

LIFE Evaluation Update: September 2016

Portland State University
Child Welfare Partnership



Framework for Today

1. Present process evaluation findings on
 - Meeting preparation
 - Family voice
 - Trauma-informed
2. Presentation structure: For each area:
 - Acknowledge consistent good work
 - Highlight unique or inspiring practices
 - Present tension/challenge
 - >ACTIVITY: Small group brainstorm
 - >ACTIVITY: Large group sharing



Variety is the Spice of LIFE

Please arrange yourselves in groups of 6 with:

- Mixture of Roles
 - At least 2 FEFs
 - At least 1 LIFE Coordinator/OS2
 - At least 1 PM
 - At least 1 Supervisor (PM and/or DHS)
- Mixture of Districts

Appoint a scribe to take notes (will be collected by PSU)



D2/15 Case Study Design

Recruitment began in fall of 2015

A total of 10 cases are included

- Observations – 50+ CPMs
- Interviews with key stakeholders (on-going)
 - >Parents/Guardians - 8
 - >Caseworkers - 4
 - >FEFs – 10
 - >Parent Mentors – 6



D8 Process Evaluation

Started in the Spring of 2016

- Observations – 8 CPMs
- Group Discussions at LIFE Team Meetings
- Group Interviews (FEFs, PMs)

D3 starts in October!



thank
you!

We are very grateful to our DHS, Morrison, and Family Nurturing Center colleagues for their work recruiting families, communicating with us about CPM meeting dates and times, letting us sit in on team meetings and making time to do interviews with us given their busy schedules. This type of work will soon begin in D3.

Meeting Preparation

- Consistent good work
- Unique or inspiring practices
- Tension/challenge



Meeting Preparation: Consistent Good Work

With Family:

- Time to vent, process, emotional release
- Provide coaching re communication style and content to share at meeting to achieve their goals
- Help parents understand ASFA, Conditions for Return.
- Prepare and strategize for self care



Meeting Preparation: Consistent Good Work

With Caseworkers:

- Strategize on how to work with family
- Share info about the case; find out caseworker's perspective
- Recruit as partner in staying solution focused, strengths-based
- Alert to action items, accountability
- Alert to parent concerns, things to be addressed at meeting
- Connect with OSM



Meeting Preparation: Consistent Good Work

With Others:

- Making sure providers and others know their role at meeting, what they will be asked to talk about

Little things can be helpful:

- Include truncated agendas in email invites
- For first meeting invites, include a short description of the LIFE Program
- Ask for additional agenda items when emailing meeting reminders



Meeting Preparation: Consistent Good Work

Preparation is time intensive (and doesn't decrease over time) BUT makes a huge difference:

- Meetings are more focused, productive, positive
- Preparation is essential in implementing every value



Meeting Preparation: Unique or Inspiring

- **Parent Mentors and FEFs** work together to prepare parents or strategize for meeting
- **Communicating with attorneys** (and winning over difficult, skeptical ones)
 - Invite and consider their schedules
 - Give copies of agendas so they can counsel parent if they see the need
 - Share Ground Rules – anything to add?



Meeting Preparation: Unique or inspiring

- FEFs prepare themselves (beyond talking to parents and caseworker), by:
 - Gathering info about the case from a variety of sources
 - Meeting with caregivers & youth, understanding their wishes, concerns, needs
 - Touching base with providers
- **Parent Mentors prepare themselves** – talking to FEF, parents, caseworkers, etc.



Meeting Preparation: Tension/Challenge

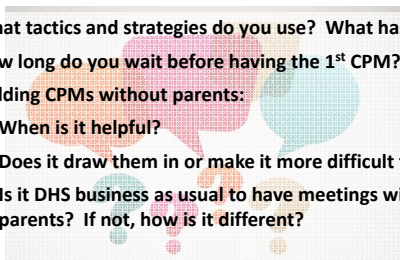
Preparing for 1st meetings:

- Multiple pre-meetings with parents
- Parents can be skeptical and hard to engage
- LIFE can be hard to explain
- Recent experience with meetings (CSM and/or OFDM) can be difficult
- Parents, and relative caregivers, overwhelmed with having to talk to another person (or 2 including the Parent Mentor)



