

Module 2: The Practice Model



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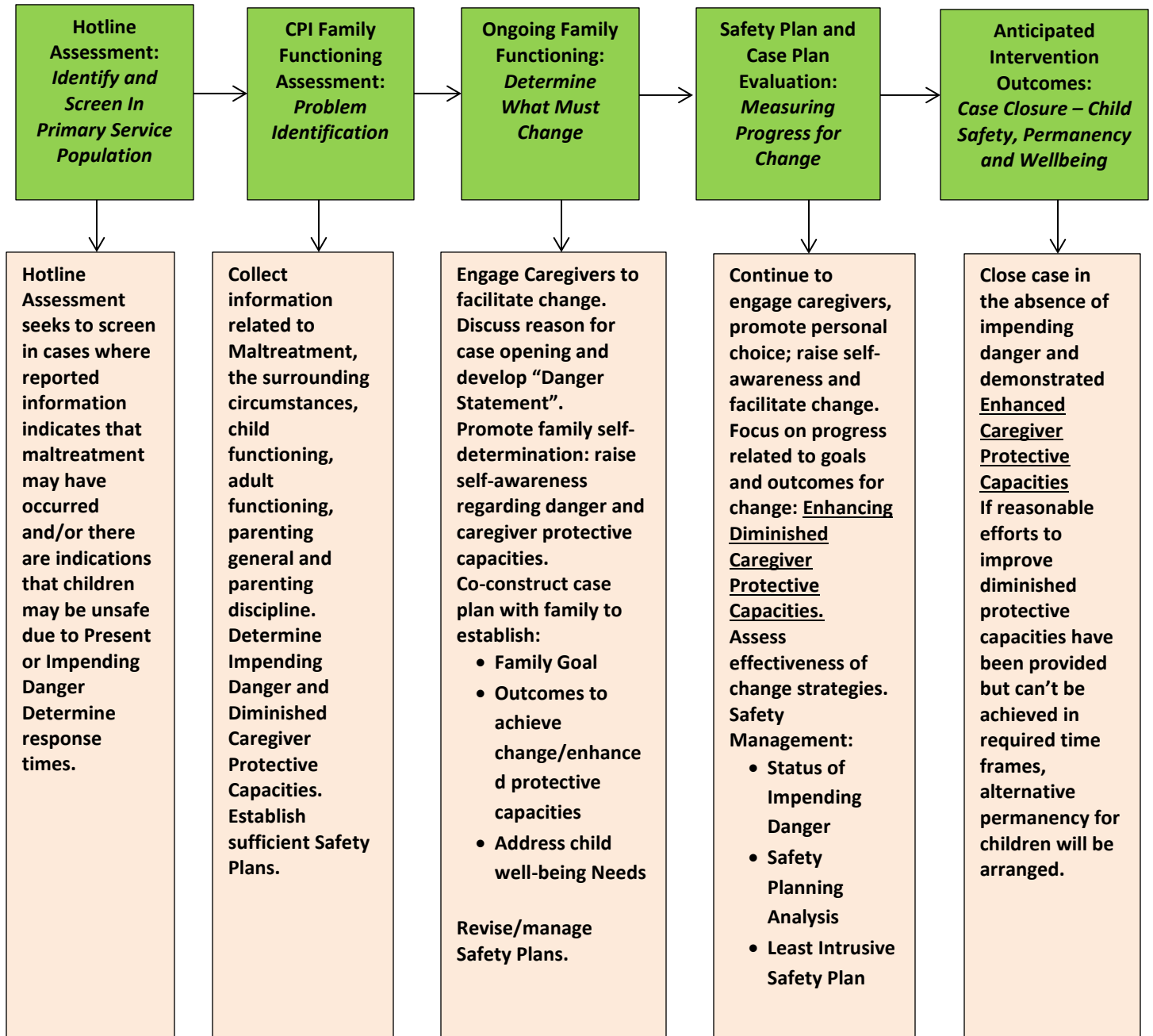
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Unit 2.1: Florida's Child Welfare Practice Model

Safety Interventions Across the Child Welfare System



Foundations for Child Welfare Practice Model

Demonstrate

Respect and Courtesy: Respect and courtesy demonstrate to our families that we believe in their worth as persons, that we want to listen to their perspectives, that we want to work with them in a productive, positive way.

Empathy and Encouragement: Child Welfare interventions of any type are basically government intrusion into a private family life; providing empathy for how the family feels about our intrusion and providing encouragement that we truly want the situation for their family to benefit from this intervention go hand-in-hand.

