circle – Family Group Conferencing](#)

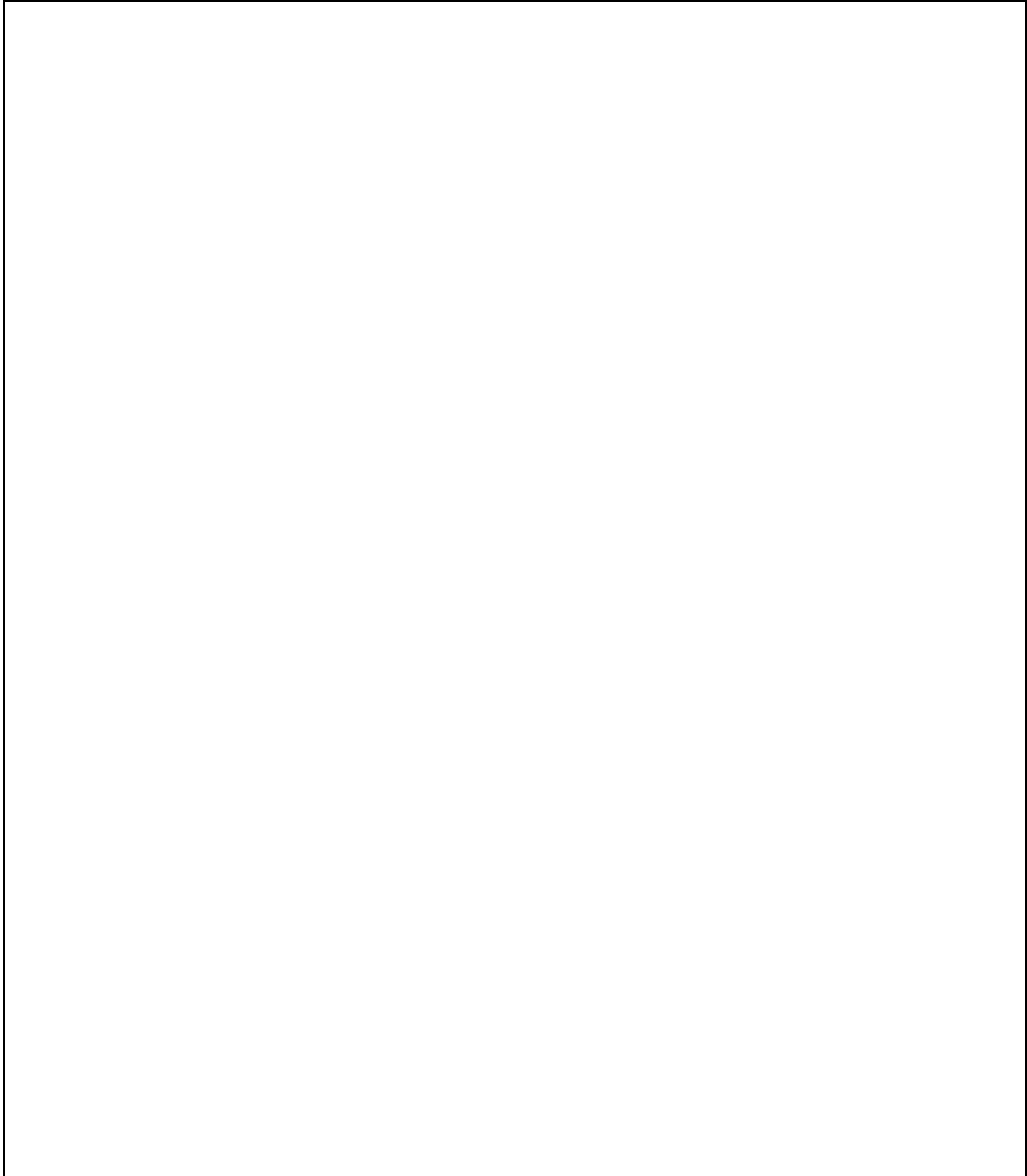
**Visit: [A Sacred Circle: Family Group Conferencing](#) for a video depicting similarities between a Family Group Meeting in an Indigenous community in Alberta, Canada, and Child and Family Team meetings here in North Carolina.**

As you watch the video, carefully follow your assigned family member and notate both verbal and non-verbal communication. Assignments are as follows:

1. Social workers, as a group. You will be following the social workers as a group. Everyone else will only target one person.
2. Child. This is the girl that is placed in out-of-home care, not the baby in the video.
3. Mom
4. Dad
5. Grandma
6. Uncle. He is wearing a plaid shirt.
7. Aunt. This is the other female who speaks during the Family Group Conference and who is not the mom.
8. Elder

Debrief

**What do you remember about what you just saw? What did you notice happening?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the debriefing question.

Activity: Child and Family Voice

Worksheet: Child and Family Team Meetings

**Outcomes:**

- A group can sometimes be more effective in making good decisions than an individual.
- Families are the experts on themselves. You must engage the experts.
- When families are included in decision-making, they are capable of identifying their own needs and strengths and are much more committed to the successful completion of the plan.
- Members of the family's community add value to the process by serving as natural allies to the family and as experts on the community's resources.

**Did you see evidence of these facts in the Sacred Circle presentation?**

**Preparatory meeting with the family prior to the CFT meeting:**

- Discuss the purpose of the meeting with parents/caregivers.
- Provide the family with a description of what a CFT meeting looks like. Include a description of what the CFT meeting might feel like.
- Find out who the family wants to engage in the process. The participants do not necessarily have to be blood or legally related.
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- Explain to the family that a service plan, such as the Family Services Agreement, will be developed at the CFT and that this plan is a road map toward their goals.
- Prepare families with examples of questions they may be asked and help them explore the information they may want to share.