Small Group Brainstorm

- **What tactics and strategies do you use? What has worked?**
- **How long do you wait before having the 1st CPM?**
- **Holding CPMs without parents:**
 - **When is it helpful?**
 - **Does it draw them in or make it more difficult to engage?**
 - **Is it DHS business as usual to have meetings without parents? If not, how is it different?**



Family Voice

- **Consistent good work**
- **Unique or inspiring practices**
- **Tension/challenge**



Family Voice: Consistent Good Work

- **Preparation facilitates Family Voice** – parents have input regarding the agenda, who is invited, etc.
- **FEFs privilege parents' voices** throughout the meeting, inviting them to talk, ask questions, check in about every topic, not just during the parent update.



Family Voice: Consistent Good Work

- FEFs name it, facilitate it, and educate the team in supporting Family Voice during CPMs.
- FEFs position meeting participants as a team of supports for the parent.
- Family voice builds over time.



Family Voice: Unique or Inspiring

PMs advocate for parent voice by helping parents to:

- Formulate questions
- Bring up difficult subjects
- Voice frustration/dissatisfaction in a way that can be heard and may be more likely to achieve results
- Understand how the system works
- Give hope



Family Voice: Unique or Inspiring

• FEFs talk to youth first:

- Who do you see as a happy, healthy person in your life?
- What are your wishes, needs, concerns?
- Can help build rapport with parents.

Family Voice: Tension/Challenge

Scope of decision making can be extremely limited for parents (e.g., adjudication hasn't happened, limited topics for discussion).

Parents can feel shut down, afraid to talk and meetings can be stressful or discouraging.



Small Group Brainstorm

Are there situations where it would be better NOT to have meetings?

How can LIFE promote or provide more room for decision making?

Are meetings still useful even if parents have no choice?

Trauma-Informed

- Consistent good work
- Unique or inspiring practices
- Tension/challenge



Trauma-Informed: Consistent Good Work

Emotional Safety, Respect, and Choice are emphasized and considered in every step of the process:

- Preparation
- Meetings
- All interactions with FEFs and PMs



Trauma-Informed: Consistent Good Work

Emotional Safety

- **No surprises!!** Including who attends, what gets talked about, what information is shared, etc.
- Preparing for difficult topics
- Working with/preparing for family dynamics/tensions
- FEF and PM help parents & youth make a plan for self-care during the meeting
- FEF or PM debriefs with parents & youth after the meeting



Trauma-Informed: Consistent Good Work

Respect

- Arriving early (up to 1 hour!) to ensure things are set up, the FEF is calm and focused and able to greet the parents and others when they arrive.
- FEF or PM takes notes/writes a list during preparation with a parent for their update and then brings it to the meeting for the parent.
- Considering parent readiness in scheduling or rescheduling a meeting.



Trauma-Informed: Consistent Good Work

Choice

- Give parents & youth choice about the location of the meeting.
- Take extra time (lots!!) with parents with mental health challenges.
 - Get help from PM or other family members if appropriate.
 - Consider what they can handle on agenda, or number of attendees.



Trauma-Informed: Unique or Inspiring

- Youth brings a “therapy kitten” to meetings.
- Tell parent you are looking out for them.
- Stop the meeting if it looks unsafe for a parent.



Trauma-Informed: Unique or Inspiring

Help take care of parents' needs:

- Notice if parent arrives hungry or thirsty. If possible, provide healthy food/drink/water (at least do not allow others to eat/drink in front of them).
- Notice if parent arrives stressed/distracted because they don't know where they are going to sleep that night.
- Provide pens and paper to use during meeting.
- Ask where they would like to sit.
- Ask if they know everyone.



Trauma-Informed: Tension/Challenge

A caseworker is not on board with LIFE.

- Does not attend meetings
- Does not work with the family in a way that gives them choice
- Authoritative
- Does not follow through with things
- Talks to parent negatively or in a demeaning way during meetings



Small Group Brainstorm