Professionalism: Professionalism includes due diligence in following our standards of conduct and ethics. Through the lens of family-centered practice, we are exploring how we present to families and how we maintain our professional objectivity. This relies on the ability to have compassion and empathy for the family.

Respond

Promptly: When we offer any follow-up actions, such as a phone call, referral to an agency, bus pass, etc., our follow-up and promptness will speak volumes. An often-heard complaint about case workers from families is that the worker does not return phone calls.

Continually Seeking to Engage: Constantly remember that without the family, practice cannot proceed successfully, and information and decision-making will be insufficient. It is our job to proactively make every effort to engage families and build trust. The family is our customer and, as such, continually seeking to engage the family is critical.

Enable

Participation and Involvement: Because we serve families your skills in engaging the family will be critical to securing their participation and involvement. Change cannot happen without family involvement; nor can sufficient decisions be made regarding safety without family involvement.

Family Expertise: The family should be the primary source of information. This recognizes that each family is the expert on that family. This also demonstrates respect for the families you are assisting.

Family Knowledge: “Knowledge is power” and families are empowered when provided necessary information to keep informed of their rights and responsibilities at each phase of our involvement. This includes ensuring that families have a basic understanding of how the system works.

Child Welfare Practice Model



Essential Skills For Practice Model

Safety Decisions (What we need to know)	Essential Practice Skills (How we do the work)
<p>Assess Safety (Present and Impending Danger)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the extent of the maltreatment? 2. What surrounding circumstances accompany the maltreatment? 3. How does the child function on a daily basis? 4. How does the caregiver function with respect to daily life management and general adaptation, including substance use and mental health functioning? 5. What are the overall, pervasive general parenting practices used by the caregiver? 6. What are the disciplinary approaches and/or behavior management strategies and typical context used by the caregiver? <p>Develop, Implement and Manage Safety Plans</p> <p>Prior to case transfer for supervision, safety management and case management, identify underlying conditions that must be addressed to achieve child safety over the long term.</p> <p>Manage transition of child and family to case management agency that will supervise and manage safety plan and address underlying conditions through case plan and case management.</p>	<p>Engagement Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display sincere sense of caring, empathy and encouragement. • Use active listening skills to <u>hear</u> what family is saying. • Observe and interpret non-verbal behaviors to explore <u>positive intent</u> and purpose. • Elicit family competencies and solutions. • Encourage, support and provide positive reinforcement. • Observe and respond appropriately to diffuse symptoms of resistance (behaviors that reflect passiveness, depression, denial, anger, anxiety). • Reframe causality from “Why did you do it?” to “How did this come about?” And “What life experiences do you think brought you to this point?” (Trauma-informed) • Clearly convey safety concerns and non-negotiable actions to family. • Elicit family priorities, and identify basic needs. • Enlist family members to participate in development of safety plan. • Assist family and extended family in creating alliances around child safety. • Identify and deliver on next actions offered to family. <p>Teaming Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage immediate and extended family in assessment of family dynamics, participation in meetings and hearings. • Be aware of one’s own prejudices and biases. • Identify family members who care about child(ren), and identify appropriate roles in safety planning. • Identify and utilize family resources. • Identify other professionals with necessary expertise to participate in assessment and interventions planning. • Facilitate involvement of family members in developing adequate interim safety interventions and consensus when possible. • Utilize team meetings when necessary, with family participation when appropriate, to achieve understanding of family dynamics and develop actions, including safety planning and case planning.

Safety Decisions (What we need to know)	Essential Practice Skills (How we do the work)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use facilitation skills to conduct family team meetings with other necessary persons. • Ensure family members and other professionals have clear roles and responsibilities. • Promote commitment and accountability of family and team members to common safety plan and longer term goals.
<p>When there are no present or impending dangers, but scored risk level indicates high or very high probability of future verified maltreatment, encourage and guide families to community resource options.</p> <p>When reports are false (malicious intent), take appropriate actions to ensure law enforcement referral.</p>	<p>Assessing/Understanding Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use keen observation and interviewing skills to assess congruence of verbal and non-verbal communication among family members. • Learn how family culture influences safety considerations. • Create emotional safety for children and adults to share their family experiences. • Discern family communication and relationship patterns, (For example, which relative speaks for whom? Who follows? What subjects can be explored? Which subjects are taboo? Do parents display appropriate expectations and parenting behaviors? Do family members keep each other at a distance? What factors promote family stability? What purpose might the family problems or child symptoms serve?) • Conduct screening using information ascertained during interviews, historical information, professional judgment (and other resources as necessary) for substance abuse, domestic violence and mental illness. • Engage other expertise to understand the severity of substance abuse, domestic violence and/or mental illness, and impacts on parent functioning and child safety.
	<p>Planning and Identification of Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and intervene promptly when children are not safe. • Respond to concrete needs quickly. • Identify and offer culturally appropriate options for intervention. • Create clear expectations for family members and professionals who will be responsible for safety plan implementation. • When child removal is necessary to achieve interim safety,

