

Kin Mobilization Learning Collaborative





Shared Voices, Shared Solutions:
Engaging Family for Better Outcomes



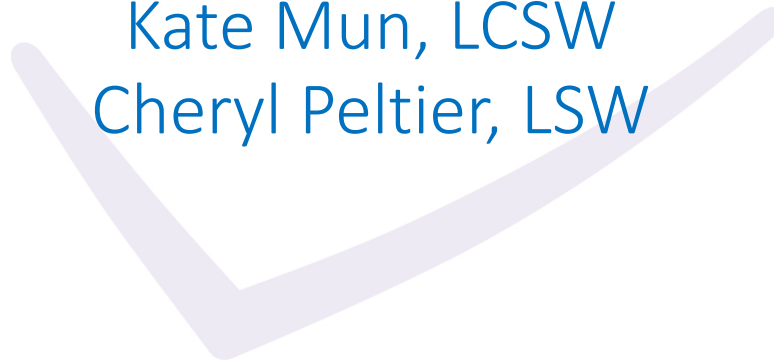
Kin Mobilization Coffee Talk
November 7, 2024

Welcome



Plummer Youth Promise Permanency Practice Leadership

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Family/Adult Engagement



Tuning In




What are some of your family's greatest strengths?

- How does/did your family demonstrate those strengths?
 - How would other people know that your family had those strengths?
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Definition of Family Engagement



A **strength-based approach to partnership** that enables youth and families to have direct and meaningful input into, and influence on, case planning, goal setting, and services to achieve desired outcomes.



Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2015

Engaging Families



Engaging Families

Why might families be reluctant to engage?

Let's begin with this ...

How do we engage and interact with families and youth?

- **Mattering – Let's Start**
- **Marginalizing – Let's Stop**



Engagement: Mattering

- Getting to know people outside of their problems
- Learning the values, history, cultural practices and beliefs
- Deepening conversations about strengths, building on them to increase capability
- Inviting AND welcoming families to all key planning and decision-making meetings involving their kin, and ensuring their voice is valued and heard and considered



Marginalizing

- Family member resists being involved, struggles with engaging
- Family member appears hopeless, deflated
- Professional meetings center on the “professionals”
 - Needs/Worries
 - Formal services and supports
 - Compliance





Group Discussion

Mattering: What practices do you engage in that might have the effect of “mattering” families?

Marginalizing: What language or actions may have the effect of “marginalizing” families?

Family Ambivalence



Benefits of Family Engagement

- Increase sense of agency, decrease sense of guilt
- The process is less adversarial and punitive and leads to investment in the plans
- Identifying a family's strengths and needs supports development of culturally sensitive and relevant services
- Improves timeliness of child welfare permanency decisions and can lead to quicker reunification
- Being part of the solution vs. having it imposed on them
- Allows them to play an important role even if they are not the 24/7 parent

*Adapted from/Impact of Family Engagement | Youth.gov. <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/impact-family-engagement>

Strategies for Engaging Family

Preparing family to be part of the permanency solution:

- Create a sense of felt safety for the family
- Build a trusting relationship by consistently being transparent, actively listening, and supporting self-determination
- Start with the help that families say they need
- Acknowledge outside stressors

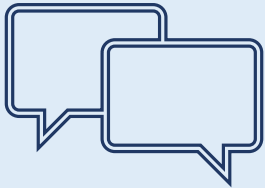
ABA Center for Children and the Law. (2023, June 9). *What child welfare agencies can do to support reunification*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMWkGinqq9I>

Engaging Family

Preparing family to be part of the permanency solution:

- Work with adults to become more youth centered
- Provide education about youth's current needs
- Establish / re-establish and strengthen relationships
- Assess adult's current life circumstances
- Prepare for coming together with youth and other adults

Practice Tools



“I Want to Say
Something”
(parent version)



“Tell Me About
the Day I was Born”

“I Want to Say Something” About My Life, My Family, My Child, Our Plan

Things I want you to know about me and our family:

These are the safe and supportive family members and caring adults that can help our family:

When it comes to our family and my child, these are the things that:

- Are going well
- I am worried about
- I hope will happen

These are the things I need to help me parent and/or plan for my child (and our family):

1 *Adapted from North Carolina Family-Centered Meetings Project 3/2007 Nothing About Them Without Them: Children’s Participation in FGDM December 3, 200 Teleconference Handout #29 Revised for NH DCYF by 3P Consulting LLC 2016 www.3PLLC.net

Practice Tool

“Tell Me About the Day I was Born”

Tell Me About the Day I Was Born

My name is Jeffrey Malcom Johnson. I was born at Parrish Medical Center in Titusville, Florida on January 7th, 2008. I was born at 9 o'clock pm.



