

## STAGES OF CHANGE

### **Preparation**

Getting ready to make a change. Parent/legal guardian/caregiver has some experience with change and is trying to change: "Testing the waters" This stage represents a period of time when a window of opportunity to move toward change opens. The parent/legal guardian/caregiver may be modifying current behavior in preparation for further change. A near-term plan to change begins to form.

### **Action**

Ready to make a change. Parent/legal guardian/caregivers are practicing new behavior for 3-6 months. The parent/caregiver engages in particular actions intended to bring about change. There is continued commitment and effort. Parents/legal guardians/caregivers are taking steps to change, including participating in a change process with the ongoing case manager and other changed focused services, but they also express a belief and attitude that the actions taken to address problems will result in things being different.

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### **Maintenance**

Continuing to support behavior change. Continued commitment to sustaining new behavior post-6 months to 5 years. The parent/legal guardian/caregiver has successfully changed behavior for at least 6 months. He or she may still be using active steps to sustain behavior change and may require different skills and strategies from those initially needed to change behavior. The parent/legal guardian/caregiver may begin resolving associated problems.

### **Relapse**

Use for Substance Abuse only. Resumption of old behaviors. Recovery from drug addiction can be a long-term process and frequently requires multiple episodes of treatment. Most people working to overcome an addiction experience relapse. It is much more common to have at least one relapse than not. Relapse is not the same as treatment failure. Recurrence of substance use can happen at any point during recovery. Work with the parent to re-engage in treatment.