Safety Decisions (What we need to know)	Essential Practice Skills (How we do the work)
	<p>establish safety benchmarks to indicate conditions necessary for parents to resume custody.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address child needs for emotional safety when transitions to another person’s care are necessary. • When child removal occurs, identify child and family needs for family time based on child’s age and needs. • Establish case plan outcomes and goals in collaboration with the parent/caregiver. • Establish case plan outcomes that clearly describe in positive terms what the parent will be able to do differently in order to be protective. • When child removal occurs, identify appropriate family care options and the family connections that should be sustained. • Identify the underlying family needs that must be addressed over the long-term in the case plan in order for the family to achieve system independence. • Identify and articulate child and family needs in specific behavioral terms, not as “services” needed. • Develop clear, small and achievable steps and benchmarks to increase family’s ability to succeed.
	<p>Monitoring and Adapting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify specifically how accountability for all safety actions will be monitored (by whom, for how long, process for reporting challenges or changes, etc.). • Clarify specifically how progress evaluation of case plan outcomes will be achieved. • Identify and implement adaptations quickly when needed, based on child and family needs. • Establish clear understanding of on-going lead responsibility for safety when present danger is identified and at conclusion of FFA where impending danger threats, with diminished caregiver protective capacity to manage the threats, require an ongoing safety plan and case management; establish clear understanding of safety management responsibilities at case transfer from protective investigator to case manager.

Engagement and Teamwork

EXERCISE VIGNETTES

1. Ms. Jones makes it clear that she doesn't think I know anything because I don't have children.

- ☐ Strengthen Engagement
- ☐ Strengthen Teamwork
- ☐ Strengthen Engagement and Teamwork

2. Mr. Harris will not talk to me unless I reveal who called the hotline.

- ☐ Strengthen Engagement
- ☐ Strengthen Teamwork
- ☐ Strengthen Engagement and Teamwork

3. The child has a pervasive developmental delay, and I don't understand how that impacts his care.

- ☐ Strengthen Engagement
- ☐ Strengthen Teamwork
- ☐ Strengthen Engagement and Teamwork

4. Ms. Smith is so friendly every time we talk, and she agrees to go get a substance abuse evaluation. However, she keeps missing every appointment I set up for her.

- ☐ Strengthen Engagement
- ☐ Strengthen Teamwork
- ☐ Strengthen Engagement and Teamwork

5. Ms. White believes that her mother-in-law just has it in for her. She does not feel that her drinking is a problem.

- ☐ Strengthen Engagement
- ☐ Strengthen Teamwork
- ☐ Strengthen Engagement and Teamwork

6. I know from reading the record that Ms. May has a mental illness. She won't let me into her home to interview her.

- ☐ Strengthen Engagement
- ☐ Strengthen Teamwork
- ☐ Strengthen Engagement and Teamwork

INFORMATION SUFFICIENCY EXERCISE

1. John says that he broke his leg falling down on the playground at school, but the Child Protection Team says that his injury could not have happened that way.
 - ☐ Get more information, because right now it is insufficient.
 - ☐ Need to reconcile inconsistent information.
 - ☐ Need to validate this information from another source.
2. Ms. White says that her daughter is doing very well in school.
 - ☐ Get more information, because right now it is insufficient.
 - ☐ Need to reconcile inconsistent information.
 - ☐ Need to validate this information from another source.
3. The infant's mom says the baby is perfectly normal.
 - ☐ Get more information, because right now it is insufficient.
 - ☐ Need to reconcile inconsistent information.
 - ☐ Need to validate this information from another source.
4. The mother says the 4-year old is extremely active and doesn't follow directions. The child care provider says the child is on task and able to sit during story times.
 - ☐ Get more information, because right now it is insufficient.
 - ☐ Need to reconcile inconsistent information.
 - ☐ Need to validate this information from another source.
5. Mr. Hodges says that his wife is over-reacting; he does not have a drinking problem.
 - ☐ Get more information, because right now it is insufficient.
 - ☐ Need to reconcile inconsistent information.
 - ☐ Need to validate this information from another source.