- Talk about tasks and goals. Explain that even their family support members will be assigned tasks, that the agency will have tasks, and the family will have tasks.

**Did you see evidence that preparation for the family team meeting occurred in the Sacred Circle presentation?**

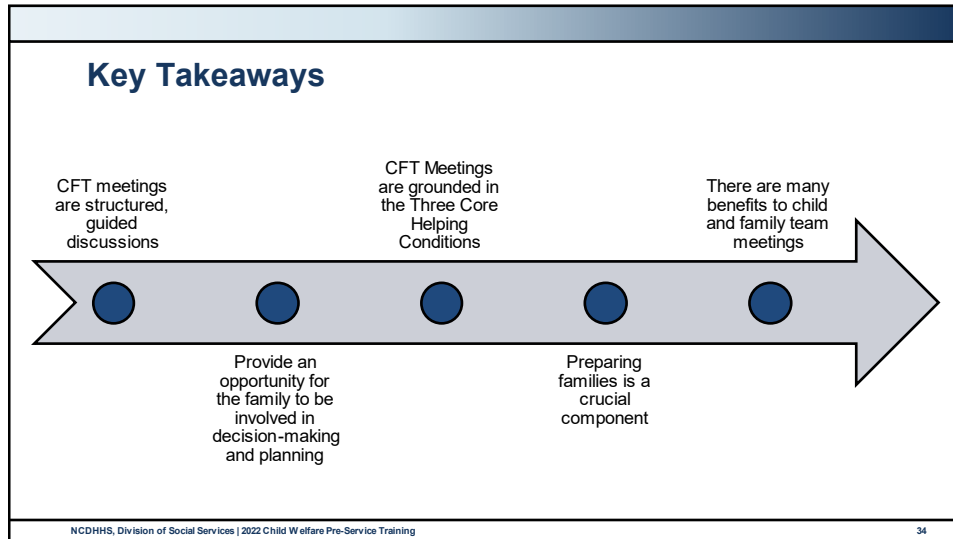
**Purpose of the meeting:**

- Prevent removal by identifying natural supports that the family has available or services that can be used to create a safe environment for the child.
- Establish a relationship between the social worker and family members.
- Engage the family and secure an investment in the partnership and working together.
- Explore family needs and appropriate services to address the needs.
- Learn about family strengths, resources, and protective capacities.
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved.
- Discuss what could happen in the case, like court hearings and placement, if the child is not protected from abuse or neglect.
- Allow for everyone to have the same information and to be clear about the plan of action for the protection of children and for their needs to be met.

**Did you see evidence that the purpose of the family team meeting was honored in the Sacred Circle presentation?**



### Key Takeaways



### Questions and Reflections

**Use this space to record questions and reflections about what you have learned.**



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## Appendix: Handouts

LGBTQIA+ Community – Terms and Definitions .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Placement Preferences .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Requirement to Provide Notice.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Tribal Contact Information .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Our Beliefs About Change and Client Engagement .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Family-Centered Practice .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Keys to Building Strong Relationships with Fathers .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CFT Meetings.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CFT Meetings Timelines Policy .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Preparing for and Participating in CFT Meetings.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## LGBTQIA+ Community – Terms and Definitions

<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/lgbtq-youth/key-terms-and-concepts>

**2/Two-Spirit:** An inclusive term created specifically by and used by some Native American communities. It refers to American Indian/Alaskan Native individuals who express their gender, sexual orientation, and/or sex/gender roles in Indigenous, non-Western ways, using tribal terms and concepts, and/or who define themselves as LGBTQ+, questioning, and intersex in a Native context. Often a person's spiritual experiences or cultural beliefs are core to the formation of their two-spirit identity.

**Agender:** Individuals who do not identify as any gender.

**Ally:** A term relating generally to individuals who support marginalized groups. In the LGBTQ+ community, this term is used to describe someone supportive of LGBTQ+ individuals and the community, either personally or as an advocate. Allies include heterosexual and cisgender individuals (i.e., those who identify with the sex assigned to them at birth).

**Asexual:** Individuals who do not experience sexual attraction. An individual can also be aromantic, meaning that they do not experience romantic attraction.

**Bigender:** Individuals who identify as a person whose gender identity encompasses two genders (often man and woman, but not exclusively), or is moving between two genders.

**Bisexual:** An individual who has the capacity to form enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to those of the same gender or those of another gender.

**Coming Out:** The process through which youth identify, acknowledge, express, and share with others information about their sexual orientation and gender identity. This experience can be an affirming one, resulting in a sense of belonging, but it can also create stress in the life of youth and put them at risk for negative outcomes as a result of LGBTQ+ -related stigma and the responses and behaviors of others. This process includes coming out over time to oneself, to friends and other peers, at school, to family, at work, and in one's community.

**Gay:** Individuals whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex.

**Gender Identity:** Our internal sense of being male, female, or another identity. Because gender identity is internal, it is not necessarily visible to others. "Cisgender" describes youth whose gender identity/expression does not differ from that typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. For example, a young person who was born male and identifies as a man may be considered cisgender. In contrast, "transgender" (or "trans") describes people whose gender identity/expression is different from that typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. A relatively small percentage of gender-variant children develop an adult transgender identity, but most adolescents with a gender-variant identity develop an adult transgender identity.

