SAFETY ORGANIZED PRACTICE SUPERVISORS' GUIDE

CIRCLES OF SUPPORT

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA TRAINING ACADEMY

SUMMARY

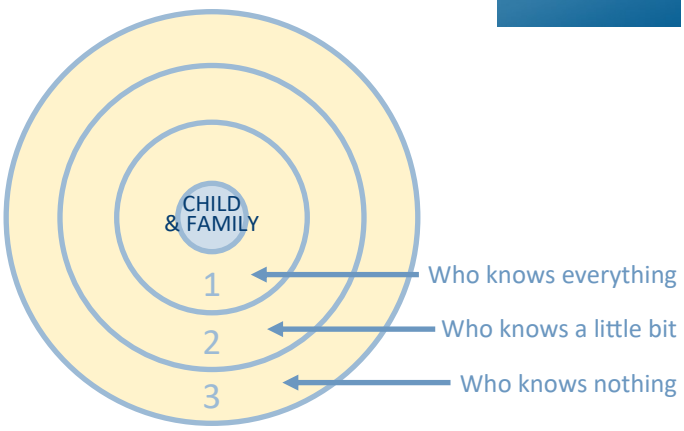
The Circles of Support is a tool to explore with a family who their natural support network is and who may be built into a formal Safety Network to help ensure the safety of the child in the care of the parent.

GETTING STARTED

- Ask the worker to review their notes from Circles of Support (sometimes called Safety Circles) training with you.
  - What do they like about the Circles of Support tool?
  - What worries do they have about using it?
  - What questions do they have?
  - On a scale of 1-10, how comfortable do they feel trying it out?
- Discuss how they will go about trying it the first time.
- Have them role play doing the tool with you.

GOAL SETTING & COACHING

1. Have the worker identify a parent to try out the Circles of Support with one-on-one in the next week. Discuss at supervision:
   - How was the process of completing the tool?
   - How did the parent respond?
   - Was the worker able to engage the parent in a way that he or she answered questions and participated?
   - Does the worker feel the tool elicited more, or different, information if they had they interviewed the parent differently? In what way?
   - How many individuals were identified?
   - What did the worker observe or learn about the impact of trauma on the parent or family system?
   - What did the worker think they did well that they would do again next time?
   - What is something the worker wishes they had done differently? What are their ideas to try next time?
2. Have the worker complete the Circles of Support process during a Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting. Attend the meeting if possible. Discuss afterward:
   - How was the process of completing the tool?
   - How did the group respond?
   - Were there any group conflicts that arose during the discussion? How did the worker resolve them?
   - How many individuals were identified?
   - Was the worker able to begin developing a viable Safety Network?
   - What did the worker observe or learn about trauma and the family system?
   - What did they think they did well that they would do again next time?
   - What would they like to do differently next time?



   - What other steps will the worker take to continue expanding the network?
2. Have the worker complete the Circles of Support process with a youth in permanency. Discuss afterward:
   - Was the worker able to engage the youth in a way that he/she answered questions and participated?
   - Does the worker feel the tool elicited more, or different, information if they had they interviewed the youth differently? In what way?
   - How many individuals were identified?
   - What did the worker observe or learn about the impact of trauma on the youth or family system?
   - What did the worker think they did well that they would do again next time?
   - What would they like to do differently next time?

USING THE TOOL IN DOCUMENTATION

1. Have the worker document completion of the Circles of Support in CWS/CMS.
   - Review their contact note and provide feedback.
   - Ensure relatives identified through the process are documented appropriately in CWS/CMS.
2. Have the worker use information from the Circles of Support to inform a Safety Plan or behaviorally-based case plan. Discuss:
   - How was the Safety Network involved in the developing the plan?
   - How will the worker help the Safety Network ensure accountability to the plan?
   - How will the worker monitor the plan?
   - What do they think they did well in creating the case plan? What would they change for next time?
   - Continue to discuss the plan's effectiveness in ensuring child safety, and how the worker is monitoring this, regularly in supervision.
3. Have the worker incorporate the Circles of Support into a court report. Discuss: What do they think they did well? What would they change for next time?