



Planning Practice Standards

How Supervisors Can Support Their Workers

In addition to your own Practice Standards, your workers have their own set of core activities and Practice Standards. It is important that you help support your workers as they implement their best practice behaviors. Below are some strategies you can use to support your workers as they implement their Practice Standards. These strategies are different and more effective than telling or directing your workers because they give your workers a "hands-on" approach and experience to see how the Standards should look in practice. As a supervisor, it's also important to complete the Worker Practice Standards training yourself, so you are familiar with the Practice Standards as you support your workers.

Modeling

- Model planning behaviors during all interactions with your workers, families, and others by asking open-ended and strengths-based questions, transparently sharing the family's strengths and challenges, and inviting the family to identify specific issues they want to change and include in the plan.
- Model how to synthesize and prioritize the information gathered during the assessment process, and how to use that information to inform case planning.
- Review case plans and other case information ahead of supervisory meetings with workers. During the meeting asks your worker to share their perspective and provide additional information and assess if the information they are sharing matches what is documented in the case plan.
- During interactions with families, model for your worker how to seek the family's input into what has and hasn't worked in the past and why, and help your worker apply that information to planning.
- Model the three-step process by asking workers "what's going well, what needs to happen, what are our next steps?" and then ask your workers to use these same questions in their interactions with families.
- Model engagement strategies with the family by partnering with the family on owning their plan and creating buy-in regarding the change that is needed. Support your worker as they do the same.
- Actively participate in Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings by arriving to the meeting prepared, encouraging children and families to participate throughout the meeting to make sure all voices are heard, and supporting your worker as they co-create the plan with the family. Be mindful to avoid overstepping during the CFT as you model these behaviors.

Coaching

- Set aside a specific time during consultation to answer questions and provide guidance to workers as they implement the Practice Standards.
- Remind your workers to continually analyze and evaluate the family's progress toward meeting their case plan goals and to adjust plans accordingly. Help your workers stay on track so plans are reviewed and adjusted timely to keep the plan current.
- Encourage your workers to be strength-based and include information about the family's strengths and successes in the planning process, including what has worked well in the past for the family.
- Remind your worker to update the plan with every success, no matter how small, to show progress and improvement, to keep the family motivated.
- Evaluate your worker's written case plan and assess what they have written versus what they share verbally about the family. Look at the information in the plan that supports the goals and objectives.
- Assist your workers in thinking critically about the root causes and tying the assessment and case plans to root causes.

- Thoroughly review case plans to ensure the plan's goals and objectives are tied to the family's assessment and underlying reasons why the family is involved with child welfare.
- Provide feedback to your workers on areas of the case plan that need adjustments to meet the needs of the family.
- Talk with your worker about how to assess a family's progress to meet their goals during challenging situations. Ask insightful and open-ended questions like "was there ever a time when things were going well for the family, or they were able to meet their needs?" As your worker begins to brainstorm periods when things had been going well, ask them to think about what going on during those times, what changed, and what would it take to get back to that place.

Case Staffing

- Provide case-level assistance when needed and model the Practice Standards when doing so.
- Provide regularly scheduled consultation and supervision where you review, assess, and provide feedback on your worker's case plan. Assess the quality of your worker's case plans and the plan's connections between the assessment of the family and the plan's goals and objectives.
- During staffing, review your worker's assessment of the family. Discuss and process their conclusions and decisions made using your Structured Decision-Making tools to help them inform the family's case plan.
- Ask your workers questions about how they created buy-in to the case plan with the child and family and how the family was involved in creating the plan. Provide guidance to workers in family engagement as needed.
- Discuss with your workers how they will seek out information to help the family understand the root causes of family involvement with child welfare and provide tools and techniques to identify root causes.
- Discuss with your workers what has and hasn't worked in the past and why for the family and then support your workers as they apply that information to the case plan goals and objectives.
- Ask your workers questions like, "what is your concern?" as it relates to the child and family, and then talk through those concerns to identify goals that will appropriately address the family's needs.
- Talk with your workers about bias and how their own bias may be impacting the areas of need and goals they have identified for the family.
- Set aside time to talk with your workers about reviewing and adjusting case plans regularly. Help your workers create a timeline and alerts to remind them to review their case plans timely.
- Talk with your worker during the case staffing about how they developed the case plan. Take time to review notes from previous CFT meetings, review the list of attendees, and whether all voices were heard. Discuss with your worker how they used this information to inform the plan.
- Talk with your workers about their preparation for CFT meetings, including how they will prepare the family for the meeting.
- Confirm with your workers that they have shared a copy of the plan with the family.
- During case staffing, use creative exercises to help your workers identify the family's root cause for child welfare involvement and desired outcomes for the family. For example, use a whiteboard to create four columns: 1) reason for involvement; 2) behaviors desired; 3) strategies; and 4) desired outcomes. Then brainstorm with your workers to help them fill in each column.

Unit Meetings

- During unit meetings, ask your workers to share how they develop plans collaboratively with the family to create buy-in and ownership of the plan. This provides an opportunity for new workers to hear what more seasoned workers are doing, and new workers can share new, innovative ideas about what they are doing.
- Set aside time for skills practice to provide opportunities for your workers to practice how and what to present at CFT meetings. During skills practice, your workers will be able to hear and see how others partner with families during CFT meetings. You will also be able to step in to provide feedback and alternatives.

Field Observation

- Regularly observe your workers in the field for real-time coaching and feedback on how your workers are processing information about families and forming conclusions that impact planning. Field observation is especially helpful for new staff to provide coaching and set expectations.
- During field observation, actively engage in CFT meetings by modeling best practice planning skills. Get to know the family better by asking open-ended and strengths-based questions.
- Prior to the CFT meeting, meet with your worker to prepare them for the meeting and provide techniques for how they can support the family throughout the meeting. Talk with your worker about the importance of involving the family in the planning process and ensuring everyone is heard and provides input to the case plan.
- While you observe your worker in the field, take notes on how they partner with the family to create the plan. Did the worker invite the family to identify specific issues they want to change and include those items in the plan? Did they plan with the family and not for or about them? Step in as needed to model for your worker by explaining the purpose of case plan goals and objectives and how they are used to help the family meet their intended outcomes.
- After the CFT meeting, have staffing with your worker to talk about your observations. Use this staffing to help your worker take the information discussed during the CFT and use it to make decisions around the family's case plan. Talk with your worker about the importance of involving the family in the planning process and ensuring everyone is heard and provides input to the case plan.