**Gender Expression:** How youth represent their gender to others. For example, individuals may express their gender through mannerisms, clothes, and personal interests. Our understanding of gender and what it means to be “masculine” and “feminine” is influenced by how we were socialized. For example, families, schools, and the media influence our understanding of gender. Research shows that children as young as two years old can identify a person’s sex based on how they present their gender, that by age three they can begin to see themselves as either male or female, and that around age nine they understand gender roles. For most youth, internal gender identity is reinforced by the reactions that others have to our gender expression. Other terms are sometimes used to describe one’s gender. For example, “gender fluid” or “gender creative” reflect a more flexible range of gender expression.

**Genderqueer:** Individuals who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman.

**Gender Variant:** Individuals who do not follow gender stereotypes.

**Intersex:** An umbrella term used to describe people with differences in reproductive anatomy, chromosomes, or hormones that don’t fit typical definitions of male and female.

**Lesbian:** A woman who has romantic and/or sexual orientation toward women. Some nonbinary individuals also identify with this term.

**Nonbinary:** Individuals who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as outside of the male-female gender binary.

**Pangender:** An individual whose gender identity and/or gender expression is numerous, either fixed (many at once) or fluid (moving from one to another, often more than two).

**Pansexual:** An individual who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions.

**Queer:** Historically, this has been a pejorative term used to describe LGBTQ+ people, but is now used by some people, particularly younger people, whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual. Some people may use queer, or more commonly genderqueer, to describe their gender identity and/or gender expression.

**Questioning:** A term used to describe young people who are unsure about their sexual and/or gender identity.

**Sex:** Genetic and anatomical characteristics with which youth are born, typically labeled “male” or “female.” Some youth are born with a reproductive/sexual anatomy that does not fit typical definitions of “male” or “female.” This is sometimes referred to as “intersex.”

**Sexual Orientation:** A youth’s emotional, sexual, and/or relational attraction to others. For some, this attraction is to people of the opposite sex/gender (heterosexual), the same sex/gender (gay/lesbian), both sexes/genders (bisexual), or people in general independent of their sex/gender (pansexual or omnisexual). The term can also refer to low or non-existent attraction to any sex/gender (asexual).

**Transgender:** People whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Many transgender people will transition to align their gender expression with their gender identity; however, a person does not have to transition to be transgender.

**Transitioning:** Transgender youth “transition” to express their gender identity through various changes, such as wearing clothes and adopting a physical appearance that aligns with their internal sense of gender. Transitioning may or may not include medical or surgical treatment and depends on a variety of factors, including age, access to and affordability of services, overall health, and personal choice. For transgender youth, transitioning is an important part of affirming their identity.

## Placement Preferences

For **foster care placements**, the placement preferences are, in order:

5. A member of the child's extended family
6. A foster home licensed, approved, or specified by the child's Tribe
7. An Indian foster home licensed or approved by an authorized non-Indian licensing authority
8. An institution approved by a Tribe or operated by an Indian organization that has a program suitable to meet the child's needs

For **adoptive placements**, the placement preferences are, in order:

4. A member of the child's extended family
5. Other members of the child's Tribe
6. Other Indian families

For both foster and adoptive homes, Tribes can assign a different order of placement that supersedes ICWA. In addition, the court must, where appropriate, consider any placement preferences of the child or their parent.

Further, for foster care or pre-adoptive placements or changes in placement of American Indian or Alaskan Native children, the child must be placed in the least restrictive setting that:

- Is the most family-like setting, considering sibling attachment
- Allows the child's special needs, if any, to be met
- Is in reasonable proximity to the child's home, extended family, or siblings



## Requirement to Provide Notice

When an Indian child is removed from their homes to be placed into foster care, the child welfare agency is required to notify the child's tribe. Remember from an earlier section of this training that an Indian child is defined as "any unmarried person under the age of 18 who is either a member of a **federally** recognized Indian Tribe or the biological child of **a member of** a federally recognized Indian Tribe and is **eligible for membership** in a federally recognized Indian Tribe."

The federal Indian Child Welfare Act requires notice to tribes for:

- Involuntary foster care placements
- Termination of parental rights proceedings

ICWA does not require notice to tribes:

- For voluntary placements (including when there is no threat of removal by the state child welfare agency or when the child's parent or Indian custodian can regain custody on demand)
- If both the parent and child are not members of a federally-recognized tribe
- If the child is not eligible for tribal membership in a federally-recognized tribe
- For Tribal court proceedings
- For proceedings regarding a criminal act committed by a minor
- For awards of custody in divorce proceedings

ICWA does **not** require notice to tribes prior to emergency removals, but state child welfare agencies must immediately take action to comply with ICWA if it is applicable.

North Carolina policy requires that county DSS workers notify:

- Tribal authorities when taking custody of a tribal child or earlier with parental permission, and
- Adult relatives of Indian children being placed in foster care for possible placement preferences

An ICWA notice should include:

- The birth name, birthplace, date of birth, Tribal enrollment information, and number (if applicable) for the child, birth parents, grandparents, and other direct lineal ancestors
- A copy of the relevant child-custody proceeding documents or petition, and the date, time, and location of any scheduled hearing

An ICWA notice should be sent to:

- The child's parents
- The child's Indian custodian, if applicable
- The ICWA Designated Agents of each Tribe in which the child is or may be enrolled. The ICWA Designated Agent for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians can be found on the Bureau of Indian Affairs website.
- The appropriate BIA Regional Director

The ICWA notice must be sent by **registered or certified mail with a return receipt requested**, with a copy sent to the appropriate BIA Regional Director. The appropriate Regional Director can also be found on the BIA website.

