

Social Services Assistant Day 1 - Facilitator Guide



DCFS Mission, Vision, and Values

Role and Job Expectations

Ethical Practice and Confidentiality

Introduction to Family Systems Theory

Effective Communication

Day 1:

New Social Services Assistant Training Agenda

Monday	
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome Pre-Test
9:30 – 10:30	DCFS Mission, Vision, and Values
10:30 -10:45	Break
10:45 – 12:00	Role and Job Expectations
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch Break
1:00 – 1:45	Ethical Practice and Confidentiality
1:45 – 2:15	Introduction to Family Systems Theory
2:15 - 2:30	Break
2:30 – 3:30	Effective Communication
3:30 – 4:00	Wrap Up and Review

Before You Train

Facilitator Resources – Day 1

Materials and Handouts

- Name Tents
- Markers, Pens, Highlighters
- Sticky Notes
- Giant Sticky Note Pad
- Printed Participant Manuals
- Blank paper

DCFS Entry Level Competencies

- | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| • 101-1 | • 102-2 | • 104-4 |
| • 101-2 | • 102-4 | • 104-5 |
| • 101-6 | • 102-5 | • 104-7 |
| • 101-7 | • 102-6 | |
| • 102-1 | • 102-8 | |

DCFS Forms and Publications

- CFS-324 Checklist of Homemaker's Activities
- At One Table: A Guideline for Child Welfare Practice

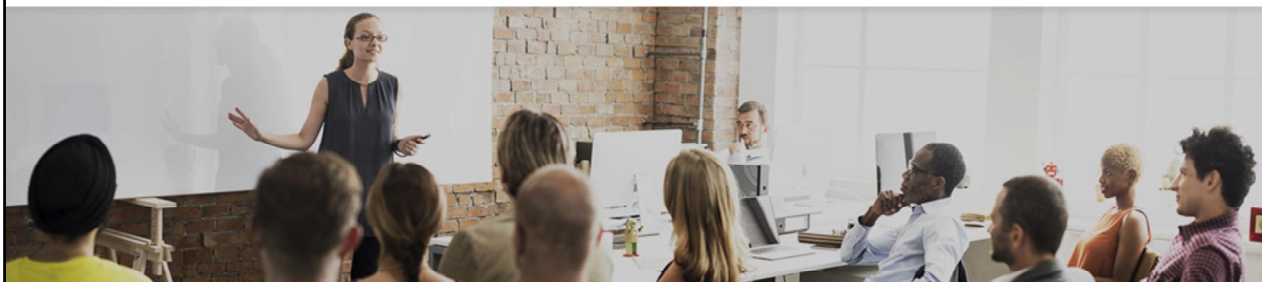
DCFS Policy And Internal Procedures

- 9 CAR § 40-816. Division of Children and Family Services' Contact with Children in Out-of-Home Placements.
- 9 CAR § 40-713. Parent-Child Contact for Children in Out-of-Home Placements.
- Internal Procedure 105: Vehicle and Passenger Safety
- Internal Procedure 103: State Vehicle Safety Program for Employees
- 9 CAR § 40-806. Resource Home Assessment Process
- 9 CAR § 40-413. Client Drug and Alcohol Screening.
- 9 CAR § 40-208. Confidentiality
- 9 CAR § 40-712. Maintaining Family Ties in Out-of-Home Placements.

Day 1 Sources

- **Source:** Used in part from “Top 10 Tips for Introducing a Training Session Like a Pro” by Langevin. <https://langevin.com/top-10-tips-for-introducing-a-training-session-like-a-pro/#:~:text=Share%20a%20bit%20about%20your,the%20human%20behind%20the%20trainer.&text=Establishing%20a%20connection%20with%20your%20learners%20is%20crucial.>
- <https://depts.washington.edu/eedu/FEB/cbook/FEB-Topic02-FamilySystems.pdf>
- <https://www.thebowencenter.org/introduction-eight-concepts>
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New Social Services Assistant Training



MidSOUTH
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, HEALTH,
AND HUMAN SERVICES
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

Day 1

NEW SOCIAL SERVICES ASSSITANT TRAINING – DAY 1



WELCOME

Time: 2 Minutes

Purpose: To welcome participants and introduce the training structure for the specialty training

Say:

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to Social Services Assistant training. I am excited to have you here as you begin your work with DCFS. During Foundations, you learned the principles and practice model that guide the work of DCFS. Over the next three days, we will build on that foundation by focusing specifically on the role of the Social Services Assistant.

Social Services Assistants play a unique role within child welfare. You are often the team member who spends the most time with children and families through transportation, supervised family time, phone contacts, and ongoing support. The relationships you build, the observations you make, and the professionalism you demonstrate directly support child safety, permanency, and well-being.

Throughout this training, you will strengthen the skills needed to communicate

effectively, document objectively, supervise family time, transport children safely, maintain confidentiality, and support specialists while serving children and families with compassion and professionalism.

You will also participate in realistic activities and scenarios designed to prepare you for situations you will encounter in the field, so you leave this training feeling confident and ready to begin your role.

One thing I want you to remember over these three days is this - you are never “just” the assistant. Many children will spend more uninterrupted time with you than with anyone else on the team. A car ride may be the first time a child feels safe enough to talk. A supervised family visit may be the only opportunity you have to observe something that helps the specialist better understand what’s happening with that family. What you do matters.

Insert Facilitator 1 Headshot Photo Here Facilitator Name	Meet the Facilitator All about me ... - Your role - Brief Credentials/Background - Something relatable/Passionate about - Share a moment or experience in your professional career that shaped how you show up in this work
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ALL ABOUT ME FACILITATOR 1 SLIDE

Time: 3 minutes

Purpose: To build rapport with participants and set the tone for a positive learning environment

Activity Set Up:

Each facilitator will need to complete this slide with their desired information and a professional headshot photo, following the guidelines listed below.

Activity Instructions:

Please limit the introduction to 1-2 slides per trainer (i.e., an information slide with your picture, and an optional second slide if you want to share a family/pet pic for relatability). First, introduce yourself, and then allow a few minutes for your co-trainer to introduce themselves to the classroom as well. A second set of slides can be created as needed for your co-trainer.

What to include in your “All about me ...”

- Your photo:** Please ensure that the photograph is a headshot and be mindful of any writing on clothing or backgrounds that would not meet professional standards

for the classroom.

- **Your name and role** (Facilitator)
- **Brief credentials/background:** Briefly mention relevant education, professional experience, or areas of specialty related to the training.
- **Something relatable/passionate about:** Share your enthusiasm for the subject and why you enjoy teaching/training. Let them see the human behind the trainer.
- **Something Fun to build rapport:** Share a moment or experience in your professional career that shapes how you show up in this work.

Keep it simple, impactful, and engaging! Balance professionalism with approachability to make learners comfortable and excited to learn. It's important to understand that the way you kick off your training sets the tone for the entire course so start with a bang!

Tips for Facilitation Success:

- **Start Strong:** Energetic greeting, smile, and a positive vibe.
- **Balance Professionalism:** Be credible but not intimidating.
- **Be Authentic:** Share genuinely to build trust.
- **Keep it Concise:** Don't overshare; focus on relevance. Share your enthusiasm for the subject and why you enjoy teaching/training.
- **Be Clear:** Speak clearly and calmly.
- **Make it Interactive:** Get participants talking early. Establishing a connection with your learners is crucial. Acknowledge the diverse group in front of you and make it clear that their experiences and perspectives are valued. Encourage open communication and assure them that questions and discussions are more than welcome.
- **Conclude Positively:** Express excitement for the session and invite participants to share.

Source: Used in part from "Top 10 Tips for Introducing a Training Session Like a Pro" by Langevin. <https://langevin.com/top-10-tips-for-introducing-a-training-session-like-a-pro/#:~:text=Share%20a%20bit%20about%20your,the%20human%20behind%20the%20trainer.&text=Establishing%20a%20connection%20with%20your%20learners%20is%20crucial>



ALL ABOUT ME FACILITATOR SLIDE

Insert Facilitator 2 Headshot Photo Here Facilitator Name	Meet the Facilitator All about me ... - Your role - Brief Credentials/Background - Something relatable/Passionate about - Share a moment or experience in your professional career that shaped how you show up in this work
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ALL ABOUT ME FACILITATOR 2 SLIDE

Time: 3 minutes

Purpose: To build rapport with participants and set the tone for a positive learning environment

Activity Set Up:

Each facilitator will need to complete this slide with their desired information and a professional headshot photo, following the guidelines listed below.

Activity Instructions:

Please limit the introduction to 1-2 slides per trainer (i.e., an information slide with your picture, and an optional second slide if you want to share a family/pet pic for relatability). First, introduce yourself, and then allow a few minutes for your co-trainer to introduce themselves to the classroom as well. A second set of slides can be created as needed for your co-trainer.

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ALL ABOUT ME FACILITATOR SLIDE



PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS

Time: 15 minutes

Purpose: To build rapport with participants and set a positive tone for the training environment

Say:

Now that you've met your facilitators, we'd love to get to know each of you. Rather than introducing yourself, you're going to introduce the person sitting next to you. Take the next two minutes to get to know your partner by finding out:

- *Name they wish to be called*
- *County*
- *Practice Coach*
- *Supervisor*
- *One fun fact*

Once everyone has had a chance to connect, we'll go around the room, and each person will introduce their partner to the group.

Facilitator Note:

Keep introductions moving at a comfortable pace. If the group is large, you may choose to have pairs introduce each other at their table only rather than to the full room.

Say:

Thank you for those introductions. It is always helpful to know who is in the room because the people sitting beside you today will become part of your professional network. Throughout your career, you will lean on one another to share ideas, solve problems, and support children and families across Arkansas.

Although you will each return to different counties, you are all working toward the same mission of keeping children safe and helping families.

As we begin this specialty training, remember that you are not starting from scratch. During Foundations you learned the Practice Model, core values, and policies that guide your work. Over the next three days, we will build on that foundation by focusing on how those concepts apply specifically to the Social Service Assistant role.

Don't underestimate the people sitting around you. Some of the best ideas and support you will receive throughout your career will come from coworkers who have been in your shoes. Use these three days to build on those relationships.



FOUNDATIONS FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

Time: 15 minutes

Purpose: To allow participants to reflect on key takeaways from their Foundations training and identify a learning goal as they continue their professional development

Say:

Now it's your turn to reflect on your learning. Using the sticky notes provided, you will have a few moments to respond to the following prompts.

Activity Prep:

Each table will need markers and sticky notes, or the facilitator can prep a giant sticky note and have it placed on the wall in advance.

