

UC DAVIS

Continuing and
Professional Education | Human Services

Building Working Partnerships and Maintaining Confidentiality

Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice





Welcome!

- Introductions
- Housekeeping
- Comfort Agreements
- Lunch and Breaks



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Learning Objectives

- Understand the dynamics of Family Centered Practice
- Develop better understanding of Team Fundamentals, the Parent Partner role and what it means for service providers and families
- Interrupt bias and prejudice against the parent/youth as it occurs (especially for dads)
- Identify and communicate family needs

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Learning Objectives

- Analyze details of and communicate personal stories in a way in which others find helpful
- Develop skills for a strength-based approach and effective collaboration
- Maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries

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The Process Elements

Access

Parent/child has valid option at inclusion in decision making process

Voice

Parent/child is heard, listened to at all junctures of planning

Ownership

Parent/child agree with and are committed to any plan that concerns them

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New Roles for Families at the Practice Level of System Care


- Family and Youth as partners
- Family and Youth as resource for other families
- Family and Youth as resource developers
- Family and Youth as system advocates
- Family and Youth as evaluators
- Family and Youth as LEADERS!



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A Grievous Wound



"Fathers want to be involved in their children's lives, but because of past experiences with law enforcement, absenteeism, the requirements of programs and services offered to/for the mother and the children, fathers have somehow gotten the message that the children would be better off without them being involved in the children's lives."

- Father, Focus Group, Minnesota, 2005

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Family Centered Practices

- Strength-Based
- Outcome-Based
- Family Voice and Choice
- Team-Based
- Persistent
- Individualized
- Natural Supports
- Community-Based
- Culturally Competent
- Collaborative

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Role of Parent Partner

- Promote the parent (mom & dad)/caregiver/youth/client perspective
- Provide friendly support and information for everyone (mom, dad, & youth)
- Create opportunities to increase natural supports as individuals (breaking loneliness/isolation)
- Brainstorm new ideas

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Role of Parent Partner

- Assure access to resources
- Inspire hope among team members
- Assure Quality: Keep the process honest
- Build partnerships with team members for positive outcomes

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Family Partnerships “Code of Ethics”

- We tell our own story when it can help other families
- We maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the families we serve
- We support other families as peers with a common background and history
- We acknowledge that each family's answers may be different than our own



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Family Partnerships “Code of Ethics”

- We take responsibility to clarify our role as family partner/youth peer mentor (as parent of child with special needs or youth with foster/system experience)
- We build partnerships with others, including professionals who are involved with the care of the children/family member

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Family Partnerships "Code of Ethics"

- We commit to honesty with each other and all involved in the care of a child, and expect the same from others
- We commit to a non-judgmental and respectful attitude in our dealing with and discussions regarding families
- We commit to non-adversarial advocacy in our roles within the system

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First Skill: Tell your own story when it can help others

- Why telling your own story is important:
 - Breaks isolation and loneliness
 - Communicates hope
 - Builds connections



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Empathy – Brene Brown

- [Empathy: An Essential Member of the Team](#)

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First Skill: Tell your own story when it can help others

- How to tell your story
 - What: Parts of your story that can be most helpful
 - When: Timing so that it is as supportive as possible
 - How: Methods to make it respectful to the family
- Activity

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Second Skill: Support families as peers rather than as experts with all the answers

- Why peer partnering support is important
 - Reinforces shared/common background
 - Can say things in a “different” way
 - Creates new learning opportunities



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Second Skill: Support families as peers rather than as experts with all the answers

- How to provide peer support
 - Listen to the family's story for similarities and differences
 - Provide candid, supportive feedback
 - Communicate common experiences to other partners/mentors as a learning experience

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Third Skill: Acknowledge that each family's answers are different

- Why acknowledge different answers?
 - Your solution may not work for others
 - Family strengths are different
 - Family needs are different
 - No two children are the same
- Activity



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Third Skill: Acknowledge that each family's answers are different