## Tribal Contact Information

### **Current as of September 2022**

Each Tribal government has a Tribal Office (or offices), and the contact information generally includes the:

- Tribal Chief or Chairperson
- Executive Director or Tribal Administrator
- Tribal Enrollment Specialist



Coharie Tribe

Ammie Gordon "Gordie", Chief

Greg Jacobs, Executive Director - greg\_jacobs53@yahoo.com

JaNella Williams, Tribal Enrollment Officer - cohariegurl@hotmail.com

**Address:**

7531 N U.S. Hwy 421

Clinton, NC 28328

**Phone:** 910-564-6909

**Fax:** 910-564-2701



Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation

Richard G. Sneed, Principal Chief

Alan B. Ensley, Vice Chief

Richard French, Chairman

Albert Rose, Vice Chairman

Ashleigh Stephens, Chief of Staff - ashstep@ebci-nsn.gov/Phone: 828-359-7029

**Address:**

PO Box 1927

Cherokee, NC 28719

**Phone:** 828-359-7000

**Fax:** 828-497-7000



Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe

Jamie Oxendine, Tribal Administrator - [joxendine@haliwa-saponi.com](mailto:joxendine@haliwa-saponi.com)

Tosha Silver, Enrollment Clerk - [toshasilver@haliwa-saponi.com](mailto:toshasilver@haliwa-saponi.com)

Dr. Ogletree Richardson, Chief

Gideon Lee, Chairman

**Physical Address:**

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Hollister, NC 27844

**Mailing Address:**

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Hollister, NC 27844

**Phone:** 252-586-4017

**Fax:** 252-586-3918



Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina

**Mr. John Lowery, Tribal Chairman** - [johnlowery1@yahoo.com](mailto:johnlowery1@yahoo.com)/**Phone:** 910-522-5474

**Tammy Maynor, Administrator** - [tmaynor@lumbeetribe.com](mailto:tmaynor@lumbeetribe.com)/**Phone:** 910-522-2221

**Camera Brewer, Admin. Assist. to Chairman** - [cbrewer@lumbeetribe.com](mailto:cbrewer@lumbeetribe.com)/**Phone:** 910-522-2190

**Reena Locklear, Enrollment Director** - [roxendine@lumbeetribe.com](mailto:roxendine@lumbeetribe.com)

**Mailing Address:**

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Pembroke, NC 28372

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**Main:** 910-521-7861

**Fax:** 910-521-7790

**Fax-Adm:** 910-521-2278

**Website:** [www.lumbeetribe.com](http://www.lumbeetribe.com)



Meherrin Indian Tribe  
Jonathan Caudill, Jr., Chief  
Vacant, Tribal Administrator - bmeherrin@yahoo.com

**Mailing Address:**

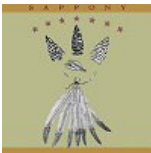
PO Box 274  
Ahoskie, NC 27910  
**Phone:** 252-904-1517



Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation  
**Mr. W.A. "Tony" Hayes, Tribal Chair** - tony.hayes@trancasnc.com  
**Ms. Vickie Jeffries, Tribal Administrator** - vickiejeffries@yahoo.com/**Phone:** 336-421-1317

**Mailing Address:**

PO Box 356  
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**Phone:** 919-304-3723  
**Email:** obsntribe@gmail.com  
**Website:** www.obsn.org



Sappony  
**Mr. Otis K. Martin, Chief**  
**Mr. Dante Desiderio, Executive Director** - dante@nafoa.org  
**Mrs. Dorothy Yates, Tribal Chair** - dorothysyates@gmail.com

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**Mailing Address:**  
PO Box 3265  
Roxboro, NC 27574  
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**Website:** www.sappony.org



Waccamaw Siouan Tribe

**Rev. Mike Jacobs, Chief** - revmdjacobs@gmail.com/**Phone:** 910-619-3967

**Ms. Pamela Young Jacobs, Chairperson** - nativesongpj@yahoo.com/ **Phone:** 910-234-1294

**Mrs. Brenda Moore, Housing Coordinator** - brendamoore50@aol.com

**Leslie Jones, Tribal Enrollment Specialist** - leslie.jones@waccamaw-siouan.com/**Phone:** 910-655-8778

**Mailing Address:**

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Bolton, NC 28423

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Bolton, NC 28423

**Phone:** 910-665-8778

**Fax:** 910-655-8779

**Email:** siouan@aol.com

**Website:** www.waccamaw-siouan.com

## Our Beliefs About Change and Client Engagement

### **What do the social worker's beliefs have to do with the family's ability to change?**

- Instillation of hope: we cannot instill hope if the social worker does not have hope
- Self-fulfilling prophecy: your beliefs about a family or about change, can impact whether that change occurs. It can be a self-fulfilling prophecy, good or bad.
- Energy of the social worker and dedication of the social worker: your dedication and energy in working with the family will transfer to them. If you are energetic and more dedicated, the family will feel that. They will become more energetic and dedicated to working with your agency and engaged in the change process.
- Honesty, concern, and genuineness of the social worker will be evident (and the lack of will also be present)

### **What needs to be present in the social worker to allow every family to have an equal chance for change?**

- Belief that if children can be kept safe and their needs met, they are better off with their parents. This is the importance of permanency.
- Belief that people can change.
- Belief that the social worker's skills and knowledge can help people to change.
- Belief that you must be hopeful and have the ability to instill hope in others.
- Belief that you must be nonjudgmental and non-accusatory.
- Belief that under different life circumstances the social worker could in fact be the client.
- Belief in the importance of treating every family with dignity and respect.