Activity Instructions:

1. Each participant will have five minutes to write down their responses to the following questions on their sticky notes:
 - Glows: Two key takeaways from your foundations training that have made the biggest positive impact on you as a learner.
 - Grows: One skill you hope to become more confident using as a Social Service Assistant by the end of this training. (Some examples if they struggle include supervising family time, transporting children, documentation, communicating with difficult families, professional boundaries, confidentiality, handling conflict)

2. After five minutes, allow participants to share their responses. After all participants have shared;

Say:

Thank you for taking the time to reflect on your learning. Your Foundations training gave you the knowledge that every DCFS employee needs. Your “glows” highlight the knowledge and skills you’ve already begun building, while your “grows” identify opportunities for continued development. Learning is an ongoing process, and recognizing both your strengths and your growth areas is an important part of becoming an effective child welfare professional.

Keep your “grows” in mind over the next three days. As we move through activities, discussions, and scenarios, think about how each topic helps you become more confident in the role you will be performing every day.

Paraphrase:

You don't have to leave here knowing everything. Nobody did when they started. The goal is that you leave here more confident than when you walked in. Now that you've reflected on where you've been and where you want to grow. Let's shift our focus to where we're headed next. In the following slide, we'll review the target outcomes for this specialty training. These outcomes will provide a roadmap for the knowledge, skills, and abilities you'll develop and help connect today's learning to your role in supporting children and families.



Social Services Assistant Pre-Test

SOCIAL SERVICES ASSISTANT PRE-TEST

Time: 20 minutes

Purpose: To assess the existing knowledge at the beginning of this specialty

Facilitator Note: Before moving to the Target Outcomes direct participants to the QR code on the slide. Participants will need to use their phones to scan the code to complete the pre-test in Qualtrics.

Target Outcomes



- Describe the role of the Social Service Assistant and how it supports children, families, Social Services Specialists, and the DCFS mission
- Demonstrate professional skills for transporting children, supervising family time, maintaining confidentiality, communicating effectively, and documenting observations objectively
- Recognize child and family behaviors, respond professionally, and communicate concerns appropriately without making assessments or diagnoses
- Apply DCFS policies, procedures, and family-centered practices to support child safety, permanency, and well-being during daily job responsibilities

WELCOME AND TARGET OUTCOMES

Time: 5 Minutes

Purpose: To welcome participants, introduce the training structure, and define the target outcomes for the session

Say:

Social Services Assistants play an important role in every stage of child welfare practice.

While you are not responsible for making case decisions or completing assessments, the work you do every day directly supports those who are.

You may be the person transporting a child to a placement, supervising family time, documenting important observations, conducting a drug screen, or helping a family connect with resources. The quality of your work, your professionalism, and your interactions with Children and Families have a direct impact on outcomes.

Everything we cover over the next 3 days is designed to help you perform those responsibilities confidently, safely, and professionally.

Target outcomes:

- Describe the role of the Social Service Assistant and how it supports children, families, Social Services Specialists, and the DCFS mission
- Demonstrate professional skills for transporting children, supervising family time,

maintaining confidentiality, communicating effectively, and documenting observations objectively

- Recognize child and family behaviors, respond professionally, and communicate concerns appropriately without making assessments or diagnoses
- Apply DCFS policies, procedures, and family-centered practices to support child safety, permanency, and well-being during daily job responsibilities

Say:

Now that we've reviewed what you will be able to do by the end of this training, let's take a moment to connect those target outcomes to the bigger picture. Every skill you develop, every interaction you have with families, and every task you complete as a Social Services Assistant contribute to the mission of DCFS.

Three wooden blocks are stacked vertically against a dark blue background. The top block is light brown and has the word "MISSION" in black capital letters. The middle block is white and has the word "VISION" in black capital letters. The bottom block is light brown and has the word "VALUES" in black capital letters.

MISSION

VISION

VALUES

Division Mission, Vision, and Values

DIVISION MISSION AND VALUES

DCFS MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to keep children safe and help families. DCFS will respectfully engage families and youth and use community-based services and supports to assist caregivers in successfully caring for their children. We will focus on safety, permanency, and well-being for all children and youth.

VALUES CLARIFICATION: DCFS MISSION STATEMENT & VISION

Time: 8 Minutes

Purpose: To explore the DCFS mission, vision, and core priorities and how they shape practice decisions

Say:

During foundations, you learn the DCFS mission, vision, and priorities. Rather than reteaching them today let's briefly reconnect to why they matter. Every responsibility you have as a social services assistant should support this Mission whether you're transporting a child, supervising family time, documenting observations, or helping families assess services.

Paraphrase:

Point out the delicate line that participants will tread during their tenure with DCFS. One of the challenges in child welfare is balancing child safety with strengthening families. While other professionals may have different roles, DCFS is responsible for protecting children while working towards safe permanency whenever possible. Your role supports both of those goals.

- **DCFS Mission Statement:** Our mission is to keep children safe and help families. DCFS will respectfully engage families and youth and use community-based services and supports to assist parents in successfully caring for their children. We will focus on safety, permanency, and well-being for all children and youth.
- **DCFS Vision:** Every child has a safe and stable home every single day.

The Division's Main Priorities include collaboratively designing a practice framework to guide the agency's top three priorities:

1. Safely stabilize and preserve families, and if that is not possible...
2. Safely care for children and quickly reunify children with their families of origin. If children must be removed from the home, relative and fictive kin caregivers will be considered immediately and throughout the entire engagement with the family; and if reunification is not possible...
3. Safely support the permanency, well-being, and development of safe lifelong relationships for children and youth.

Paraphrase:

Now that we've discussed the mission of DCFS, let's take a moment to think about what it means in the context of your work. On the slide, you see the DCFS mission statement. Please take a few moments to read it carefully.

Facilitator Note:

Allow participants 25-30 seconds to silently review the mission statement before moving to the next slide. Resist the urge to fill the silence; give participants time to reflect before moving into the activity instructions on the next slide.

Say:

As a Social Services Assistant, you contribute to this Mission every day. Whether you are transporting a child, supervising family time, assisting with services, or documenting observations, your work helps children remain safe, supports families, and provides valuable information that assists specialists in making informed decisions.

Sometimes people think only Specialists help families. That's not true. Every interaction you have with a child or caregiver either builds trust or breaks it. You help carry out this Mission every day, even if you are not the person writing the case plan.

DCFS MISSION STATEMENT



Activity

ACTIVITY: THE DCFS MISSION STATEMENT

Time: 15 Minutes

Purpose: To help participants connect their role to the DCFS mission and think about how the mission shapes practice

Paraphrase:

The DCFS Mission Statement helps us understand our role as a change agent, colleague, team participant, community servant, and mentor. The mission statement is more than just words on a page; it is how DCFS creates a shared vision of where we are and where we are going. Our official mission is simple: "To keep children safe and help families".

Activity Instructions:

1. Direct participants to open the link on the landing page or scan the QR code on the slide with their phone to complete the fill-in-the-blank activity on the survey using what they remember from the mission statement.
2. Once everyone has submitted their responses, confirm the official mission statement:

"Our mission is to keep children safe and help families. DCFS will respectfully engage families and youth and use community-based services and supports to assist parents in successfully caring for their children. We will focus on safety, permanency, and well-being for all children and youth."

Think about your role. How can transportation, family time, documentation, or supporting specialists help fulfill our mission of keeping children safe and helping families?

3. Encourage participants:

Say:

Always Remember: How you do your job matters just as much as what you do. Families may not remember every policy you explain, but they will remember whether you treated them with dignity and respect. Every interaction is an opportunity to build trust and support DCFS's mission.

Facilitation Question:

- How does our mission of 'helping families' support the goal of 'keeping children safe'?

Facilitation Answer:

- By strengthening parents' ability to care for their children through support and services, we create a safer, permanent home environment.

Facilitation Question:

- Which responsibility do you think gives Social Service Assistants the greatest opportunity to build trust with a family? Why?

Say:

You will hear throughout these 3 days that you are the team's eyes and ears. I also want you to remember that you are often the heart of the team. You spend time with children and families in ways others may not, which gives you the opportunity to make a lasting, positive impact.

Key Points:

- The mission focuses on three core outcomes: Safety, Permanency, and Well-being for all children.
- DCFS is committed to respectfully engaging families and using community-based support to help parents succeed.
- The mission is congruent with federal outcomes used to evaluate the division's success.
- Assistance is provided through a Family-Centered Approach, treating the family as partners rather than just recipients of services.



REVISITING AT ONE TABLE VALUES



At One Table Values Review

Value 1: Relationships with children, youth, and families are the foundation

Value 2: Collaborative partnerships with resource families

Value 3: Helping children and youth achieve their full potential and develop lifelong relationships

Value 4: Shared responsibility with community partners

Value 5: A strong working relationship with the legal system

Value 6: A workplace environment characterized by reflection, appreciation, and ongoing learning

AT ONE TABLE VALUES REVIEW

Time: 5 minutes

Purpose: To reconnect participants to the At One Table practice model and align personal values with the DCFS mission

Say:

Let's take a moment to reconnect with something foundational. At One Table is Arkansas's practice model that represents our collective vision: every child deserves a safe, stable, and nurturing family every day.

DCFS remains committed to recognizing how our practices may affect different families and communities. As we work with families from various backgrounds, we must ensure our practices support consistency and respect for everyone — setting aside personal beliefs to best serve the mission. Throughout today's training, continue to reflect on how the work we do supports that commitment. The responsibilities you will learn throughout the specialty are all expressions of the At One Table values in action. Every interaction is an opportunity to build trust, support families, and promote child safety.

At One Table isn't something we only talk about in training. It should influence how you greet a family at the front door, how you interact with a child during transportation, how you supervise family time, and how you communicate with your teammates. It is not another policy is how we do the work.

Source: *At One Table: A Guideline for Child Welfare Practice*

At One Table



Activity

ACTIVITY: At One Table

Time: 10 Minutes

Purpose: To help participants review the At One Table Values

Paraphrase:

Let's do a quick review of the six values we covered in-depth during Week 2. This is just a quick reminder to keep them in view as we move through today's content.

Activity Instructions:

1. Direct participants to open the link on the landing page or scan the QR code on the slide with their phone to complete the activity on the survey.
2. Once everyone has submitted their responses, ask for six volunteers to share their answers.

Facilitator Note:

No discussion needed here — keep it moving.

Value 1 — Relationships with children, youth, and families are the foundation. Enhancing safety for children and youth in the home is the top priority for everyone involved.

Value 2 — Collaborative partnerships with resource families. Ensure cutting-edge training and supportive services for resource families.

Value 3 — Helping children and youth achieve their full potential and develop lifelong relationships. Continually focus on children's safety and well-being while they are in their own homes or in our care.

Value 4 — Shared responsibility with community partners. Share responsibility with the community to ensure resources are accountable, accessible, responsive, and culturally sensitive.

Value 5 — A strong working relationship with the legal system. Ensure that all parties have a mutual understanding of and respect for one another's roles, the law, and the rights due to children, youth, and families.

