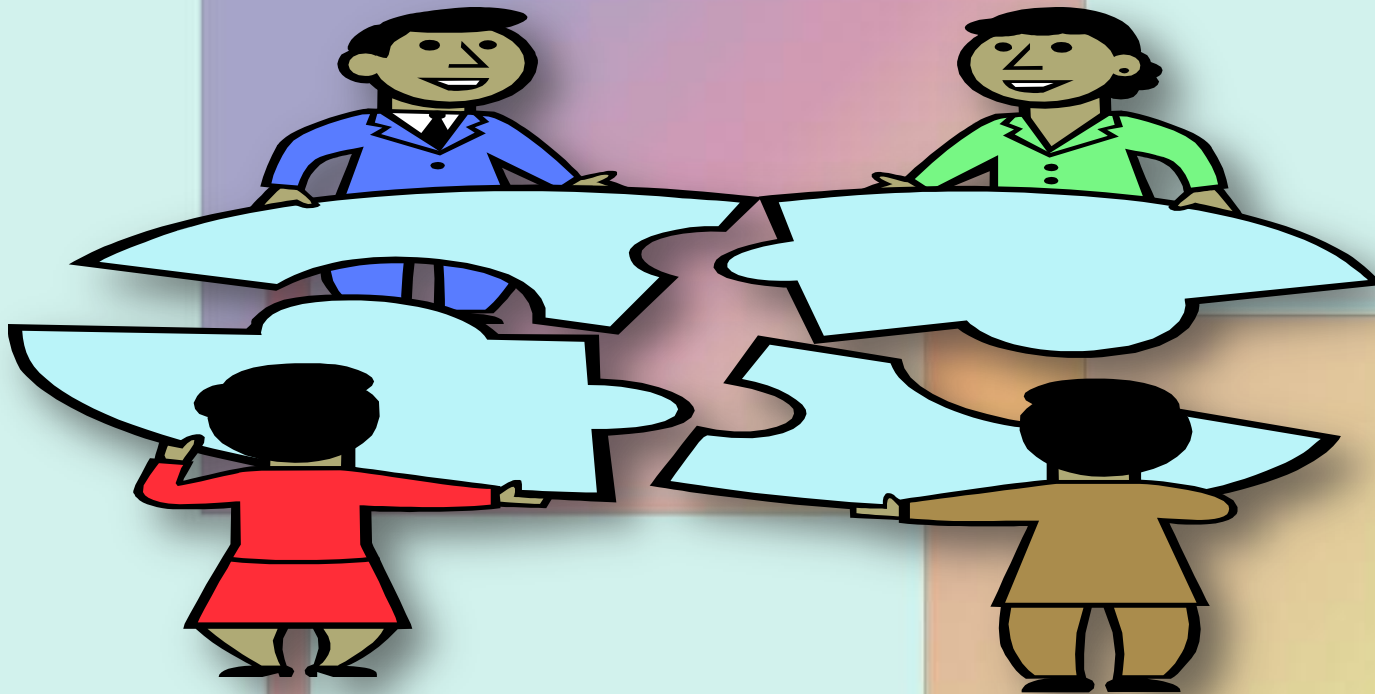
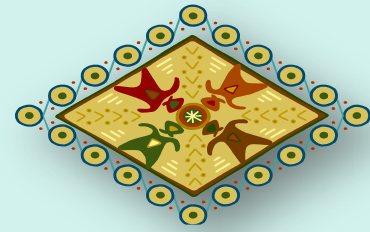


# System of Care Web-based Tutorial

## Module II: Introduction to the Child & Family Team Process



# Child & Family Teams



## OVERVIEW

- Child and Family Teams (CFTs) are family members and their community supports which come together to create, implement and update a person centered plan (PCP) with the child and family. The plan builds on the strengths of the child and family; addressing their needs, desires and dreams.
- In partnership with the family and/or the legal guardian, the Qualified Professional (QP) assigned by the clinical home agency (in most cases, this is the community support worker) is ultimately responsible for ensuring that a Child and Family Team meets on a regular basis. However, other members of the team can request or facilitate a meeting as needed or desired. Best Practice is to begin meeting every 30 days, decreasing or increasing frequency as needed and as agreed upon by the Child and Family Team members.

# Child & Family Teams



## CORE VALUES

1. child-centered, family focused, and family driven;
2. community-based; and
3. culturally competent and responsive.