### **Rules of Engagement in Family-Centered Practice Planning**

- Seek common ground
  - What can you agree on?
  - What is the common goal?
- Be respectful, honest, empathetic, concerned, and genuine
- Be explicit and understandable and give information
- Try to understand and listen empathetically
- Acknowledge the perspective of the child and family
- Allow the child and family to show feelings and ask questions
- Treat the child and family with respect, as you would want to be treated

## Family-Centered Practice

### Our Beliefs:

- Children must be allowed to grow up in a safe environment free from abuse or neglect.
- If children can be kept in their own homes, we must do so by providing support and services that will eliminate the risk of harm by abuse or neglect.
- If the children must be removed, we must work toward reunification as soon as possible.
- If we can't get children back to their own homes, we must get them into a permanent family situation as soon as possible.
- Connections need to be made to kin, culture, and community.
- Children need stability, security, safety, and their needs to be met while we are working toward permanent placement.

### Reasons for Family-Centered Practice:

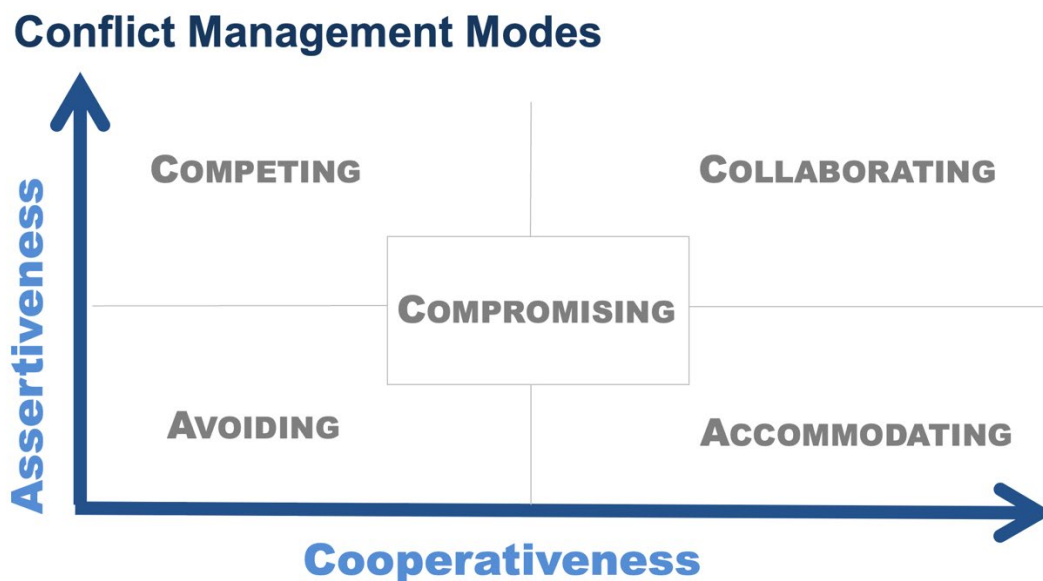
- Better information and more information about the family (history, functioning, characteristics, system, culture, values, beliefs, etc.) can be obtained when the family is included in the process.
- Better assessments of safety and risk of harm can be done with better information.
- Plans for change are more likely to have investment by family members when they are a part of the process.
- Individualized plans are more relevant to specific issues and needs of the family and can capitalize on the strengths of family members and the family as a whole.
- Strengths-based practice helps people to be more motivated and hopeful for change to really occur.
- Families can really change if they are a part of the change process.
- Building trust and entering into a relationship are difficult when the family is involuntarily participating. The family must be brought into the change process for real change to occur.
- The caregiver needs to be empowered to meet the child's needs and to keep the child safe.

### Principles of Family-Centered Practice

1. Family-centered practice requires that the family be viewed as a system of interrelated people and that action and change in one part of the system impact the other.
2. Family-centered practice honors the importance of a child's emotional and spiritual attachments to his/her birth family, culture, and community. Maintaining these attachments is paramount.
3. Family-centered practice requires an understanding of the importance that kin can play in planning for and ensuring child safety and permanence. (Define the family!)
4. Family-centered practice requires that we build the strengths and capacities and resources of the family system.
5. Family-centered practice requires that we are honest with families and that we practice full disclosure.
6. Family-centered practice seeks to engage the family as partners in the identification of needs, planning for services, and assessment of service efficacy.
7. Family-centered practice requires that the case plan is clearly linked to the assessment and that the family fully understands their roles and responsibilities outlined within the case plan.
8. Family-centered practice ensures that children have permanent legal connections with adults who love them and are committed to them.

## The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) assesses an individual's behavior in conflict situations—that is, situations in which the concerns of two people appear to be incompatible. In conflict situations, we can describe a person's behavior along two basic dimensions: (1) assertiveness, the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy their own concerns, and (2) cooperativeness, the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy the other person's concerns.