Value 6 — A workplace environment characterized by reflection, appreciation, and ongoing learning. Foster a proactive workplace culture of reflection, responsiveness, and shared responsibility.

Key Points:

- At One Table is the foundation of how we treat families in this work.
- Consistency and respect for all families guide every decision we make.
- Personal beliefs must be set aside in service of the mission.
- The content we cover today connects directly to child safety and well-being.

Say:

Every interaction, every decision, and every relationship you build as a Social Services Assistant is an expression of these values in action. Let us talk about what that looks like in practice through the lens of your role and job expectations.

Source: *At One Table: A Guideline for Child Welfare Practice*



Role and Job Expectations

ROLE AND JOB EXPECTATIONS

What's my role?

- What are the primary duties of a Social Services Assistant?
- What skills are most critical for establishing a trusting relationship with a family?



REFLECTION: WHAT'S MY ROLE?

Time: 10 Minutes

Purpose: To define the multifaceted role of the Social Services Assistant as a "change agent" and review functional duties

Say:

Before we discuss the role of the Social Services Assistant, I want to get a better sense of your ideas about your role. Take a minute to reflect on the following questions, and then I'd like a few volunteers to share their answers.

Facilitation Question:

- What are the primary duties of a Social Services Assistant?
- What skills listed here do you think will be most critical for establishing a trusting relationship with a family?

Facilitation Answers:

- Answers may vary

Paraphrase:

One big misconception about the Social Service Assistant role is that it's only about transportation or helping with paperwork. While those responsibilities are important, your role goes far beyond

completing tasks.

As a Social Service Assistant, you are often one of the DCFS Employees families see most consistently. You build relationships with children and caregivers during transportation, family time, phone contacts, and everyday interactions.

Your objective observations, professionalism, and communication help specialists make informed decisions that support child safety, permanency, and well-being.

Beyond your assigned duties, you'll often serve as a mentor, encourager, resource connector, and trusted support for families. Every interaction is an opportunity to build trust and model professionalism.

Depending on your county's needs, you may also conduct random drug screens, assist with Transitional Youth Services, connect families with community resources, or complete other supportive responsibilities assigned by your supervisor. While specific duties may vary, your purpose remains the same- supporting children, families, and specialists through professional, relationship-centered practice.

Facilitation Note: If time permits, the trainer may ask for volunteers to share their personal job experience and the job duties in their specific counties.



Activity: Review of Job Expectations

ACTIVITY: REVIEW OF JOB EXPECTATIONS

Time: 20 Minutes

Purpose: To allow participants the opportunity to compare their expectations of the role with the official description and discuss hidden duties in practice

Participant Manual: Functional Job Description

Say:

Before we review the official functional job description, work together to brainstorm the responsibilities you believe the Social Services Assistant performs. Think beyond paperwork and consider everything you've learned during foundations, your conversations with supervisors, or experiences you've already had in the field. Afterward, compare your ideas to the official job description. Discuss which responsibilities are specifically listed, and which may vary depending on your county, supervisor, or the needs of children and families.

Activity Instructions:

1. Ask participants to get into small groups of 3–4. Have each group select a recorder to take notes and a speaker to share with the rest of the class.
2. Without looking at their job descriptions, ask each group to spend about 6 minutes brainstorming a list of their job duties on a flip chart.

3. Direct participants to look at the Functional Job Description in their participant manuals. Allow each group about 6 minutes to compare their lists to the official job description.
4. Once groups are finished, lead a discussion about the field realities that are not described within the description.

Say:

Let's take the opportunity to compare your expectations of the role.

Facilitation Question: (ask the following question and validate responses)

- Which of the official duties within the job description stood out to you the most?

Facilitator Note:

If the items below were not mentioned, be sure to point out that additional duties may include:

- Assisting with intakes and service referrals.
- Assist with resource navigation.
- Maintaining accurate records and case documentation.
- Supporting community outreach and public education initiatives. Coordinating and scheduling follow-ups for family services.

Key Points:

- The Functional Job description outlines the core responsibilities of the Social Service Assistant role.
- Daily responsibilities may vary based on county needs, Supervisor assignments, and the needs of children and families.
- Social Services Assistants play an important role in supporting Specialists through transportation, family time, documentation, communication, and other supportive services.
- Flexibility, professionalism, and teamwork are essential to success in this role.

One thing you will learn quickly is that no two days look exactly alike. While there are responsibilities every Social Services Assistant performs, you will also be asked to meet the unique needs of the children, families, and specialists you support. Being flexible while staying grounded in policy and professionalism is one of the strengths of a successful Social Services Assistant.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES DURING CASES

- Provide the child with accurate information.
- Answer questions the child may have.
- Engage the child and resource parents, as appropriate.
- Assess the quality of the care being provided.
- Determine and monitor, through conversation and/or observation, the child's safety.
- Assess the child's adjustment to the out-of-home placement.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES DURING CASES

Time: 20 minutes

Purpose: To explain the Assistant's role in visitation support, family contact, and documentation during ongoing cases

Participant Manual: CFS-324 Checklist of Homemaker's Activities

Paraphrase:

Regular, high-quality contact between DCFS and a child in an out-of-home placement can be a vital source of stability for children in custody. Consistent contact not only provides some stability in the child's life but also allows the division to ensure the child's safety and well-being. As such, the division will have regular visits and other forms of contact with children in DCFS custody. You are here to bridge the gap through weekly phone calls and manage the logistics of transportation and supervision.

- In the event the Social Services Specialist is unable to conduct these regular visits in the out-of-home placement, another Social Services Specialist or the Social Services Supervisor may make the visits in their place.
- While Social Services Assistants may visit families, the legal visitation requirement is not fully met until the assigned Social Services Specialist visits the home. Per DCFS policy, the assigned Specialist must conduct home visits weekly or monthly, depending

- on the family's safety and risk level.
- Social Services Assistants may initiate weekly telephone contact with families on behalf of the assigned Social Services Specialist, but this will not replace the requirement for the child's Social Services Specialist to maintain weekly contact with the child. Social Services Assistants must also assist with transportation, supervision of visits, and/or other logistics, as needed.

Purposes of Contact with Families:

The purpose of these visits and other contacts will be to:

1. Provide the child with accurate information about his or her case at an age and developmentally appropriate level.
2. Answer questions the child may have.
3. Engage the child and resource parents, as appropriate, in activities geared to accomplish case plan goals and to ensure the child's needs are being met.
4. Assess the quality of the care being provided.
5. Determine and monitor, through conversation and/or observation, the child's safety and the extent to which the child's developmental, medical, intellectual, and emotional needs are being met; and
6. Assess the child's adjustment to the out-of-home placement, resource parents, other people in the home, and school.

Documentation During Visits

Documentation is critical for establishing "reasonable efforts" in legal proceedings. Unlisted duties, such as random drug screens and parenting classes, are essential to supporting family safety and case plan goals. Social Services Assistants can document these 'unlisted' activities on the CFS-324. While it is not required, it can be a valuable tool for documenting what has been done with a family.

1. Ask participants to open their Participant Manuals to view the CFS-324 Checklist of Homemaker's Activities.
2. Briefly point out how the checklist format makes it easier to document multifaceted activities and how it can be used as a professional safeguard that proves exactly what you have done to support the family.

Documentation must be professional, truthful, and free of personal opinion or jargon. Narratives must also include the "When, What, Where, Who, and Why" of every contact.

Facilitation Question

- Why is it important for the agency that your phone calls don't replace the Specialist's required contact?

Facilitation Answer:

- Frequent contact with the primary Specialist serves as a vital source of constancy for a child during the trauma of being in DCFS Custody.

Key Points:

- Documentation is critical for establishing "reasonable efforts" in legal proceedings.
- Narratives must include the "When, What, Where, Who, and Why" of every contact.
- Entries must be professional, truthful, and free of personal opinion or jargon.
- Social Services Assistants support visitation through weekly phone calls, transportation, and supervision — but cannot replace the Social Services Specialist's required visits
- The CFS-324 Checklist of Homemaker's Activities is a valuable tool for documenting unlisted duties and serves as a professional safeguard
- All documentation must be professional, truthful, free of personal opinion, and include the When, What, Where, Who, and Why of every contact

Say:

Now that we've explored the important role Social Services Assistants play in supporting children, families, and specialists, let's take a closer look at a few of the policies and procedures that guide this work. Understanding these expectations helps ensure consistency, accountability, and quality service delivery.

As we review these key policies and procedures, consider how each supports your day-to-day responsibilities and contributes to achieving positive outcomes for the families you serve.

Sources:

9 CAR § 40-816. Division of Children and Family Services' contact with children in out-of-home placements.

9 CAR § 40-713. Parent-child contact for children in out-of-home placements.

DCFS POLICY & PROCEDURE: TRANSPORTATION

Internal Procedure 105:
Vehicle and Passenger Safety

Internal Procedure 103:
State Vehicle Safety Program for
Employees



DCFS POLICY & PROCEDURE: TRANSPORTATION

Time: 8 Minutes

Purpose: To explain transportation safety standards, reporting expectations, and Arkansas driving requirements for staff

Participant Manual: Transportation Best Practice

Paraphrase:

Transportation is much more than getting a child from one place to another. For many children, the ride to a placement, court hearing, medical appointment, or family visit may be one of the most stressful moments they experience. Your responsibility is not only to transport children safely, but also to create an environment that is calm, respectful, and supportive while following DCFS safety requirements.

All DCFS staff (paid and volunteer) must operate motor vehicles (state-owned or privately-owned) used on state business in a safe manner, observing all traffic laws and making allowances for road and weather conditions. They must also promptly report any accident or traffic violation in which they are involved to their supervisor.

- Seat belts must be used in accordance with Arkansas law at all times by drivers and passengers of state vehicles and private vehicles used for state business.
- Children who are less than six years old AND who weigh less than 60 pounds must be

- properly restrained in an approved child passenger safety seat
- Smoking is prohibited in all vehicles and enclosed areas owned, leased, or operated by the State of Arkansas, its agencies, and authorities. State prohibits smoking in a vehicle if a child in the car is under fourteen (14) years of age, and under Division of Children and Family Services policy, this prohibition on smoking in a vehicle extends to all children in foster care, regardless of the age of the child in care

Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program

All drivers operating state vehicles or private vehicles on State Business shall participate in the Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program (ASVSP). This program ensures that state employees driving on state business maintain valid licenses and clean driving records. It is very important to remember that if, at any time, an employee is unable to perform DCFS driving duties due to their driving record, their driving privileges may be revoked or employment terminated. The document is located on DHS Share under DHS Policy 1004.

If you receive a traffic citation or are involved in an accident, notify your supervisor within the required timeframe. DCFS personnel will guide you through the required reporting process and determine any next steps under the Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program.

