



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Charlie Crist
Governor

George H. Sheldon
Secretary

DATE: August 20, 2010

TO: Regional Directors

FROM: Alan Abramowitz, State Director, Office of Family Safety

THROUGH: ^{*Pete Digre*} Pete Digre, Assistant Secretary for Operations *[Signature]*
David L. Fairbanks, Assistant Secretary for Programs

SUBJECT: Clarification for Regional Quality Assurance (QA) Reviewers: "Tasks" versus "Goals" for Children and Youth in Case Plans
ACTION REQUIRED: Review and Disseminate
DUE DATE: None

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide clarification to Regional QA Reviewers on expectations of children and youth being included in the case planning process through the assignment of "tasks" and/or "goals" in the case plan.

BACKGROUND: The issue of assigning case plan "tasks" for children and youth in the child welfare system has been a subject of discussion between the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Office and the Department. Although the GAL believes that it is never appropriate to assign a "task" to a dependent child, the Department believes that in some cases a case plan "task" for the child or youth is appropriate, i.e., in the case of a 14 year old who is chronically truant, a "task" could be for that child to attend school regularly. Although the term "task" is a requirement of case planning in Rule 65C-30.006, Florida Administrative Code, it is not defined.

We believe the term should be interpreted liberally and interchangeably with the term "goal".

A child or youth is not responsible for their abuse, neglect or abandonment that has resulted in the need for a case plan but must have every opportunity to influence the development and execution of the family's case plan.

Quality assurance assesses case work practice through QA Standard 24.0 that requires documentation of child involvement, if developmentally or age appropriate, through assignment of "tasks" in the case plan. In measuring this standard, QA reviewers are instructed to assess whether the case plan specifically addressed the actions necessary to resolve the issues that led to the family's involvement in the child welfare system. Reviewers are advised to consider if the tasks, services, and supports are tailored to each individual family member and provide the necessary treatment and supports,

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formal and informal, to achieve case goals and mitigate factors affecting child safety, emerging risk and overall child and family well-being.

ACTION REQUIRED: Regional QA reviewers are advised to give careful consideration when measuring the above standard related to the child, and consider interchangeability of terms (goals versus tasks). This standard is not meant to be punitive, therefore, as in the scenario presented above, if the truant 14 year old did not have a "task" to attend school, reviewers should consider if there were other activities within the case plan that supported his attending school with a "goal" of no absenteeism during a given reporting period, for example. This clarification will be an agenda item for the QA Managers Meeting in September to ensure ongoing inter rater reliability.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any general questions or need additional information, please contact me at (850) 566-5670. For questions related to Quality Assurance reviews of child tasks/goals, please contact Eleese Davis or Gail Perry at (850) 921-9857 or (850) 921-7794 respectively.

cc: Mary Cagle, Children's Legal Services
Dee Richter, FSPO Deputy Director
Circuit Administrators
CBC Chief Executive Officers
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