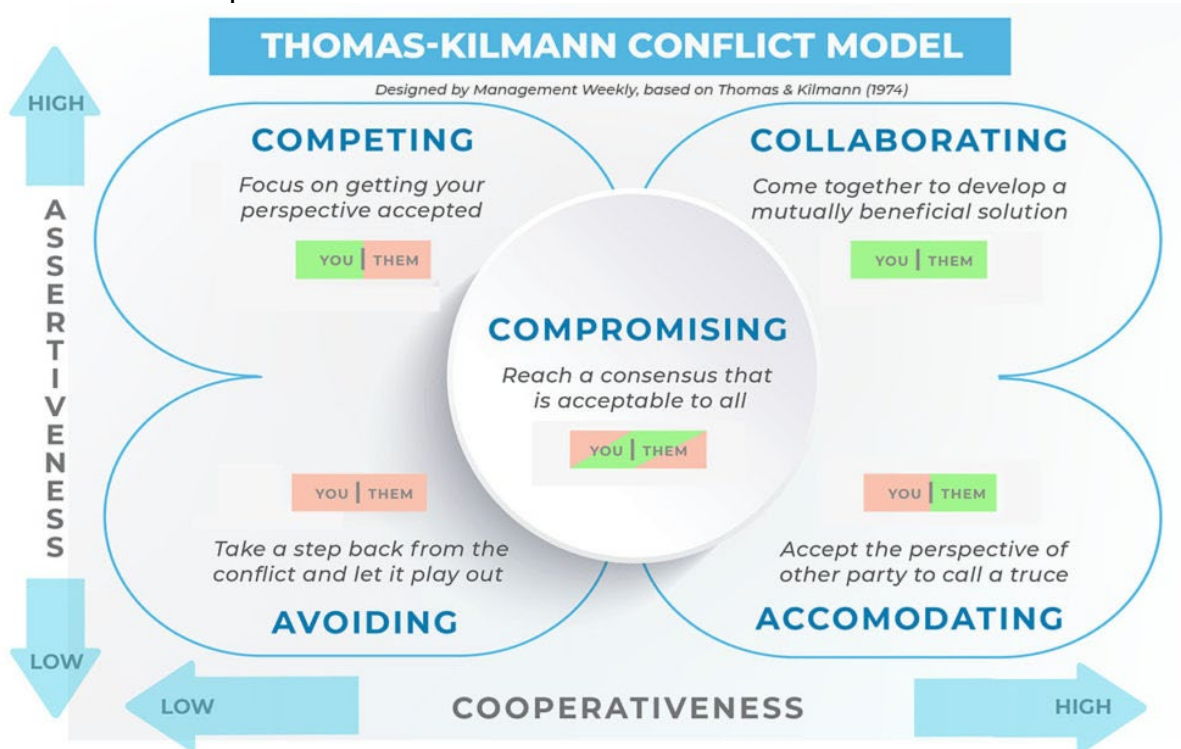
These two dimensions of behavior can be used to define five methods of dealing with conflict. In the case of conflict-handling behavior, there are no right or wrong answers. All five modes are useful in some situations: each represents a set of useful social skills.

You are also capable of using all five conflict-handling modes; you cannot be characterized as having a single, rigid style of dealing with conflict. However, most people use some modes more readily than others, develop more skills in those modes, and therefore tend to rely on them more heavily.



## The Five Modes for Conflict Management

The five modes for conflict management are the core takeaway from Thomas Kilmann's conflict model. These modes are spread across the two dimensions or approaches as we have discussed earlier. Let us first place them in a chart. This will help us make a better sense of the model. Further, we shall take a deeper dive into each one of these modes.



### Competing

At the top left end of the chart, we have high assertiveness and low cooperation. We find competing right at this spot. This means that we use 'competing' as a conflict resolution strategy when we resort to being assertive. Additionally, we also become uncooperative with the opposing party. However, this strategy is not as evil as it sounds. This mode may be more appropriate when we need speedy toward resolution and are in a higher position of power. It is also imperative to use this mode when we have to take tough calls.

### Collaborating

We use collaborating mode of conflict resolution when we are on the same page as the opposing party. This is an ideal solution. It happens when both parties are sensible, have similar power and authority, and are ready to be cooperative with each other. This is easier in a decentralized organizational structure.

Typically, the first step is a detailed discussion. We need to understand each other's viewpoints. This leads to a deeper analysis of the situation. We also try to understand the expectations of each other. Finally, we reach a solution where both parties may benefit.

**Avoiding**

The avoiding mode reflects passivity in conflict management. Although, from an ideal perspective, we would agree that we should face the problems head-on. However, the most confident of us would have been in situations where confrontation was best avoided. Also, some problems are so trivial, they are not worth your time.

This approach involves shunning the conflict and withholding one's views and opinions. People also employ this approach when the cost of confrontation and resolution is far more than the cost of living with the conflict. However, avoiding does not resolve the conflict. On the downside, it just buries it below the surface and may potentially lead to future conflicts.

**Accommodating**

Now, we are gradually moving towards more amicable means of resolving conflicts. Perhaps, the accommodating mode is so considerate of the opposing party that you are ready to call it a truce at the cost of giving up your position. It may be worthwhile in situations when the conflict is a total waste of your time.

The Thomas and Kilmann Conflict Model positions this mode as high in cooperativeness and low in assertiveness. We sacrifice our own stance to make the other party happy.

**Compromising**

Finally, we arrive at the literal middle ground in the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Model. The center of the chart shows us a point where we are moderately assertive and moderately cooperative. In certain situations, we may not want to have an extended resolution. Collaborating takes time. Also, in some situations, we don't want to be too confrontational but at the same time, we want to take a stand as well.

Also, there are some conflicting situations where we know that the best potential solution would be to satisfy all the parties. In such situations, we typically approach the conflict as a compromise. Each conflicting party gets something they want. Meanwhile, they also give up something they wanted. So, it is a mixed win for all. However, some parties may get a resolution closer to their expectations while it could be a greater compromise for the other.

## Keys to Building Strong Relationships with Fathers



### Keys to Building Strong Relationships with Fathers

#### 1. Demonstrate interest in the whole family

- a. Get contact information of fathers on all intake/enrollment forms.
- b. When talking to mothers, ask also about the fathers: what do they do for a living, their work schedules, areas of concern, hobbies, and interests, etc.