Suspensions of Driving Privileges

Driving privileges for the employee will remain suspended for the following incidents, pending the completion of the required administrative action (See Internal Procedure 103: State Vehicle Safety Program for Employees for more information):

- DUI
- Expired Driver's license
- Suspended Driver's license
- At-Fault Accident While Transporting

Facilitation Question:

- Besides following policy, what can you do to help a child feel safe during transportation?

Transportation Best Practice

- Explain where you were going before leaving
- Verify everyone is buckled before moving the vehicle
- Never discuss confidential case information where others can hear
- Never promise outcomes you can't control
- Stay professional, even during difficult conversations
- Document any significant statements or behaviors after the transport

Key Points:

- All DCFS staff must operate vehicles safely, observe all traffic laws, and report any

accident or traffic violation to their supervisor within 24 hours

- Seat belts are always required; children under 6 and under 60 pounds must be in an approved child safety seat; smoking is prohibited in all state vehicles and any vehicle transporting a child under 14 or any child in foster care, regardless of age
- All staff driving on state business must participate in the Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program (ASVSP). Failure to maintain a valid license and a clean driving record may result in revoked driving privileges or termination
- Driving privileges are automatically suspended pending administrative review for DUI, expired or suspended license, or an at-fault accident while transporting

Sources:

Internal Procedure 105: Vehicle and Passenger Safety

Internal Procedure 103: State Vehicle Safety Program for Employees

9 CAR § 40-806. Resource Home Assessment Process

DCFS POLICY & PROCEDURE: FAMILY TIME & MAINTAINING FAMILY CONNECTIONS

9 CAR § 40-712.
Maintaining family ties in
out-of-home placements



DCFS POLICY & PROCEDURE: FAMILY TIME & MAINTAINING FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Time: 8 minutes

Purpose: To explain standards for family time, sibling contact, and the Assistant's role in supporting visitation logistics

Paraphrase

Removal from the home is traumatic, and research shows that children who maintain positive family ties achieve better long-term outcomes. Maintaining and strengthening the parent-child relationship, family visits, and other forms of contact between parents and their children in out-of-home placements are highly essential. Visits between parents, including noncustodial and putative parents as applicable, and their children will occur at least weekly based upon the child's best interest.

Once the frequency and length of visits are established, the Social Services Specialist will arrange the visits with parents as outlined in the case plan, and the Social Services Assistant may assist with transportation, supervising visits, and/or handling other logistics. Social Services Assistants are tasked with transporting families to visits and, where appropriate, supervising visits.

- Visits that have been ordered to be supervised may be graduated to unsupervised depending on the dynamics of the case. An appropriate supervisor will individualize each assignment to supervise visits.
- The preferred location for visits is the caregiver's home or, if that is not possible, in the

most home-like setting possible. Office visits are a last resort.

- Visits are encouraged to include a variety of quality family time activities, such as visiting a library for story time, playing at a park, or making and enjoying a meal together, as appropriate for each family.
- If siblings must be separated for their own best interests, the division will attempt to place them in close proximity to facilitate regular, meaningful contact at least weekly, when possible. Biweekly face-to-face visits must also occur where possible, unless a Social Services Supervisor grants a visit waiver.

In an effort to ensure foster care supports the permanency and well-being of children in department custody, children may have the opportunity to visit or have other forms of contact with noncustodial parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, other relatives, and fictive kin, provided the visits are in the best interests of the children.

Facilitator Question:

- What is the difference between supervising family time and assessing family time? Social Services Assistants observe, support safety, and document objectively. The specialist and supervisor use that information, along with other case information, to make recommendations or decisions.)

Facilitator Answer:

- Social Services Assistant should document what they saw and heard, not whether they believe the parent “passed” or “failed” the visit.

Source:

9 CAR § 40-712. Maintaining Family Ties in Out-of-Home Placements.

FOUR CORNERS KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



Activity

ACTIVITY: FOUR CORNERS KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Time: 10 minutes

Purpose: To encourage peer discussion and knowledge sharing around family time policy and practice through a movement-based activity

Say:

Remember, as a Social Services Assistant, your role is to help create a safe, family-centered environment while following the family time plan established by the specialist and the court. As you answer these questions, think about them from your role, not from the specialist's perspective.

Activity Instructions:

1. Label four corners of the room with the numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4.
2. Read each question aloud one at a time and assign one possible answer to each corner.
3. Give participants a couple of minutes to move to the corner that best represents their answer or perspective.
4. Discuss briefly as a group before moving to the next question. There are no wrong answers; the goal is discussion and shared learning.

Facilitation Question #1:

- Why is the parents' home preferred over the DCFS office for a family time visit?

Facilitation Answers:

1. It provides the most family-like experience for the child
2. It increases the family's power in the relationship
3. It allows the Department to observe the home environment and parent-child interactions in a natural setting
4. It reduces the institutional feeling that can increase anxiety and resistance for both parents and children

As the person supervising or transporting for family time, what could you do to help make the visit feel as normal and comfortable as possible for the child? (arrive on time, explain what to expect, maintain professionalism, reduce distractions)

Facilitation Question #2:

- If a sibling is placed in a different county, how might you assist in ensuring they have meaningful contact at least weekly?

Facilitation Answers:

1. Through phone calls, emails
2. Video platforms like Skype or FaceTime, in addition to face-to-face visits
3. Coordinating with the resident county Specialist to schedule and document sibling contact
4. Including sibling contact as a documented component of the family time plan

Facilitation Question 3:

- What do you think a supervisor would need to see before recommending a move from supervised to unsupervised family time?

Facilitation Answers:

1. Demonstrated behavioral change from the caregiver, not just service attendance
2. Consistent, positive parent-child interactions observed over time
3. Resolution or significant reduction of the safety threat that required supervision
4. Collateral support from service providers confirming progress

Facilitation Question 4:

- What would you look for or observe during family time that might support a recommendation to move to unsupervised visits?

Facilitation Answers:

1. How the caregiver greets and engages the child
2. Whether the caregiver can manage the child's behavior calmly and effectively
3. How the child responds to the caregiver
4. Whether the caregiver is present and engaged or distracted and disengaged. Any concerning interactions

Facilitator Note:

After all questions have been asked, bring the group back together and ask:

- What did you hear from your peers that surprised you or that you want to remember? Use responses to reinforce that family time is not just a requirement for documentation; it is a critical intervention that directly impacts permanency outcomes.

Say:

Family time is one of the most important services DCFS provides. Children don't remember policy numbers; they remember experiences. Your professionalism, preparation, and calm presence can help make an already stressful situation a little less stressful for everyone involved.

DCFS POLICY: DRUG SCREENINGS

9 CAR § 40-413.
Client drug and alcohol
screening.



DCFS POLICY: DRUG SCREENINGS

Time: 10 Minutes

Purpose: To explain when drug and alcohol screenings are used, what results do and do not mean, and how confidentiality applies

Paraphrase

As a Social Services Assistant, you may be assigned to conduct drug screens with parents, caregivers, or youth. This responsibility requires professionalism, respect, confidentiality, and careful adherence to policy. Your role is to administer the screen and document the results, not to accuse, interpret, or diagnose substance use. The drug screening can be administered by any DCFS employee assigned. DCFS may request random drug or alcohol screenings of a youth, parent, or caretaker for reasonable cause. The division will also conduct drug screens for clients as outlined in court orders, when applicable.

- Reasonable cause to suspect may include a history of drug and/or alcohol abuse and/or observable client behavior indicating he or she may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- The division staff will conduct only oral fluid and urine specimen drug screenings.
- Appropriate locations for drug and/or alcohol screenings for clients thirteen and older may include (but are not limited to) the county office, client home, and courthouse, as appropriate.

It is also important to recognize that drug screens administered by the Division of Children and Family Services staff are only presumptive screening tools. It does not definitively confirm drug use. Only a laboratory-confirmed test can do that.

Facilitation Question:

- How can you conduct a drug screen in a way that preserves the person's dignity while still following policy?

Facilitation Answer:

- **Client refusal of screens.**
 - If not previously court-ordered, caregivers may decline participating in their own drug and/or alcohol screens. If an individual refuses a drug screening:
 - The screen will be documented in CHRIS as a refusal.
 - The refusal will be disclosed to the court.

Results of the Drug Screen

Regardless of the drug screen results, division staff will verbally share the results with the individual. The results of the screen must be documented with the client via the **CFS-150: Drug and Alcohol Screen Results form**.

- If the results are positive, the division must assess how the drug and/or alcohol usage is impacting the caregiver's ability to effectively parent and ensure child safety prior to making decisions about the placement of the child, parent-child visits, and/or other case plan requirements.

A positive drug or alcohol screen in and of itself will not result in the postponement and/or withholding of visits between a parent and child in Department of Human Services custody unless:

- The parent is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at the time of the scheduled visit and has observable behavior indicating impairment of parenting capacity.
- A court order specifies that a parent's positive screen will result in the withholding of parent-child visits.

Confidentiality of drug and alcohol screen results

All data, information, and results related to client drug and/or alcohol screens are confidential. Disclosure of information will only be to those individuals whose official business duties necessitate disclosure or as required by law. Breaches of confidentiality will constitute grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Facilitator note:

- Remind participants that drug and alcohol screening alone are neither treatment interventions nor child safety interventions.

- The use of drug and alcohol screens and the corresponding results are only one (1) component in the assessment of child safety and risk, as well as the strengths and protective capacities of families.

Say:

Now that we've reviewed the policies and procedures that guide your work, let's turn our attention to confidentiality and ethics.

We'll begin with a brief confidentiality reflection activity to consider how our everyday decisions help protect the privacy and trust of the children and families we serve.

Afterward, we'll expand the conversation to ethics and discuss the professional principles that guide our decisions and interactions in child welfare practice.

Source:

9 CAR § 40-413. Client Drug and Alcohol Screening.



Ethical Practice and Confidentiality

ETHICAL PRACTICE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

REFLECTION

Lets take an opportunity to identify the emotional and professional impact that confidentiality violations have on the helping relationship.

Confidentiality

CONFIDENTIALITY REFLECTION

Time: 15 minutes

Purpose: To recognize how confidentiality violations can damage trust, relationships, and professional practice

Activity Instructions:

1. Ask the group: "Has anyone here ever had to share sensitive information and asked for it to be kept confidential?"
2. Ask participants to take a few minutes to reflect on a time when someone violated their confidence.

Facilitator Note: As you ask this, remind participants not to share specific details of their situation.

3. Ask the group, "How did you feel when that happened?" and "What would that person have needed to do to rebuild your trust? Record feeling words (e.g., betrayed, angry, hurt) on the whiteboard.
4. Discuss how these feelings relate to the families DCFS serves. Relate the activity to the Family-Centered Practice values:
 - Respect
 - Empowerment

- Trust.

Facilitator Question:

- Knowing how it felt to have your trust broken, how will that impact the way you explain confidentiality to a family during your very first meeting?

Facilitator Answer:

- Answers may vary.
- Accept responses and facilitate discussion.
- Reinforce key learning points as appropriate.