## 7 Practice Principles

1. Family, children and youth are full partners
2. Planning is led by the family
3. Meetings are a safe, supportive place for all members
4. Meetings include people who can help the family succeed
5. Plans are built around what families do well and fits their beliefs
6. Members are committed to the plan and share responsibility for successful outcomes
7. Plans are changed when they are not working for families

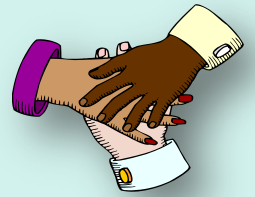
# Child & Family Teams



## OVERARCHING GOAL

1. Provide unconditional support to the child and family
2. Facilitate increased collaboration among agencies and with parents, allowing for a constantly evolving team membership that changes as the family's needs change.
3. Promote Increased involvement of the family's informal resources and natural supports in the planning and delivery of services and evaluation of plan outcomes.
4. Inclusion of parents as full and necessary partners in the care of their children.
5. Address immediate needs such as safety and crisis plans, as well as long term needs.
6. Development of one Person Centered Plan (PCP) that bases its strategies on the family's strengths. The team changes the plan as goals are met or when problems arise.

# Child & Family Teams



## UNDERSTANDING THE MEMBERSHIP

Each “team” is different, so there is no set number of people on a CFT and the team changes, as necessary over time, based upon the issues of concern.

### ***Child and Family Teams:***

1. Require a parent/guardian’s involvement and the child when age appropriate.
2. Include a family advocate who serves as a guide and support for the family as needed or requested
3. Are chosen by the family with help from a CFT Coordinator (a professional who could be a service provider from a variety of service agencies involved with the family or a trained family support person or community volunteer, etc.)
4. Include an adult who can assist the family with communication needs (ie. language interpretation, etc.) if the child and/or the family needs such support.
5. Include anyone who is important in the life of the child and family and anyone who knows the strengths and needs of the child and family.

# Child & Family Teams



## UNDERSTANDING THE PERSON CENTERED PLAN (PCP)

A person centered plan is a coordinated service plan that lists in detail what is needed, what is expected, and who will do what.

A Person-Centered Plan:

- Lists the people/agencies that will work with the child & family.
- Spells out what people will do.
- Includes strategies and accommodations to help family members communicate with team members on an ongoing basis.
- Includes and coordinates other related plans, such as a child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and any existing court orders, etc.
- Includes a Crisis Plan. Crises will happen. The Crisis Plan spells out details such as who to contact, where the child should go, who will take charge and what backup services will be used to help the child and family. A crisis plan will also identify the triggers that typically set off the child's crisis behavior. Without a Crisis Plan, a child often ends up in an institution or residential placement when this could have been avoided.

# Child & Family Teams



## FACILITATOR/COORDINATOR DUTIES

- The facilitator/coordinator is responsible for organizing and managing the coordination of each Child and Family Team meeting whose ultimate function is to develop, monitor and update a person centered plan. The location and time of the meeting should be extremely flexible to meet the needs and desires of the family. For example, occasional meetings might need to be held after normal business hours or held at a family's home or family church versus an agency location.
- If any member is unable to physically attend a particular team meeting, the facilitator/coordinator should make every effort to coordinate alternative strategies for participation such as: phone conferencing or obtaining a written report/summary from that member and presenting the information to the Child and Family Team. The facilitator/coordinator should also communicate any changes in the plan back to any absent team members.

# Child & Family Teams



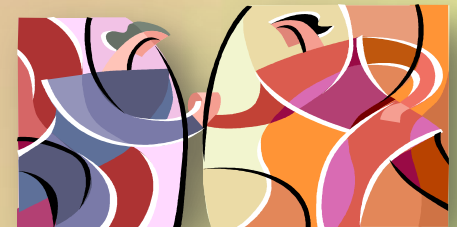
## MEETING AGENDA CHECKLIST

- Welcome and Introductions
- Review of the Purpose
- Family Opening
- Review of Ground Rules and Confidentiality Statement
- Information Sharing
- Coming together to make a plan
- Plans for follow up to this meeting
- Closing thank you and acknowledgements

# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips

## WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

- Displaying the family or young persons name on a flip chart at the beginning of the meeting can visually reinforce that the meeting is to support the family or young person in question.
- To feel safe in the room and to encourage partnership, it is important that everyone in the room identify themselves and how they are connected to the family or the young person. This reinforces that all participants have been invited to act as potential supports for a collaborative person centered plan.



# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips



## REVIEW OF THE PURPOSE

- State the purpose in a concise manner, strength-focused manner.
- It is very important that the purpose of the meeting has been determined with the family or young person before the meeting.
- Participants are more likely to arrive at the meeting ready to support a collaborative process if they know why they are being asked to come.
- Family should be in agreement with the purpose or general goals of the meeting before they arrive. An agency and a family may have different goals, but this must be discussed before the meeting.
- Prior to the meeting, families should be made aware of any “bottom lines” that the agency has for the plan. (bottom lines are the things that any agency is unable to compromise at the present time. This may be because of a court order, safety restraints, licensing regulations, etc).

# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips

## FAMILY OPENING

- An opportunity for the family to start the meeting in a way that honors their family's culture.
- The family should be asked prior to the meeting if there is anything they would like to do at the start of the meeting to support their family in coming to a successful plan. Often times this can be a prayer, a poem, or a song that unites the family.



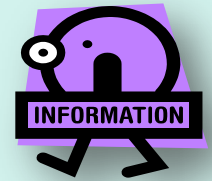
# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips



## **REVIEW OF GROUND RULES/ CONFIDENTIALITY**

- For the initial meeting, have each member list ground rules that they believe will make the meeting most productive and safe. Keep a record of this for future use.
- Request that the family and their natural supports keep what is said in the meeting private; reiterating that professionals are bound to do so by law.
- When contacting participants for recurring meetings, there should be a discussion about any ground rules that should be in place for the meeting that would support the family in feeling safe to plan for their children
- Ground rules should be listed and/or reviewed at each meeting to confirm that they still apply and to see if additional ground rules might make the meeting a safer place to work together.

# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips



## INFORMATION SHARING

- An opportunity to celebrate strengths and acknowledge concerns. All participants should be invited to share strengths and concerns in this part of the meeting.
- It's important that everyone be able to see the family or the youth as having potential by acknowledging strengths and understanding that it is the strengths that will ultimately resolve concerns and build effective strategies in their family plan.
- When sharing concerns, it is important to invite the family to start. This reinforces that you have invited them to the table to be heard and intend to address some of their concerns in the plan, rather than just putting together a plan that addresses the agency's concerns.
- Do not let the concerns outnumber the strengths. Concerns should be related to the purpose of the meeting. Additional concerns can be noted, but may need to be addressed in follow up Child and Family Team meetings that may involve different participants (based on the actual purpose of the meeting).
- All participants should be encouraged to share honestly with the family their concerns and any bottom lines they must see in place to support the person centered plan.

# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips



## COMING TOGETHER TO MAKE A PLAN

- This is an opportunity for brainstorming and working together to determine all possible strategies that fit with what we are all able to do at the present time.
- Building a collaborative plan can begin through the identification of the family's desired outcome. Some of the conversation will have occurred during the set up of the meeting when coming to an agreement on a shared purpose.
- Allowing the family to identify where they want to start (either through identifying their desired outcome or identifying the concern they would like to see addressed first in the plan) supports the development of a plan that places the family in a leadership role.

# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips



## COMING TOGETHER TO MAKE A PLAN (cont...)

- Brainstorming together to determine all possible strategies that fit with a desired outcome or concern assists in the development of creative plans that should not overburden any one person or agency.
- Listening to the family first allows agency and other supports the opportunity to examine how they can best support the plan. Professionals should resist the urge to propose solutions before allowing the family to clearly express what they would like to see in a potential strategy or solution.

# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips



## PLANS FOR FOLLOW UP TO THIS MEETING

- When should we meet again? How much time do we need to see how this plan will work?
- Child and Family teams can be seen as an opportunity to provide on-going support to the youth's person centered plan; and thus should not be viewed as a one time event.
- The group should be offered the chance to decide how they would like to follow-up on the plans developed at the meeting (either formally through follow up meetings or informally through contacts and conversation).
- Everyone should be held accountable for what they have offered to do to support the youth's person centered plan. This does not mean that changes to the plan do not and will not occur. This is what makes follow-up plans so critical to the success of Child and Family Teams.

# Child & Family Teams: Meeting Agenda Tips

## CLOSING THANK YOU & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Concluding every meeting with a sincere thank you; while acknowledging the efforts of every participant in the Child and Family team, goes a long way and is of great importance. It's important that we practice showing gratitude for what we accomplish together as a team. This builds upon existing relationships and also promotes mutual respect among all.





# Additional Resources/References

- PBH System of Care Website:  
<http://www.pbhsolutions.org/soc>
- System of Care Handbook for Families:  
<http://www.ncfamiliesunited.org>
- NC State Collaborative for Children, Youth and Families:  
[www.nccollaborative.org](http://www.nccollaborative.org)
- Child & Family Team Handbook:  
<http://www.pbhsolutions.org/soc/docs/ChildandFamilyTeamHandbook.pdf>
- PBH Website:  
<http://www.pbhsolutions.org>