#### 2. Initiate programs and activities that appeal to fathers

- a. Have workshops on topics such as Family Economic Success, How to Write a Resume, How to Fill Out Job Applications, Job Training Resources, Affordable or Low-Income Housing Resources, How to Start a Small Business, etc.
- b. Organize outdoor events, support groups, and parenting classes that require the participation of fathers.

#### 3. Encourage mothers to make room for father involvement

- a. Help mothers to see the importance of fathers supporting their children's development by having quality one-on-one time with them.
- b. Reassure mothers that there will be adequate staffing to support fathers in activities that are father-child specific.

#### 4. Get to know fathers in your program and activities

- a. Make a special effort to personally greet and thank fathers who attend activities.
- b. Strike up casual conversations with fathers and listen attentively.

#### 5. Follow up with the fathers

- a. Call fathers after the activity to get their feedback and assess their interest in further involvement in your program and activities.
- b. Invite fathers for a relational visit at your center or visit them at their homes.

#### 6. Offer opportunities for fathers to get involved in the program's functioning

- a. Create a list of volunteer opportunities at the center for fathers. Make sure the list covers a variety of activities, such as physical tasks, technology support, and planning events and activities.
- b. Recruit fathers to become members of the advisory committee or event planning committees at your center. Help them develop leadership and collaborative skills during their tenure.

#### 7. Value the contribution of fathers in your program and activities.

- a. Regularly and publicly praise them for their dedication, setting them as examples for other fathers.
- b. Seek their feedback and take it seriously.

## CFT Meetings

A CFT meeting is a way to engage and partner with all the people who surround a family and to support the family in building a support network that will eventually sustain it after the case is closed. A CFT meeting is a way for county child welfare agencies to share responsibility for protecting children with their families and the community.

CFT meetings are structured, guided discussions with the family, their natural supports, and other team members about family strengths, needs, and problems and the impact they have on the safety, permanence, and well-being of the family's children. The meetings share the following components:

- A clear but open-ended purpose. All CFTs must have a clear purpose and provide an opportunity for the family to be involved in decision-making and planning.
- An opportunity for the family to be involved in decision-making and planning. The county child welfare worker and/or the facilitator must ensure that the ideas of the family and its natural supports are considered with the same weight as those of the professionals in the room.
- Options for the family to consider and decisions for the family to make. The team will develop a Family Services Agreement that is created using the best ideas of the family, informal, and formal supports that the family believes in, the agency approves of, and lessens risk and heightens safety for the child/youth and family.
- The family's involvement in the development of specific safety or permanent plans and the development of services and support. The team will reach an agreement on which identified child welfare issues will be addressed and how they will be addressed throughout the life of the case and will create a plan for how all participants will take part in, support, and implement the Family Services Agreement developed by the team.
- The outcome of the meeting will be reflected in the development or revision of a Family Services Agreement. The primary focus must always be the safety and well-being of the children.

### **CFT meeting membership:**

- ALWAYS the family, including non-resident parents
- Anyone significant to the family
- The child
- Safety resources/support system
- Social worker
- Facilitator
- Relevant service providers
- Foster parents, if the child is placed in out-of-home care

### **Child and Family Team Meetings are grounded in the Three Core Helping Conditions:**

1. Genuineness – Be yourself. Be clear about concerns and be non-defensive. Be aware of your non-verbal behavior, tone of voice, and verbal responses.
2. Empathy – Attempt to understand the experience of the child or family's world and then communicate your understanding of and compassion for their experiences.
3. Respect – Value everyone and their potential separate from any evaluation of their behavior. Treat each family member as worthwhile and anticipate their capabilities, strengths, and abilities.

**Outcomes:**

- A group can sometimes be more effective in making good decisions than an individual.
- Families are the experts on themselves. You must engage the experts.
- When families are included in decision-making, they are capable of identifying their own needs and strengths and are much more committed to the successful completion of the plan.
- Members of the family's community add value to the process by serving as natural allies to the family and as experts on the community's resources.

**Preparatory meeting with the family prior to the CFT meeting:**

- Discuss the purpose of the meeting with parents/caregivers.
- Provide the family with a description of what a CFT meeting looks like. Include a description of what the CFT meeting might feel like.
- Find out who the family wants to engage in the process. The participants do not necessarily have to be blood or legally related.
- Decide who will give the invitation and talk about how to explain the meeting and what will be shared with those being asked to attend.
- Help the family establish ground rules that will be used during the CFT meeting.
- Share with them that notes will be taken during the meeting, but that you will review the notes with them following the meeting to check for accuracy.
- Explain to the family that a service plan, such as the Family Services Agreement, will be developed at the CFT and that this plan is a road map toward their goals.
- Prepare families with examples of questions they may be asked and help them explore the information they may want to share.
- Talk about tasks and goals. Explain that even their family support members will be assigned tasks, that the agency will have tasks, and the family will have tasks.

**Purpose of the meeting:**

- Prevent removal by identifying natural supports that the family has available or services that can be used to create a safe environment for the child.
- Establish a relationship between the social worker and family members.
- Engage the family and secure an investment in the partnership and working together.
- Explore family needs and appropriate services to address the needs.
- Learn about family strengths, resources, and protective capacities.
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved.
- Discuss what could happen in the case, like court hearings and placement, if the child is not protected from abuse or neglect.
- Allow for everyone to have the same information and to be clear about the plan of action for the protection of children and for their needs to be met.