Say:

Trust is the most fragile part of our work, yet it is the foundation of the helping relationship. As you just felt, a violation of confidentiality creates a barrier that is often impossible to overcome. Many of our families have no initial reason to trust a Social Services Assistant and will "test" you to see if you are trustworthy. We must remember that the feelings of betrayal we just discussed are exactly what our families feel when we fail to protect their privacy or make promises we cannot legally keep.

Key Points:

- Building trusting relationships is essential to effective Social Service Assistants' practice.
- Trustworthiness is a core, implied value of Family-Centered Services.
- Wrongful disclosure is not just a breach of trust; it is a Class A misdemeanor and grounds for termination.
- The assistant must always be honest about the limits to confidentiality (e.g., mandated reporting) so trust is not built on a false promise.

Facilitator Question:

- What are some everyday ways confidentiality could accidentally be violated?



ETHICS: CONFIDENTIALITY and TRUST

- Confidentiality requirements
- Clarify limits
- Trust = Core Ethical Obligation

ETHICS: CONFIDENTIALITY & TRUST

Time: 8 Minutes

Purpose: To define confidentiality requirements, clarify limits, and reinforce trust as a core ethical obligation

Paraphrase:

Confidentiality & Trust

- To effectively carry out the job of a Social Services Assistant, one must be able to establish a relationship with the family. Trust is the most crucial part of relationship building; Trustworthiness is also implied within the values of Family-Centered practice. Remember, many families have no initial reason to trust you and may "test" you to see if you are trustworthy. This is why strictly following the confidentiality policy is vital.

Confidentiality

- DCFS is committed to best practices regarding client confidentiality. Information is considered confidential if it is not intended to be disclosed to people other than those to whom disclosure is allowed under the statute. It is a violation of DCFS policy to release confidential or sensitive material to unauthorized persons or entities. Confidentiality applies to verbal, written, and/or electronic transmittal of information, including information in CHRIS. All DCFS staff must maintain the confidentiality of the children and families we serve.
- Social Services Assistants should remain aware that there are also limits to confidentiality.

We will discuss these in the next activity, along with ways to maintain confidentiality.

DCFS Social Media Policy Reminder

- Confidentiality also includes the DHS social media Policy 1010— Employees must never share, post, or expose confidential information about DHS clients, patients, partners, or other employees on any publicly accessible website or social media account.
 - Remind the Social Services Assistants that they should discuss with the families during the first meeting that if they see each other in public (like a grocery store), the assistant will not acknowledge them unless spoken to first, to protect the family's privacy.

Facilitator Note: It may be important to note "any publicly accessible website" in addition to social media.

Key Points:

- Trustworthiness is a prerequisite of family-centered values.
- Establishing a relationship requires active trust-building.
- Adherence to Social Media Policy 1010 is mandatory for all division staff.

Source: 9 CAR § 40-208. Confidentiality

CONFIDENTIALITY & TRUST

Lets take an opportunity to identify ways to maintain confidentiality and distinguish them from situations requiring disclosure.

Activity

ACTIVITY: CONFIDENTIALITY & TRUST

Time: 15 Minutes

Purpose: To help participants identify ways to maintain confidentiality and distinguish them from situations requiring disclosure.

Participant Manual: Confidentiality & Trust

Say:

It is very important that we build trusting relationships with our families while maintaining confidentiality. The purpose of this activity is to help us become more familiar with ways to maintain confidentiality and its limits.

Activity Instructions:

1. Ask participants to get into small groups of about three (depending on group size).
2. Have each group select one person to serve as the scribe. Then ask each group to select another member to serve as the group's speaker.
3. Ask each group to take about 5 minutes to think of three limits to confidentiality and three ways to maintain confidentiality. Participants can record their answers on pg # of their participant manuals.
4. After groups are finished brainstorming, take a few minutes and ask each group to share their answers with the larger class.

5. Lastly, provide participants with the limits of the policy and ways to maintain confidentiality. Ask participants to record their answers on pg # in their participant manuals.

Paraphrase:

Limits of Confidentiality Policy

There are sometimes limits to the confidentiality policy that may require you to disclose certain information to relevant parties:

1. **New Reports of Maltreatment:** If an assistant sees evidence of new abuse or neglect, they are a mandated reporter and must report it to the Child Abuse Hotline.
2. **Threats of Harm:** Confidentiality is limited if a family member expresses intent to harm themselves or someone else.
3. **Legal and Supervisory Requests:** Information must be shared when requested by a legal or supervisory authority, such as a judge, a Social Services Supervisor, or a prosecuting attorney.

Ways to maintain confidentiality

Now, let's discuss a few ways to maintain confidentiality:

1. **Secure Professional Habits:** This includes locking up physical files, logging off the Division Information Management System (CHRIS) when finished, and being careful with emails and faxes.
2. **Restricted Discussion Areas:** Avoid discussing family cases in public or semi-public areas such as hallways, lunchrooms, or elevators.
3. **Social Media and Public Boundaries:** Staff must **never** post confidential family information on social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.). Additionally, Social Service Assistants should discuss with families during the first meeting that, if they see each other in public (e.g., a grocery store), the assistant will not acknowledge them unless spoken to first to protect the family's privacy. Don't take it personally if a family doesn't acknowledge you either. They may be protecting their own privacy.
4. **Transportation:** Never discuss confidential case information while transporting children or families unless it is necessary for the purpose of the transport and appropriate for those present.

Say:

Confidentiality isn't just about following policy; it is about preserving trust. Every time you protect a family's private information, you are reinforcing that they can trust you to treat them with dignity and respect.

Now that we've discussed ethics and confidentiality, let's turn our attention to understanding the families we serve. One of the most important frameworks in child welfare is Family Systems Theory, which helps us see how each family member influences

and is influenced by the others. This perspective reminds us to look beyond individual behaviors and consider the family as a whole when supporting safety, permanency, and well-being.



Introduction to Family Systems Theory

INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY

FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY: TYPES OF FAMILIES

- **Nuclear** - 2 caregivers, children
- **Single** - 1 caregiver, child(ren)
- **Blended** - 1 biological parent, 1 stepparent, child(ren)
- **Extended** - Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, perceived kinship, etc.
- **Adoptive** - Legal caregiver(s), child(ren)
- **Resource** - Substitute caregivers(s), child(ren)
- **Older Sibling** - Siblings
- **Communal** - 2 or more adults not married/related

FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY: TYPES OF FAMILIES

Time: 7 Minutes

Purpose: To introduce the idea of family as an interconnected system and broaden participants' understanding of family structure

Paraphrase:

How one defines the term “family” may differ, but all recognize its importance—it is the institution responsible for imparting values and norms. In today’s society, the definition of family is varied. It is important to understand this when working with families and their children. Every family looks different. As a Social Services Assistant, you will work with many family structures. Your job is not to decide what a family should look like, but to work respectfully with the family in front of you while helping keep the children safe.

Many have their own ideas of what a family consists of. These values and beliefs can impact your work while in the field. Often, people assume that everyone shares their interpretation of words, ideas, and concepts. It is important to remember that “Family” is one of those concepts that means very different things to different people. There are several types of families, including

Types of Families:

- Nuclear- 2 caregivers, children
- Single- 1 caregiver, child(ren),

- Blended- 1 biological parent, 1 stepparent, child(ren)
- Extended- Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, perceived kind, etc.
- Adoptive- Legal caregiver(s), child(ren)
- Resource- Substitute caregivers(s), child(ren)
- Older Sibling- Siblings
- Communal- 2 or more adults not married/related

Sources:

<https://depts.washington.edu/eedu/FEB/cbook/FEB-Topic02-FamilySystems.pdf>

<https://www.thebowencenter.org/introduction-eight-concepts>

DEFINING FAMILY



Activity

ACTIVITY: DEFINING FAMILY

Time: 20 minutes

Purpose: To help participants examine their values about family and consider how those values may affect practice

Activity Instructions

The purpose of the following exercise is to provide participants with an opportunity to explore the different ways that family can be defined and configured. It requires participants to examine their values around family issues and to consider how those values may impact their work with families. Ideally, it will help participants realize that “good” is a relative, value-laden term.

Different family structures still have strengths and support the function of nurturing children, even if the family looks different from theirs.

1. Divide the larger group into three small groups, depending on the size of the group.
2. Have each group identify one person who will be the recorder and take notes for the group. Then ask each group to select another member to serve as the group's speaker.
3. Ask each small group to define “family.” Ask the groups to reach a mutual definition of “family” so that all members’ responses can be recorded.
4. In addition to defining families, ask group members to create a list of characteristics that make a “good” family. Ask the group to note areas where group members differ significantly or disagree.

5. Be sure that participants are clear on the instructions. Give each group about 10 minutes to complete the assignment. Circulating among the small groups, asking questions as needed.
6. At the end of about 10 minutes, stop the exercise. Ask each group to share its definition(s) of family. Focus only on the definitions for now. Draw attention to the differences and the similarities in the definitions. Ask group members for their impressions and feelings about the definitions. As each group finishes its presentation, post their answers on the wall.

Highlight the different forms of families that the groups may have identified – nuclear family, single-parent family, blended family, etc. Ask participants to define other types of families not listed on the slide. Some examples might include the following: church families, gang families, work families, etc.

Facilitation Discussion

Ask each group to present what its members felt made a “good” family, focusing on areas where there were differences within the group. Again, solicit input about participants’ responses to the group lists. As each group finishes, post the list on the wall.

Facilitation Question:

- How do you think your families define their own family dynamics?
- What assumptions do we sometimes make about families that could get in the way of building trust?

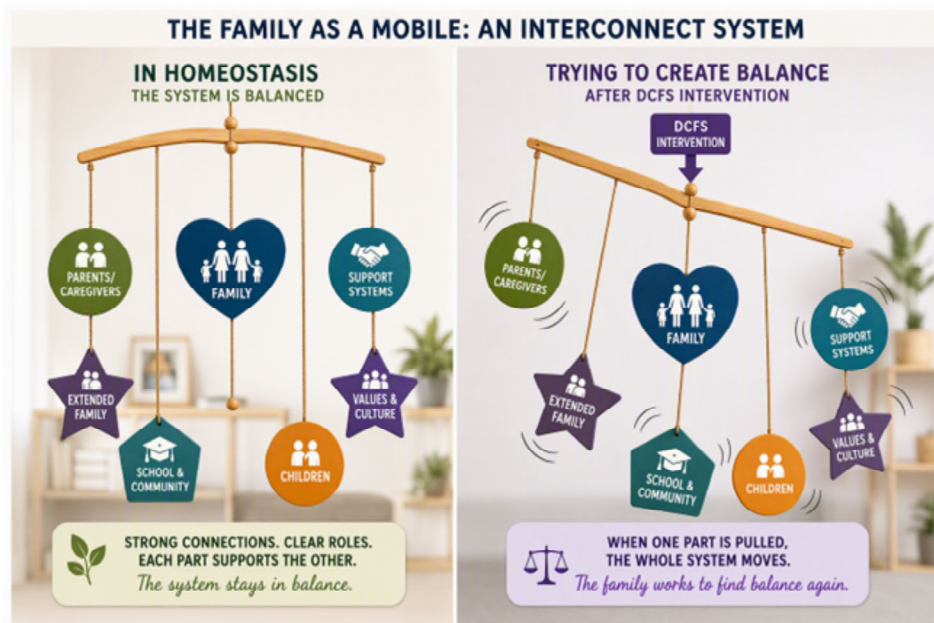
Facilitation Answers:

- Answers may vary.

