

LESSON PLAN/NARRATIVE

Day 4

Module 1: Working with Collaterals

Time: 1.5 hours

Rationale: ASFA acknowledges that the delivery of services to children and families involves a network of interrelated entities including both within child welfare and beyond. These organizations beyond the agency include the faith community, tribes, courts, schools the media, the legislature, families and domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health service providers. Bringing together such diverse entities requires strong communication, collaboration and problem solving skills. As child welfare continues to expand the use of cross system, joint decision making with internal colleagues, partner agencies and the courts, there will be increased reliance on the use of collaboration in service delivery and the casework process.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify issues to consider in selecting a resource/collateral for the client
2. Describe process of preparing collateral and client for work together
3. Be able to explain a Family Solutions case plan to a collateral and write a referral letter

Activities

1. Explain purpose and process of working with collaterals
2. Brainstorm barriers to working with collaterals
3. Describe ways to prepare the client and collaterals for working together, including writing referral letters
4. Practice a collateral conversation to initiate services OR writing a referral letter

Materials

1. Preparing the Client for Using Resources handout
2. Preparing the Resource handout
3. Tip sheet for Writing Referral Letters to Treatment Providers

Glossary of Terms

1. Collateral

Trainer's Instructions

1. **Introduce the module by presenting the purpose and objectives.**
2. **Explain basic purpose and procedures of working with collaterals:**

Results and accountability toward resolving issues of permanency early are focal points of ASFA, CQI, CFS. Attendance at a service, such as parent education,

has not meaning in and of itself. Rather, the critical issue is how the service contributes to outcome achievement.

Clients need to be matched to collateral resources that are willing and able to help them achieve the outcomes identified in the case plan.

Let's identify the barriers you experience in utilizing collateral resources effectively.

Lead group in brainstorming activity. Write barriers on flip chart as participants identify them.

When you initiate the process of linking families to collateral resources, you should consider these issues:

- *What is the right resource for this family? Why?*
- *Is the resource culturally and linguistically competent?*
- *Are all of these resources ones that will be used during this service period and related to the work that you and the family can reasonably achieve during this service period?*
- *How will you introduce the idea of this resource to the client?*
- *How will you link the involvement of this resource to the family's achievement of child welfare outcomes?*
- *How will you prepare the family to access the resource?*
- *How will you prepare and subsequently work with the resource so they provide the service congruently with the family's needs and the outcomes identified in the service plan?*
- *How does this referral relate not just to behaviors but to the needs/underlying conditions/contributing factors creating or sustaining those behaviors?*

In the Family Solutions model, collaterals may play a vital role. These providers may be engaged in the development, implementation and/or monitoring of the family's prevention plan. They may also be involved in CFS Family Team Meeting meetings.

3. Distribute Preparing the Client for Using Resources and Preparing the Resource handouts. Discuss process of preparing both the client and the collateral for work:

Talking to both family members and collaterals, conjointly when possible, increases the likelihood that the family will understand the purpose of the referral and the collateral resource will better understand and support the achievement of the child welfare outcomes.

The initial investment of time for setting up a family's involvement with a collateral resource (e.g. attending initial sessions) will pay dividends later on in terms of all the parties being clear about expectations and using their time efficiently and effectively.

Some ways that you can prepare the client for using resources include a discussion and negotiation of the following:

- *Purpose of using resources*
- *Identification of current resources being used by the family that relate to the child welfare concerns*

- *Identification of new/additional resources to resolve the child welfare concerns*
- *Role of the resource in helping the family achieve child welfare outcomes, including ensuring safety and reducing risk*
- *Advantages to the client*
- *Possible barriers to using the resource and ways of overcoming them*
- *Involving the client in choosing the resource to use*
- *How using the collateral resource will contribute to identified outcomes*
- *Resource's expectations for the client*
- *Client's feelings and needs related to using the resource*
- *Expectations for client feedback to worker about utility of the resource*
- *Process/procedure for addressing any conflicts between the family and collateral*
- *Confidentiality safeguards*
- *Your role in communicating with resource*
- *Resource contact information and scheduling*

Some ways that you can prepare the resource include a discussion of the following:

- *Resource's expectations of client*
- *Client expectations of the resource*
- *Your expectations of the resource in relation to achievement of the child welfare outcomes and the steps identified in the case plan*
- *Resource's willingness/ability to participate in the case plan*
- *Information needed by resource*
- *Method of case assignment used by the resource*
- *Contact person the resource can call in case of emergencies or problems*
- *Method for determining length of service*
- *Resource's role in case plan reviews*
- *Procedure for resolving conflict*
- *Safety/risk-related outcomes expected of the service*
- *Needs/outcomes, and activities of case plan where resource fits in*

One method that you may use for engaging collaterals is to write a referral letter. Although personal contact and attendance at any initial sessions is recommended, these referral letters can serve as an official document. When you write a referral letter, you should:

- *State the overall goal for the family*
- *State the FLOs and ILOs*
- *Provide a brief summary of the incident of risk*
- *Relate the incident to patterns (typical interaction patterns of family)*
- *Note any exceptions to the problem (instead of being solely problem focused)*
- *Ask them for assistance in writing, practicing prevention plans*
- *Ask them to help document the accomplishment of tasks*
- *Thank them and indicate plans for future contact*

4. Have group break into pairs. Each pair will have choice of practice activity. They may either role play a collateral contact to initiate services or write a referral letter to a collateral.

Bernotavicz, F. B. & Bartley, D. (1996). *A Competency Model for Child Welfare Supervisors*.
The Muskie Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Southern Maine and the Department of
Human Services.