## CFT Meetings Timelines Policy

### Child and Family Team Meetings: Required Timeframes Throughout the Life of a Child Welfare Case

#### During the Assessment Phase

- To explore safety arrangements and possible placements if the children must be removed
- Prior to filing a petition
- Initial planning for a CFT is initiated even if a CFT is not held during the assessment phase (NC Child Welfare Policy: CPS Assessments, Required Timeframes)

#### During In-Home Services

- To review the Temporary Parental Safety Agreement (TPSA)
- For quarterly reviews of the IH-FSA
- To update the Family Services Agreement to address safety or high-risk concerns, including, but not limited to:
  - Identification of a new safety threat
  - High-risk “stuck cases”
- When requested by the family
- At critical decision points, include possible out-of-home placement
- When a child is placed with a TSP and the parent cannot be located and/or there is no parent to make decisions regarding the child
- Six months after the development of the In-Home Family Services Agreement:
  - There is a lack of progress as indicated by no activities completed nor any behavioral changes demonstrated that mitigate risk; or
  - The child(ren) in the care of a TSP is unable to return home
- Prior to and within 30 days of case closure in cases that are repeat recipients of CPS In-Home or received Permanency Planning services to specifically address the plan the family will follow to prevent repeat maltreatment.

(NC Child Welfare Policy: In-Home Services, Review of Services/Family Services Agreements)

#### During Permanency Planning and Adoption

- Any time there is a change in the permanent plan
  - Any time there is a need to change the placement
  - Any time there is a significant change in the case, including a school change
  - Any time the family requests a meeting
- (NC Child Welfare Policy: Permanency Planning Services, Required Timeframes)

### **Non-Resident Parents are Family, Too Involving Non-Resident Parents in CFT Meetings**

Non-Resident parents (who may or may be non-custodial parents) must be involved in the CFT meeting unless there is a valid conflict or safety issue, and this must be clearly documented in the case record. The agency shall use alternate methods to involve the non-resident parent in case planning if it is determined that the parent cannot participate in the CFT meeting due to a conflict or safety issue. Some alternate methods that might be used include:

- The absent parent can participate over the phone
- The absent parent can send written concerns and ideas for case planning
- The absent parent can choose a proxy who will represent his/her concerns and wishes
- A separate plan can be completed with the absent parent
- The absent parent should be given the opportunity to share in the case planning and should be encouraged to do so throughout the life of the case.
- In cases where there are volatile relationships among family members, one strategy that has been successful in some cases is the use of meetings done in “stages”. This involves having one group of family and supports meet to discuss their ideas for addressing safety and risk, they would then be excused, and the other family group would discuss their ideas. If possible, both groups are then brought together to look at the common areas and finalize the plan.



## Preparing for and Participating in CFT Meetings

- Preparing families is a crucial component of a successful CFT meeting
- Prepare both the child and the family.
- The family needs to feel confident that this is their meeting
- Family voice and choice are the heart of the meeting

The following are some strategies and ways you can prepare families for CFT meetings.

- Share with them that notes will be taken during the meeting, but that you will review the notes with them following the meeting to check for accuracy.
- Provide the family with a description of what a CFT meeting looks like. Include a description of what the CFT meeting might feel like.
- Because this is the family's meeting and their voice is at the forefront of our work with the family, remind them that they are the creators, the invitation extenders to this meeting. You can assure them that you will assist them in extending invitations on their behalf. In doing so, it's important that you reflect on the person you are inviting, and that the invitation is being sent on behalf of the family.
- Review with families what happens at a CFT meeting. You do not want any elements to be a surprise and to really "own" the meeting, the family needs to know what to fully expect. Share a shell of an agenda with the family and ask them how they would like to see the agenda adjusted, changed, or added to. It is important that you also make adjustments to the agenda per the family's wishes.
- Families may have worries or fears about telling their support system about the CFT meeting and sharing their stories. You must support them in preparing their support system for the CFT meeting. For example, share with the family that it is good for them to explain to the team what has happened and that now the team needs the meeting. However, if the family feels like they cannot do this or does not feel comfortable, you can partner with them in sharing the message.
- Ask the family what they would like to get out of the CFT meeting – what do they want to see happen at the meeting.
- Help parents or other family members prepare to tell the story of how they became involved with your agency.
- Help the family establish ground rules that will be used during the CFT meeting. Use a similar process as you did for developing the agenda. Use a template for the ground rules and provide some ideas to the family about typical ground rules, such as:
  - Show respect at all times to each other.
  - Stay strength-focused, even while addressing needs.
  - Stay solution-focused with every participant keeping in mind "how can I help?"
- Explain to the family that a Service Plan, such as the Family Services Agreement, will be developed at the CFT and that this plan is a road map toward their goals.
- Prepare families with examples of questions they may be asked and help them explore the information they may want to share.
- Talk about tasks and goals. Explain that even their family support members will be assigned tasks, that the agency will have tasks, and the family will have tasks.

Preparation of the family must also include preparing the child. Children, as well as their families, participate in CFT meetings. Preparing the child may look different than the activities listed above.



- Be sure you are using terms and language the child will understand.
- Explain the purpose of the CFT to the child and what they can expect.
- Explain what the child's role will be, including when they may be asked to share their perspective and input.
- Elicit the child's voice in all planning activities, such as asking for their input on who they would like to attend the meeting.
- Ask the child what they would like to get out of the CFT meeting – what do they want to see happen at the meeting?
- Encourage the child to speak up during the meeting and reassure them that they won't get "in trouble" for sharing their voice.
- Explain to the child that, if at any time they need a break during the CFT, the group will take a break.

Child and Family Team Meetings should be planned in advance with the family, not for the family. Children and families should be prepared in advance to fully participate in the meeting. This will require you to clearly explain that their opinions and experiences will be actively sought and discussed in a group setting.