Key points

- Asking these questions early on will help families identify who can help support them, and possibly aid in the future, when DCFS is not involved.
- Building networks is a crucial strategy and part of the work as outlined in Safety Organized Practice.
- Our values about what makes a “good” family will impact our work with families who differ from our ideal.
- Strengthening families (as stated in the Mission Statement) does not necessarily mean reconfiguring families to suit an assistant’s idea of “good.”
- Rather than “good” it may be more helpful to look at whether the family is functional, especially around the roles of nurturing and socializing children.

THE FAMILY AND THE FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY



THE FAMILY AND THE FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY

Time: 8 Minutes

Purpose: To explain key concepts of family systems theory and how child welfare involvement affects family balance

Paraphrase:

Family Systems Theory:

The core principles of family systems theory include:

- The family is made up of interconnected members who impact each other in predictable ways.
- Families have entrenched patterns of behavior that allow them to operate and survive in the world. These may be influenced by prior generations, current experiences, stressors, and broader cultural expectations.
- It is important to consider the family as a whole when working with the individual child. It is a complex system with subsystems. Each family system has invisible boundaries that determine who is in or out.

Every family develops patterns, roles, and ways of responding to stress. Understanding those patterns helps us work with families more effectively, rather than just reacting to individual behaviors. Under the Family Systems Theory, think of a family as a mobile. If you pull one piece, the whole system moves to find balance, or homeostasis. When DCFS enters the home, we upset

that balance, and you should expect resistance as the system tries to stabilize.

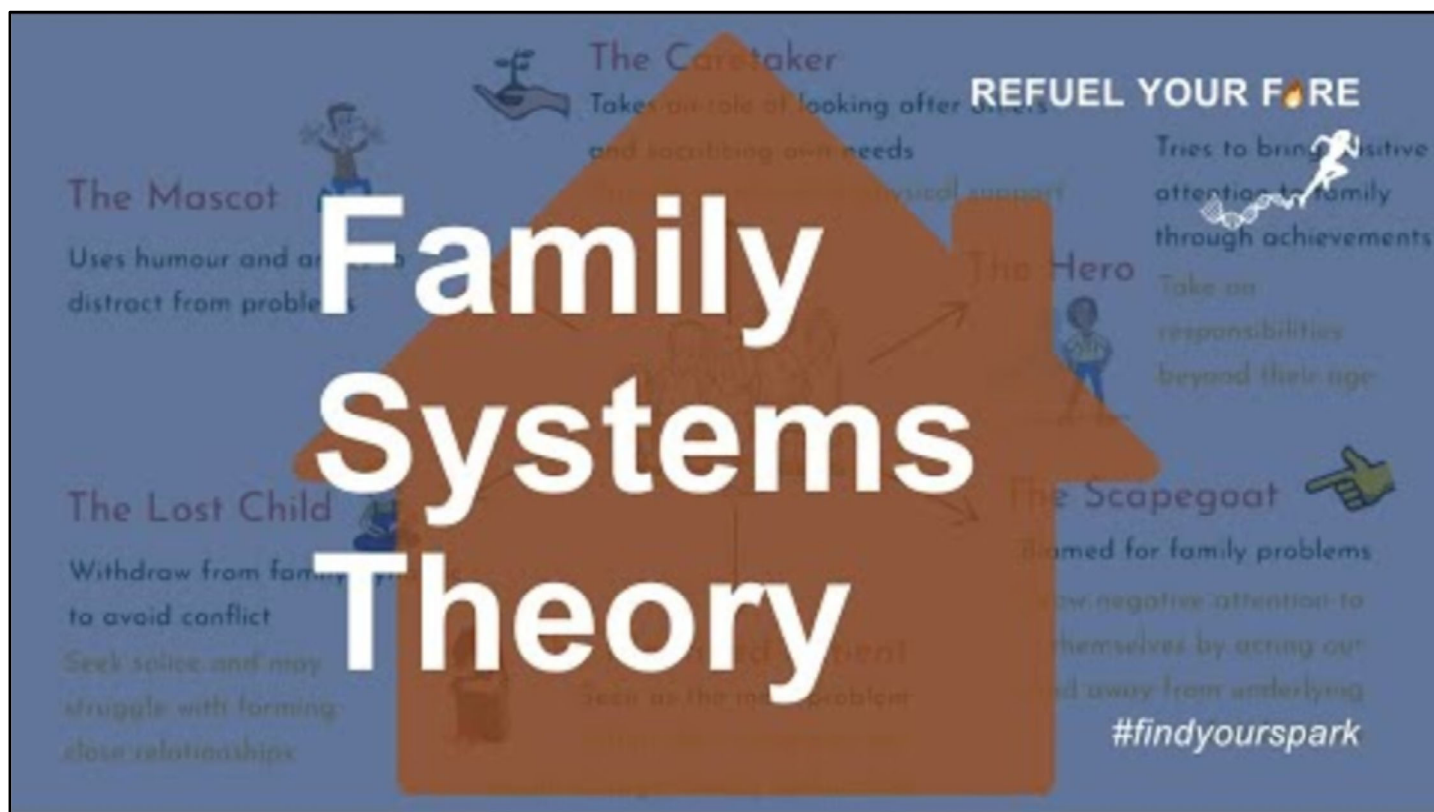
Key Points:

- We must recognize and respect a variety of family structures
- The "mobile" concept: what affects one member affects the entire unit.
Interconnectedness means change in one member impacts the entire group.
- Families are the primary unit of society, bound by ties of loyalty.
- Homeostasis explains why families resist change and division.

Sources:

<https://depts.washington.edu/eedu/FEB/cbook/FEB-Topic02-FamilySystems.pdf>

<https://www.thebowencenter.org/introduction-eight-concepts>



VIDEO: DISCOVER YOUR ROLE WITH FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY

Time: 7 minutes

Purpose: To reinforce family systems concepts through a brief visual example and transition into practice application

Video: Discover Your Role With Family Systems Theory (4:49):

<https://youtu.be/42qucj4SGdU?si=V0o3eHcQfPxz-cWa>

Video Instructions:

1. Before playing the video, remind participants to watch how family systems theory helps explain why one change in a family can affect everyone in the system.
2. After the video, reinforce that families operate as interconnected units, and when DCFS becomes involved, the family may respond by trying to restore balance. Connect this back to practice by emphasizing that resistance is often not personal; it is a response to disruption in the family system.
3. Use the video as a bridge into a discussion about homeostasis, roles, boundaries, and how assistants can engage families with more understanding and less judgment.

Facilitation Question:

- Based on the video, how can a change in one family member affect the whole family system?

Facilitation Answers:

- Families are interconnected, so a change in one person can affect everyone else.
- One stressor, behavior change, or crisis can shift roles, routines, and reactions across the whole family.
- This is why assistants should look at the family as a system, not just one individual.

Facilitation Question:

- How does family systems theory help us understand resistance when DCFS becomes involved?

Facilitation Answers:

- Families often try to maintain balance, even when the pattern is unhealthy.
- When DCFS enters the system, that balance is disrupted, so resistance can be a normal response to change.
- This helps assistants respond with understanding, patience, and engagement rather than judgment.

THE PRINCIPLES OF FAMILY CENTERED SERVICES

- ✓ Families need to feel confident in the part that they play in the investigation process. Remind participants that the families are the experts
- ✓ Using a rigorous and balanced assessment is the foundation of a good working relationship with families
- ✓ Empowerment is the primary goal for strengthening the family

THE PRINCIPLES OF FAMILY CENTERED SERVICES

Time: 10 Minutes

Purpose: To introduce family-centered practice as a strengths-based, partnership-focused approach

Paraphrase:

The DCFS Mission Statement, Family systems theory, and Practice Model all reflect a certain value base that should drive the actions of all assistants. This value base is referred to as a Family-Centered Approach to Practice. The concept of Family-Centered Practice can be confusing for a new Social Services Assistant. Many people that Social Services Assistants encounter may confuse a family-centered orientation with services and a family-centered value base with family preservation programs. Family-centered practice is a philosophy of how to treat people rather than a set of intervention steps. It means shifting to a partnership model.

The Principles and Values Associated with Family-Centered Services include the following:

- Families need to feel confident in the part that they play in planning for their children and working toward safety and permanency. Social Services Assistants help support this by treating families with respect, encouraging participation, and communicating professionally. Remind participants that the families are the experts. They know their families better than anyone else! Therefore, they must play a vital role in creating an appropriate plan.
- Building trusting relationships, making objective observations, and communicating important information to the assigned specialist are foundational to effective family-centered practice.
 - **For example:** if a family lacks food, finances, or healthcare, a Social Services Assistant may refer them to the Access Arkansas Resources located on the DHS website at <https://access.arkansas.gov/Learn/Home>. Access Arkansas is a one-

stop shop for families to answer a few questions to determine initial eligibility and apply for SNAP, TEA, or healthcare.

- While eligibility decisions are made by the appropriate program, Social Services Assistant can help families learn about available resources and connect them with the right services.
- Empowerment is the primary goal for strengthening the family by “joining with” rather than “doing to.” Allowing families to contribute will give them a sense of control rather than feeling controlled.

Core principles of family-centered practice

- Respect
- Empowerment
- Strengths
- Trust

Say:

Family-centered practice doesn't mean agreeing with everything a family does. It means treating people with dignity, involving them whenever possible, and maintaining a respectful partnership while carrying out our DCFS responsibilities.

Key Points:

- By working in the home, we utilize natural support from friends and church groups to build up the family's confidence.
- Providing services in natural surroundings increases family power.
- Shift from "doing to" to "doing with" families in partnership.
- Natural supports are critical for building long-term family safety.
- A strengths-based focus provides a foundation for growth.



Effective Communication

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION CONDITIONS

- Emotional State of the Sender
- Quality of Information
- Time and Pacing
- Psychological and Physical State
- Credibility Attitude

COMMUNICATION CONDITIONS

Time: 7 Minutes

Purpose: To explain the communication process, highlight barriers, and introduce ways to communicate across differences

Paraphrase:

Think about the last message you completely misunderstood. The sender thought they were being funny. You thought they were mad. Communication isn't just about what we say. It is about what the other person hears.

