



# Office of Children and Family Services

## Child Welfare Practice Model

### Purpose

To establish a consistent and recognizable approach to child welfare practice across New York State.

### Vision

Children, families and adults are protected and supported to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being.

### Outcomes

We will use our Practice Model to achieve the following **outcomes** we believe will help to achieve our vision:

- **Safety** - Children are safely maintained in their own home, families and communities with connections, culture and relationships preserved.
- **Prevention** - Through effective intervention, parents, caregivers, and families improve their ability to develop and maintain a safe, stable environment for themselves and their children.
- **Permanency** - When it is necessary to place children in out-of-home care, it is a safe, short and stable experience concluding with permanent attachments to caring adults.
- **Well-being** - Parents and caregivers have the capacity to provide for their children's needs. Children are cared for in safe, permanent, and nurturing environments that meet their needs and develop their physical, cognitive, behavioral/emotional and social functioning. As youth transition to adulthood, they benefit from services that promote healthy development, academic success and/or self-sustainability and safe living conditions.
- **Organizational Effectiveness** - Organizations are diverse, flexible, professionally and culturally competent and use child-centered, family-focused practice, and demonstrate partnership at all levels.

### Values

To achieve these outcomes, we are committed to the following **values** and will function accordingly:

- We believe children and adults have the right to be safe, and to have permanent families and lasting relationships.
- We listen first, then learn and proceed with knowledge, focusing on individual and family resources and strengths.
- We believe that services for children, families and adults must be individualized and culturally competent, recognizing and honoring differences in traditions, heritage, values and beliefs.
- We approach our work with a sense of urgency and persistence, recognizing and respecting a child and family's sense of time.



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- We believe that high performing supervisors and caseworkers are key to building and sustaining an effective child welfare system.
- We value interagency collaboration.
- We believe in accountability for action and results.
- We strive for data-informed decision making.
- We value the principles of partnership:
  - Everyone desires respect.
  - Everyone needs to be heard.
  - Everyone has strengths.
  - Judgments can wait.
  - Partners share power.
  - Partnership is a process.

## **Core Competencies**

These **competencies** for child welfare staff are fundamental to the implementation of a child-centered, family-focused practice model:

- Strength-based family engagement.
- Written and verbal communication.
- Collaboration.
- Interviewing skills.
- Assessment.
- Service planning.
- Intervention.
- Critical thinking.
- Cultural competence.
- Facilitation skills.
- Transitional supports.

## **Practices and Strategies**

Implementation of the following **Practices** and OCFS supported **Strategies** (Interventions) are intended to achieve outcomes and are in alignment with our values. We will prioritize our resources accordingly.

CHILD WELFARE PRACTICES	STRATEGIES
<b>Engage families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Team Meeting</li> <li>• Locate and engage absent fathers/parents</li> <li>• Coached Family Visits</li> <li>• Family Assessment Response (FAR)</li> <li>• Child-Centered, Family-Focused practice</li> </ul>



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CHILD WELFARE PRACTICES	STRATEGIES
<b>Engage youth and provide normative experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of Independent Living Skills</li> <li>• Educational stability through LDSS/school collaborations</li> <li>• Youth Advisory Boards/Youth in Progress</li> <li>• Education and Training Voucher program</li> <li>• Link Positive youth development to child welfare</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthen caregiver capacity to protect and provide for children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Families NY (HFNY) Home Visiting</li> <li>• Bridges to Health</li> <li>• CPS/DV Collaboration Projects</li> <li>• DV-informed child welfare practices</li> <li>• Multi-Disciplinary Teams/Child Advocacy Centers</li> <li>• Child Fatality Review Teams</li> <li>• Evidence-based, evidence-informed and promising community based programs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family Resource Centers</li> <li>- Parenting programs</li> <li>- Prevention programs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Facilitate safe out-of-home placements and rapid permanency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-adoption education</li> <li>• KinGAP</li> <li>• Kinship support services</li> <li>• Heart Gallery</li> <li>• Permanency Roundtables</li> <li>• Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelters</li> <li>• Family Finding</li> <li>• Fostering Hope/foster parent support</li> <li>• Connections to permanent adult resources</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention of foster/adoptive parents</li> <li>• Court Improvement Project</li> </ul>
<b>Develop a trauma-informed system</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trauma training for caseworkers, supervisors, adoptive families, and foster families</li> <li>• Screening tool implementation</li> <li>• Evidence-based interventions (TBD)</li> <li>• Secondary trauma training</li> <li>• Implementation of the NYS Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children model</li> </ul>



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CHILD WELFARE PRACTICES	STRATEGIES
<b>Support a racially equitable and culturally competent system</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial Equity and Cultural Competency Learning Exchange</li> <li>• Undoing Racism Training</li> <li>• State and Tribal Nation collaboration</li> <li>• Working with LGBTQ youth and families</li> </ul>
<b>Address individual family needs through comprehensive family assessments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize evidence-informed or validated assessment tools</li> </ul>
<b>Develop organizational effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate KEYS into practice</li> <li>• Integrate Teaming into practice</li> <li>• Integrate Principles of Partnership</li> <li>• Implement Continuous Quality Improvement process</li> </ul>

This list is not all inclusive, and many of the strategies touch upon more than one practice area.

## Indicators

The following *indicators* may be used to measure our successes:

- Re-reporting.
- Recurrence.
- Abuse/maltreatment in foster care.
- Reporting/indicated reports within a number of months of exit from foster care.
- Child deaths due to abuse/maltreatment.
- Rate of first admissions into care.
- Number of relative placements:
  - Direct relative placements.
  - Relative foster care placement.
  - Article six.
  - Informal kinship care.
- Length of time in care.
- Permanent exits (reunification, kinship exit, adoption, successful reintegration into community).
- Number of children who remain safely with non-offending parent (CPS/DV).
- Preserving connections:
  - Consistency in relative placements.
  - Proximity of placements.
  - Sibling connections.
- Strengths and needs of the child and family as measured by the CANS-NY:
  - Cognitive functioning.



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- Physical health and development.
- Behavioral/emotional functioning.
- Social functioning.
- Decrease in the number of youth who age out of care without a permanency/community resource.
- Increase in youth life skills.
- Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR).
- Protective factors (family support services).