- How to acknowledge the difference
 - Listen, hear and acknowledge what isn't said
 - Identify a list of options and how to decide
 - Clarify and communicate parent's decision to others
 - Recognize differences in family identity and solution
 - Be positive about family choices
 - Plan for the unexpected

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Fourth Skill: Clarify role as Parent Partner

- Why clarify roles?
 - Represent and push cultural change
 - Break bias against parents
 - Bust stigmas
 - Serve as a teaching aid

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Fourth Skill: Clarify role as Parent Partner

- How to clarify roles
 - Introduce role simply and friendly
 - Interrupt bias as it occurs
 - Inspire openness in approach from others

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Fifth Skill: Build partnerships with others, including professionals

- Why build partnerships?
 - People working together is more effective
 - Parents need help
 - Children need adults to be on the same page



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Fifth Skill: Build partnerships with others, including professionals

- How to build partnerships
 - Introduce self/introduce role
 - Identify strengths of everyone
 - Identify and understand agendas (hidden and open)
 - Create win-win situations
- **Handout**

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Why is Father Involvement Important to Children?

Increases

- Academic performance
- Emotional and social competence

Protects against

- Abuse and neglect
- Delayed development
- Criminality
- Truancy
- Promiscuity
- Depression/anxiety

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Father Involvement important for both Mothers and Fathers!

- Encouragement (motivate, esteem)
- Emotional support
- Self care
- Helps reduce stress
- Better overall health
- Access to more resources

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Best practices for Father Engagement

- Recognize and acknowledge disparities with father's in our systems
- Embrace father as a viable parenting option
- Help father's focus on their strengths
- Help dad take advantage of support services or ask for them to be tailored
- Provide knowledgeable and approachable initial male contact when possible or based on family need
- Help to educate all on fatherhood data

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Sixth Skill: Commit to honesty in self and others

Why commit to honesty?

- To do "real" problem solving
- To avoid blaming
- Keep it solution-based

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Sixth Skill: Commit to honesty in self and others

- How to create honesty
 - Address situations; don't confront
 - Assess own communication style
 - Practice candid and open communication

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Seventh Skill: Commit to a non-judgmental and respectful attitude

Why non-judgmental?

- Fosters positive relationships
- More strength based
- Helps families heal themselves
- Helps everyone get off the "hopeless cycle"

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Seventh Skill: Commit to a non-judgmental and respectful attitude

- How to do it?
 - See each family as brand new, avoid conclusions
 - Be self-aware (tolerance levels/expectations)
 - Avoid solutions
 - Consider "why's" of action
 - Avoid choosing sides
 - Use strengths ALL THE TIME

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Eighth Skill: Provide non-adversarial advocacy

- Why non-adversarial?
 - Partnership is most effective
 - Adversarial advocates are trained to do that



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Eighth Skill: Provide non-adversarial advocacy

- How to provide it?
 - Build partners on the inside
 - Propose concrete solutions
 - Make sure families "call the shots"
 - Use a variety of strategies; be flexible in your role
 - Use your program's process
- Activity

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Beware, Beware: Common traps of Parent Partners

- Becoming a traditional advocate
- Staying on the outside
- Choosing sides
- Losing focus



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Maintaining Confidentiality

- Need to Know vs Breach
- Sharing personal information
- Discussion with Community Members/Stakeholders
- Coordination of Care

CONFIDENTIAL
TRUST YOUR RIGHTS
BACK TO US
SERVICE
SUPPORT
WHAT TO EXPECT
UNITY



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Confidentiality – Table Activity

Table 1: You work with a family that needs food. You accompany them to the food closet with a voucher. You run into a friend. What do you do or say?

Table 2: You work with a family that needs furniture. You accompany them to a thrift store with a voucher. The clerk asks if all the kids will be coming home (she knows where the voucher comes from). What do you do or say?

Table 3: You arrive at the school to support a parent with an IEP meeting. A teacher at the school asks if mom will get the kids back soon. What do you do or say?

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One thing you liked..


One thing you learned...

One thing you rediscovered or
relearned...


One thing you are willing to try...








Questions????





THANK YOU!!!!!!