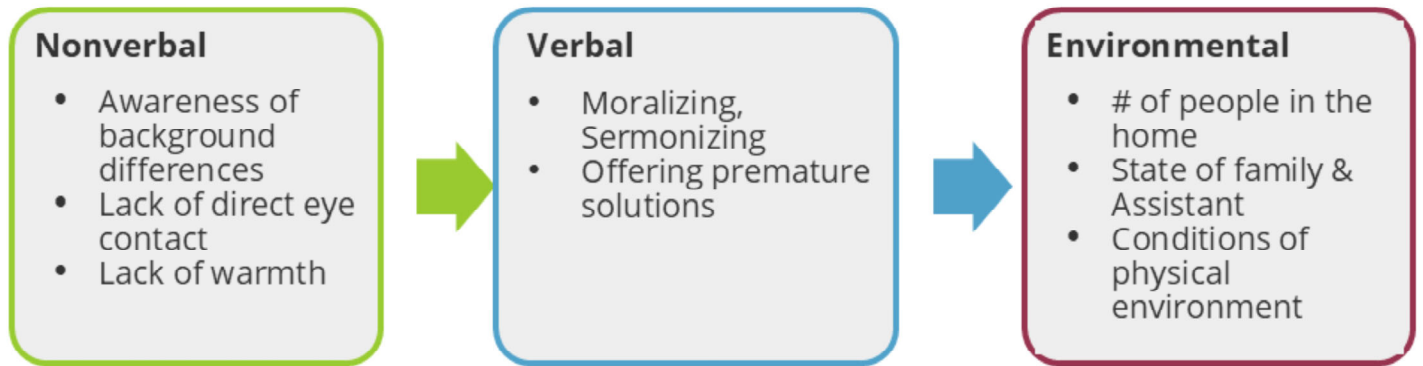
- **Emotional State of the Sender-** A sender's mood, such as anxiety, stress, or excitement, heavily colors the communication.
 - You are frustrated because the previous family time ran an hour late. How would this affect you during the next transport?
- **Quality of Information-** The effectiveness of communication depends on the sender providing complete, concise, and accurate information
 - The specialist forgot to tell you that Dad recently relapsed. How might this affect you during the next home visit?
- **Time and Pacing-** The timing of a message signals its priority.
 - You tell Mom difficult news as she is buckling her screaming toddler into the car. What might happen?
- **Psychological and Physical State-** Personal biases, fatigue, and physical pain can act as filters that distort messages, reducing the ability to select the best words or medium for the message.
 - You have been working all day and haven't had time to eat.
- **Credibility Attitude:** The sender's perceived confidence, reputation, and friendliness

affect how their message is received.

- The caregiver has had four different specialists in six months. How might this affect the case and the caregiver?

People pay attention to your body language, facial expressions, and tone, not just your words.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION



BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Time: 5 minutes

Purpose: To briefly introduce the three types of communication barriers before moving into practice

Say:

Communication can break down in many ways, and not all of them come from the words we say. Before we practice, let us quickly identify the three types of barriers you will encounter in the field.

Paraphrase:

Nonverbal Barriers

How you physically communicate before you speak. Things like lack of eye contact, a stiff or closed-off posture, a flat or cold tone of voice, fidgeting, looking at your phone while a caregiver is talking, or looking at your watch can all signal disinterest or judgment to a family before a single word is exchanged.

Verbal Barriers

These include moralizing or telling a family what they should do; jumping to solutions before fully listening; arguing or lecturing; judging or blaming; using sarcasm; stacking multiple questions at once; using DCFS acronyms or policy language that families do not understand, or asking leading questions that steer the family toward a predetermined answer rather than inviting honest dialogue.

Environmental Barriers

The number of people in the home, the physical condition of the space, noise, children needing attention during a conversation, and the emotional state of both the family and the Specialist can all interfere with communication, regardless of how skilled the conversation is.

Say:

Effective communication is not just about what you say. It is about how you say it, what the other person is experiencing, and what is happening in the environment around both of you.

Have you ever walked into a room and immediately known someone was mad before they said a word?

Families are doing the exact same thing with us. Before you ever introduce yourself, they are deciding whether you are rushed, judgmental, annoyed, or someone they can trust.

COMMUNICATION IN ACTION



Activity

ACTIVITY: COMMUNICATION IN ACTION

Time: 10 minutes

Purpose: To give participants the opportunity to practice communication skills and identify barriers in real time

Activity Instructions:

1. Ask participants to find a partner. One person will play the Specialist, and one will play the caregiver.
2. Have them work through the first scenario.
3. Take a few minutes to discuss the interaction and provide feedback to one another.
4. Then have them switch roles and complete the second scenario.

Scenario 1:

A caregiver says, "I already told the last specialist everything, and nothing changed. I don't see why I should keep talking to you people."

As the Specialist, respond in a way that acknowledges the caregiver's frustration, avoids the verbal barriers we just discussed, and keeps the conversation moving forward.

Scenario 2:

You arrive at a home visit with a family. There are three other adults in the room; the television is loud; and the caregiver seems distracted and irritated. You need to discuss a concern about the

child's school attendance.

As the Specialist, how do you begin this conversation in a way that addresses the environmental barriers and creates space for honest dialogue?

Facilitation Note:

Walk the room during the activity. Listen for verbal barriers, premature advice, lecturing, stacked questions, or defensive responses. Use what you hear to anchor the debrief.

After both rounds, bring the group back together and discuss:

Facilitation Question:

- Which type of barrier, nonverbal, verbal, or environmental, showed up most in your practice exchange?

Facilitation Answers:

- Will vary; validate all responses and connect back to the barrier types introduced on the previous slide

Facilitation Question:

- How might a Specialist accidentally create a communication barrier without meaning to?

Facilitation Answers:

- Speaking too quickly or using policy jargon
- Appearing distracted; rushed; or uncomfortable
- Giving advice before fully listening
- Using a tone, posture, or facial expression that feels judgmental or cold to the family
- Stacking too many questions at once

Facilitation Question:

- What can you do in the moment if you notice communication is starting to break down?

Facilitation Answers:

- Slow down and rephrase
- Shift from talking to listening
- Check for understanding
- Reduce distractions in the environment if possible
- Ask one open-ended clarifying question instead of assuming

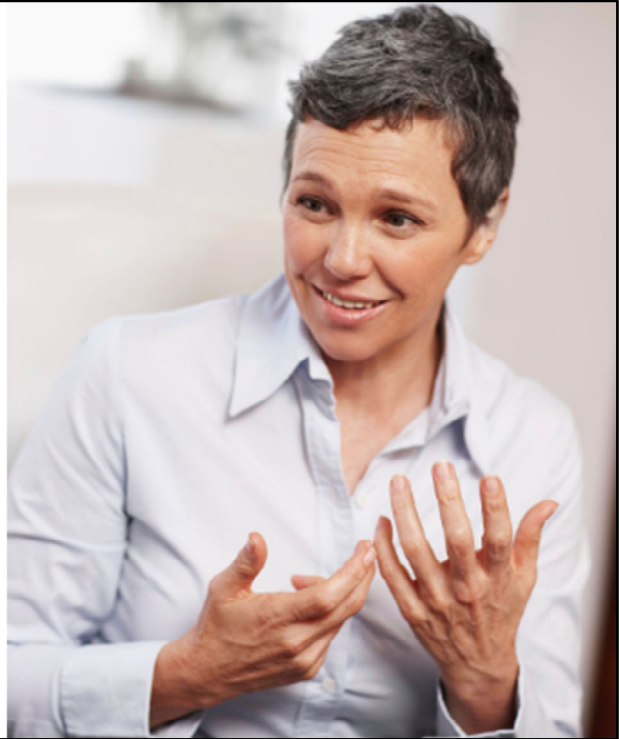
Key Points:

- Communication barriers can be nonverbal; verbal; or environmental, all three require awareness

- The most effective thing a Specialist can do when communication breaks down is slow down and listen
- Practicing these skills now makes them more natural in the field
- How you communicate is just as important as what you communicate

ACTIVE LISTENING

- Hearing what is said
- Picking up the feeling or attitude underlying the words
- Communicating understanding of that message back to the speaker.



ACTIVE LISTENING

Time: 15 minutes

Purpose: To define active listening and explain how it supports empathy, respect, and understanding

Paraphrase:

Active listening is more than hearing someone's words. It means listening to understand both what the person is saying and what they may be feeling. When people feel heard and respected, they are more likely to engage, share information, and work collaboratively. To communicate well, you must practice active listening—this involves listening for feelings and seeing things from the family's perspective. It shows that the listener is interested in what is being said and is trying to understand the message.

Active listening includes:

- Hearing what is said
- Picking up the feeling or attitude underlying the words
- Communicating understanding of that message back to the speaker

The most important aspect of active listening is that it demonstrates the message that works. While it is most difficult to convince someone that you respect him/her by telling him/her so, you are much more likely to get this message across by really behaving that way, by actually having and demonstrating respect for this person. Listening does this most effectively.

Techniques for Active Listening

1. **Listen for the Total Meaning** - Listen for both what the person is saying and how they

feel about it.

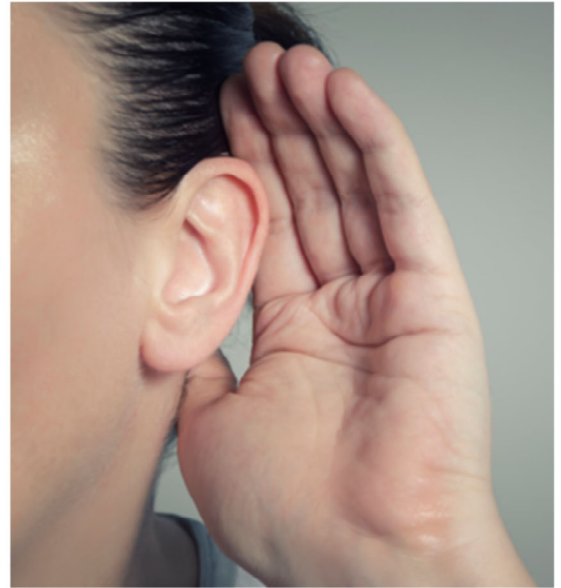
2. **Respond to Feelings** - Sometimes acknowledging a person's emotions is more important than immediately solving the problem.
2. **Note All Cues** - Pay attention to tone of voice, body language, facial expressions, and behavior, not just spoken words.

After listening, reflect back on what you heard to make sure you understood correctly. This helps the speaker know they were heard and gives them an opportunity to clarify if needed.

Key Points:

- Participants will practice active listening to grasp the "total meaning" of a family's message.
- Active listening requires grasping the speaker's feelings and perspective.

