



Implementing Practice Standards How Supervisors Can Support Their Workers

In addition to your own Practice Standards, your workers have their own set of core activities and Practice Standards. It is important that you help support your workers as they implement their best practice behaviors. Below are some strategies you can use to support your workers as they implement their Practice Standards. These strategies are different and more effective than telling or directing your workers because they give your workers a "hands-on" approach and experience to see how the Standards should look in practice. As a supervisor, it's also important to complete the Worker Practice Standards training yourself, so you are familiar with the Practice Standards as you support your workers.

Modeling

- Model how to advocate for families so they have the support to achieve their goals during all interactions with workers, especially when attending meetings with service providers.
- Review case plans and other case information ahead of supervisory meetings with workers. During the meeting talk with your worker about the family's progress, identify barriers or challenges to meeting goals, and brainstorm potential solutions.
- During interactions with families, model for your worker how to seek the family's input into their preferences for service and service delivery, including any concerns they may have.
- Model the three-step process by asking workers "what's going well, what needs to happen, what are our next steps?" and then ask your workers to use these same questions in their interactions with families.

Coaching

- Set aside a specific time during consultation to answer questions and provide guidance to workers as they implement the Practice Standards.
- Remind your workers to continually analyze and evaluate the family's progress toward meeting their case plan goals and to adjust plans accordingly.
- Thoroughly review case plans to ensure the services identified in the plan are tied to specific behavioral changes and modify the service delivery if they are not.
- Provide feedback to your workers on areas of the case plan that need adjustments to meet the needs of the family.
- Use scaling questions with your worker to look at case progress and what may still need to be done to accomplish the family's goals and close the case. For example, ask "on a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 is ready to close and 0 is the very beginning, where is this case?" Ask follow-up questions like "How might you know that the case is at an 8, 9, or 10 and ready for case closure?" and "What would it take to get the case to 7 or 8?"
- Provide guidance to workers to understand the importance of putting services in place as quickly as possible, and then coach your workers to assess those services to be sure they are the right fit for the family.
- Talk to your workers about their biases and how they can impact the case, especially if your workers are experiencing some hesitancy around closing the case.
- Continually remind your workers of the case plan goals and help them to assess if progress is being made to reach goals. Set benchmarks with your workers to evaluate if and when progress is made.
- Provide guidance and techniques to your workers about how to be family-centered.
- Help workers apply what they learn in training to their day-to-day work by discussing with them what they learn, how to implement the practice, and what support they need.

Case Staffing

- Provide case-level assistance when needed and model the Practice Standards when doing so.
- Provide regularly scheduled consultation and supervision where you give constructive case-specific feedback regarding implementation and achievement of outcomes.
- Discuss with your workers what has and hasn't worked in the past and why for the family and then support your workers as they apply that information to the case plan goals and objectives.
- Routinely talk with your workers about whether services are a good match for individual families or what more the family needs to be successful.
- Review the family's plan together with the worker and help them to identify the progress the family has made.
- Assess your workers when there is successful completion of services in connection with desired behavior change.
- When providing guidance to your workers about case closure ask them questions about their fears related to case closure, ask if the family would have the same concerns, and what it means for the case. Remember to bring the conversation back to safety and risk. Do the concerns impact risk? Do they impact safety?
- During case staffing, use the Structured Decision-Making tools to assess risk and safety. Use the tools at different intervals in the case, including prior to case closure.
- Support your workers as they advocate for families with services providers, including meeting with your worker after they have met with a service provider to discuss the meeting and provide support.
- Celebrate successful case closure!

Field Observation

- Regularly observe your workers in the field for real-time coaching and feedback on how your workers are processing information about families and forming conclusions that impact their progress towards meeting their goals and case closure. Field observation is especially helpful for new staff to provide coaching and set expectations.
- During field observation, actively engage in meetings by modeling best practice implementing skills. Ask families if they have any concerns about the services they are receiving and support the family as they prioritize services.
- During field observation, such as CFT meetings, encourage the use of tools to help the family identify natural supports that can assist them in reaching their goals.
- While you observe your worker in the field, take notes on your worker's skills as they facilitate the meeting between the family and their support system. Step in as needed to model for your worker by explaining how natural supports can help the family be successful, including long-term success after the agency is no longer involved. If needed, brainstorm with the group different solutions to challenges the family may be experiencing.
- After the field observation, have staffing with your worker to talk about your observations. Use this staffing to help your worker take the information discussed during the meeting and use it to make adjustments to the family's plan if needed. Based on your observations, your worker may need further professional development, such as a review of the Worker Practice Standards.

Engaging Community Services and Resources

- Engage service and resource providers that are available in the community to better understand which resources exist in the community, including those that are of high quality.
- Network and build relationships with service providers. When you talk with service providers explain the needs of the families that may be referred, so the provider can determine if they are best equipped to meet the needs of the families, including those needs which they cannot address.
- Bring back the information you learn from service providers to your workers by creating a list or other resource of the quality service providers. Include a summary of the services provided and the skills of those providers in the resource you create. This should be a living document that is updated regularly.
- Schedule opportunities for service providers to speak with your staff about their services and resources.
- Encourage staff to bring to your attention new service providers in the community for engagement.