The weather that day was warm and sunny with clear blue skies.

The people in the hospital room when I was born were Mom and Granny.

My favorite song when I was little was With You by Chris Brown.



What did you think the first time you saw me?

I cried because I couldn't believe I helped make such a wonderful, beautiful, special boy. I was so happy and I knew that forever I would love you and you would

always be my baby. I thought of how lucky I am to have such a perfect and healthy baby.

The first thing you said to me was:

Hello baby boy, I'm your Mommy. I love you so much already XXX and I will forever love you with all my heart.

People that visited me in the hospital:

Auntie Serena never left the hospital, and Uncle Dwayne, Granny, Pop, Uncle Larry, my friends Maria and Terry all came to see you.

Where did I live?

You lived in Cocoa Beach, Florida in a 3-bedroom apartment with Mommy, Auntie Serena and our dog Diesel until you were three months old and you were taken into foster care.

What kind of baby was I?

You were a great baby! Always happy and smiling and when I would come home from work or walk in the house you would smile and make all kinds of happy noises while kicking your feet and reaching for me to pick you up, which I did. I had you in my arms pretty much every second!

Who chose my name? Why did you choose that name?

Mommy chose your name with your Granny. We found it in a baby name book and when you were born we knew it was the perfect name.

My grandparent's names are

Maternal grandmother - Alicea Johnson

Maternal grandfather - Wayne Johnson

Paternal grandmother - Everline Williams

Paternal grandfather - Charles Williams

My sibling's names are Jayden and Jannessa

Help Adults Consider

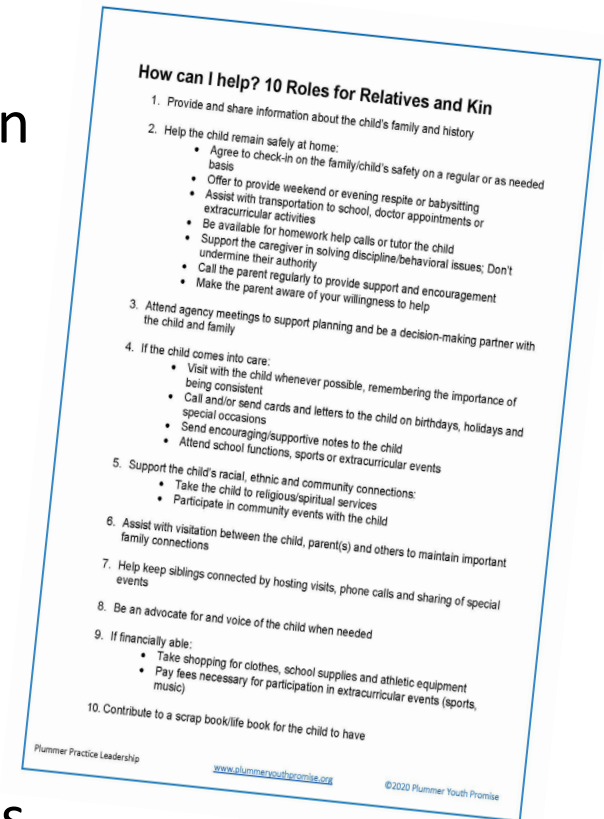


Expanded Roles:

- Sharing information
- Access to family history and genealogy
- Membership in the youth's Team
- Emotional and tangible support for youth/caregiver
- Family connections to help youth maintain critical ethnic, cultural and community ties
- Respite providers for parent/caregiver

Relatives As Resources

- Support for family preservation/reunification
- Decision-making partners in team meetings
- Respite providers for parents or other caregivers
- Access to family history and genealogy
- Family connections to help youth maintain critical ethnic, cultural and community ties
- Connections with siblings and other relatives
- Emotional and tangible supports





Thank You!

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