ACTIVE LISTENING



Activity:

ACTIVITY: ACTIVE LISTENING

Time: 5 minutes

Purpose: To collectively identify active listening practices through peer reflection

Activity Instructions:

1. Ask participants to use one or two sticky notes from the supply at their table.
2. Have them write their response to the question below, one idea per sticky note.
3. Once everyone has written their responses, ask participants to come up and place their sticky notes on the wall.
4. Then review them together as a group, grouping similar ideas and highlighting any that stand out.

Facilitation Question:

- What are some ways we can practice active listening?

Facilitation Answers:

- Maintain eye contact and open body language
- Listen without interrupting
- Focus on both the words and the feelings underneath them
- Reflect back on what you heard to check understanding

- Ask clarifying questions when needed
- Pay attention to nonverbal cues such as tone, facial expression, and posture
- Avoid jumping to advice; solutions; or judgment too quickly
- Show the speaker that you are present and engaged

Say:

As a Social Services Assistant, active listening doesn't mean promising solutions or agreeing with everything someone says. It means making sure children, parents, and caregivers feel heard and respected while you stay within your role.



RECOGNIZING RESISTANCE AND HANDLING CONFLICT

DEALING WITH RESISTANCE



Assistants can expect resistance for the following reasons:

- The Assistant is an outsider and an authority figure.
- Very personal questions are being asked.
- Changes are expected to be made.

DEALING WITH RESISTANCE

Time: 10 minutes

Purpose: To explain why resistance occurs and how Assistants can respond with family-centered engagement strategies

Paraphrase:

When DCFS becomes involved with a family, it often changes their normal routine and creates uncertainty. Because of that, resistance is a normal response, not necessarily a sign that someone is unwilling to work with you. Assistants can expect resistance for the following reasons:

- The assistant is an outsider and an authority figure.
- Very personal questions are being asked.
- Changes are expected to be made.

Resistance can be manifested in three ways:

- Verbal
- Behavioral
- Emotional

Ways to Decrease Resistance

To decrease resistance, use family-centered behaviors, be respectful, build trust through confidentiality, and honestly acknowledge their strengths. Always avoid professional jargon—families don't know what "CACD" or "DCFS" means; use simple, clear language.

Other ways to decrease resistance may include:

- Use calm, respectful, and honest communication.
- Emphasizing the idea that resistance is a signal to us to change our strategies.
- Engaging the families will help to reduce resistance and help them see DCFS is not there to judge but to join the family in helping to make progress.
- Ask families for their perspective instead of assuming you already know the answer. This will also help them feel engaged in the process, which can decrease their resistance.

Empathy

Remember, at times, the message's verbal content can be less important than the feelings it conveys. the message. Active listening is necessary to respond with empathy to the speaker, particularly when the basis of the interaction is a helping relationship. Empathy involves understanding another person's feelings without actually taking on those feelings.

Say:

Show families you understand how they feel without assuming you know exactly what they are experiencing. With practice, the Social Services Assistant will become more skilled at identifying the underlying feelings of messages.

Key Points:

- Participants will identify barriers such as the assistant's status as an "outsider" or authority figure.
 - Resistance stems from a fear of change and the assistant's authority role.
 - Honestly acknowledging family strengths builds confidence and engagement.
 - Solution-focused questions can redirect families toward future successes.



RECOGNIZING RESISTANCE

Activity

ACTIVITY: RECOGNIZING RESISTANCE

Time: 18 minutes

Purpose: To explain why resistance occurs and how Assistants can respond with family-centered engagement strategies

Paraphrase:

Think back to our mobile example. When we enter a family's life, we upset their balance, and resistance is their natural way of trying to stabilize. In your groups, you have four minutes to identify how that resistance looks. Is it what they say? What do they do? Or what do they feel? Remember: if you see resistance in your job, it isn't a "fail"; it is a sign that you need to change your strategy. This activity allows us to brainstorm the different ways resistance can be manifested, so they will know how to recognize it.

1. Divide the class into small groups of 3–4. Briefly refer back to the "mobile" metaphor: resistance occurs because DCFS is an outsider upsetting the family's balance.
2. Ask each group to take about 5 minutes to list two examples of resistance for each of the three categories:
 - **Verbal** (e.g., threatening)
 - **Behavioral** (e.g., missing appointments)
 - **Emotional** (e.g., excessive crying).
3. Once participants are finished, call on each group to share just one example not

already mentioned, creating a "Master List" on the whiteboard.

Facilitator Questions:

- "Which of these three—verbal, behavioral, or emotional—do you think will be the hardest for you to handle personally?"

Key Points:

- Resistance is manifested in three ways: Verbal, Behavioral, and Emotional.
- Resistance is a natural reaction to an outsider and authority figure asking personal questions.
- Recognizing resistance early allows an Assistant to pivot toward family-centered behaviors, such as showing empathy or building trust.

HANDLING CONFLICT

Styles Of Conflict Management

- Competing
- Collaboration
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating



STYLES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Time: 20 minutes

Purpose: To introduce conflict resolution concepts and teach participants how to approach conflict more intentionally

Paraphrase:

Handling conflict can be very difficult. It may be harder for some than for others. Next, we will discuss conflict and the various ways people may handle it, then look at some techniques you may find useful for dealing with it. Many of us, because of our personalities and nature, may put off or avoid initiating problem resolution. Much of the work we do with families focuses on improving their problem-solving skills and helping them learn effective ways to resolve problems.

- It is important to note that research and practical experience have shown that conflict tends to worsen if left unresolved
- When conflict arises in the field, our first goal is to remain calm—your demeanor and voice are the first clues to your professionalism
- It is also important to note that most of us respond to conflict based on the situation. That is, we may respond to a conflict very differently with our children than with our Social Services Supervisor at work (or perhaps not.)

- The single best method of conflict resolution is prevention

Two reasons that people may be unsuccessful at confronting problems and attempting resolution are:

- We wait too long before we deal with the issue.
- We approach the conflict emotionally and do not plan our course of action.

STYLES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

There are five styles of conflict management, which include:

- **COMPETING** is assertive and uncooperative – an individual pursues his own concerns at another's expense. This is power-oriented – using one's rank, abilities, or whatever it takes to win.
- **COLLABORATION** is both assertive and cooperative. It involves the attempt to work with others to find a solution that fully satisfies everyone's concerns. Collaborating is a "win-win" for everyone involved. It requires digging deeply into the issue, fully exploring all concerns, and developing creative solutions.
- **COMPROMISING** is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The goal is to find a solution that will partially satisfy both parties. It gives more than competing – but less than accommodating. It addresses issues more directly than avoiding, but not as in-depth as collaboration.
- **AVOIDING** is unassertive and uncooperative – the individual does not pursue his own concerns or those of another person. The conflict is not addressed.
- **ACCOMMODATING** is unassertive and cooperative – the opposite of competing. There is a tendency to neglect one's concerns in favor of another's; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode.

Key Points:

- A person's demeanor (posture and voice) can escalate or de-escalate conflict.
- Conflict resolution allows for appropriate confrontation of families when necessary.



Handling Conflict

Attitude
Ownership
Intent
Avoid Power Struggles
Timing
XYZ Method

HANDLING CONFLICT

Time: 10 minutes

Purpose: To introduce a structured framework for addressing conflict clearly and professionally

Participant Manual: XYZ Method

Paraphrase:

Ways to handle conflict:

Below are some tips for Social Services Assistants on how to approach families when confronting problems.

- **ATTITUDE:** Your attitude sets the tone. Stay calm, respectful, and solution-focused.
- **OWNERSHIP:** Take responsibility for your own words, tone, and actions. You cannot control someone else's behavior, but you can control your response.
- **INTENT:** Openness with others must come from a genuine desire to improve the relationship rather than to win arguments. When you care about another

person, openness increases the likelihood that you will be taken seriously, even when you disagree.

- **AVOID POWER STRUGGLES:** Focus on understanding and resolving concerns rather than forcing someone to agree with you.

The purpose should be to determine what can be learned from the discussion to help build a more satisfying relationship. Behavioral changes should be determined independently by each person rather than being forced by another.

- **TIMING:** Discussion should occur as close to the problem as possible so the other person will know exactly what is being discussed. Bringing up past situations can be seen as holding onto “old hurts” and using them simply to strike back rather than to resolve problems.

Common sense also tells us to address related issues rather than multiple unrelated ones. This basic concept may be forgotten if we allow problems to “pile up” without addressing them.

XYZ Method

There is a basic formula for conflict resolution. There are only minor adjustments in the formula depending on whether you are initiating the conflict resolution or responding to it. At times, you may be in a position to help other people deal with a conflict. There is also a set of steps you can use to help others to “work it out.” The techniques for basic mediation follow the steps for initiating and responding to conflict resolution. Ask participants to turn in their participant manuals to review the XYZ method.

We use the XYZ Method to keep the complaint’s objective: “When you do X, Y happens, and I feel Z”. This structured approach helps move from a problem toward a list of solutions and an agreement for change.

RESPONDING TO CONFLICT "XYZ" METHOD

Activity

ACTIVITY: RESPONDING TO CONFLICT XYZ METHOD

Time: 20 minutes

Purpose: To introduce a structured framework for addressing conflict clearly and professionally

Activity Instructions:

1. Assemble participants into groups of 3-4 or use the seating at each table as a group.
2. Ask the groups to spend about 5 minutes discussing recent conflict situations they have experienced—either among co-assistants or between an assistant and a family.
3. Instruct each group to pick one of those situations and take a few minutes to practice drafting a response using the XYZ technique: "When you do X, Y happens, and I feel Z".
4. Take a few minutes to initiate a group discussion. Rather than describing every conflict, the trainer will ask for volunteers to share the "XYZ" statement they created and how it felt to use that structure.

Facilitation Question:

- How do you think your families would respond to this approach?
- Did anyone have an 'ah-ha' moment while trying to fit a complex conflict into

this simple formula?

Facilitation Answers:

- Answers may vary

Facilitator Note:

If time is short, prioritize discussing how families might respond to this approach rather than having groups report their specific conflict details.

Say:

Before we wrap up today, let us take a moment to reflect on what we covered. Today's foundation included:

- ***Your role, job expectations, and how the DCFS mission connects to your everyday work***
- ***The values that guide practice, including At One Table and family-centered approaches***
- ***Family systems theory and how it helps us understand resistance and engagement***
- ***Communication barriers, active listening, and conflict resolution using the XYZ method***

This information is the foundation of everything you will do in the field.



Target Outcomes Evaluation

TARGET OUTCOMES EVALUATION

Time: 5 minutes

Purpose: To close out Day 1 of Social Services Assistants training; summarize key learning; and prepare participants for what comes next

Say:

Before you leave, please scan the QR code on the slide to complete your Day 1 evaluation in Qualtrics. Your feedback helps us continue to improve this training.

Facilitator Note: Direct participants to the QR code on the slide. Participants will need to use their phones to scan the code to complete the Day 1 target outcomes evaluation in Qualtrics.