Solution-Based Family Meetings:
Stakeholder Presentation

NH Division for Children, Youth and Families
Department of Health and Human Services
What is Solution-Based Casework?

Solution-Based Casework is a family-centered practice model of child welfare assessment, case planning, and ongoing casework. The model targets specific everyday events in the life of a family that have caused the family difficulty. Solution-Based Casework combines the best of problem focused relapse prevention approaches, with solution-focused models. By integrating the two approaches, partnerships between family, caseworker, and service providers can be developed that account for basic needs and restore the family’s pride in their own competence.

Three Main Tenets are at the Heart of SBC

1. We Prioritize the Family Partnership
2. We Focus on Pragmatic Solutions to Everyday Life Problems
3. We Help Families Document and Celebrate Success

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Solution-Based Casework:

- Prioritizes Partnerships with Families
- Anchors problem identification in the everyday situations of family life (family life cycle)
- Organizes case plans around Family Level Plans and Individual Level Plans (skill based vs. service based)
- Documents and credentials family members in skill acquisition at both levels (FLO and ILO) of casework intervention
Family members are helped to develop plans they can all work as a family, to make family activities or tasks go better, such as plans to:

- Improve child supervision,
- Keep the house clean,
- Become financially stable, or to
- Manage a youth’s aggressive behaviors
Example FLO for JJS

Will use their “___________” plan to set family rules and consequences as described in the tasks

- May see “Action Plan” below used to identify tasks
Example FLO for CPS

Will use their “_________” Plan to keep children safe from physical harm or its effects as described in the tasks.

- May see “Action Plan” below used to identify tasks
Individual Level Objectives (ILO)

Individual members who have personal issues related to risk area are assisted in developing their own Plan of Action, e.g.,

- Overcome their substance abuse
- Manage their temper, or
- Stay motivated during tough times
Example ILO for JJS

Will use the “__________” plan to stay in school and out of trouble as described in the tasks.

• May see “Action Plan” below used to identify tasks
Example ILO for CPS

Will use the “___________” plan to prevent harmful expressions of anger as described in the tasks.

- May see “Action Plan” below used to identify tasks

![Action Plan](image)
Using ILOs and FLOs

- In Child Protection ILOs typically involve the parent(s)
- In Juvenile Justice ILOs typically involve the youth
- It is important to state that FLOs are used in Juvenile Justice cases as a way to improve the family system in order to have the youth remain at home
- There are situations when an older child in a CPS case could have an ILO to manage their dangerous behaviors
Main Milestones to Solution-Based Casework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Case (general)</th>
<th>Planning (specific)</th>
<th>Casework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>I. Sorting Things Out</td>
<td>II. Getting Organized</td>
<td>III. Getting Down to Specifics</td>
<td>IV. Documenting &amp; Celebrating</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What happened in the situation of</td>
<td>Around the direction of how to</td>
<td>Behaviorally specific tasks to</td>
<td>Behaviorally specific tasks documented and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>concern</td>
<td>proceed</td>
<td>accomplish the goals</td>
<td>successes celebrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 4</td>
<td>Consensus Summary</td>
<td>Case Plan Outcomes</td>
<td>Specific Action Plans</td>
<td>Documented Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milestones</td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Level Objectives (FLOs) &amp;</td>
<td>Detailed plans of action at the</td>
<td>Documenting specific tasks of the action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of SBC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Level Objectives (ILOs)</td>
<td>family &amp; caretaker level</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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The Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) believes that all families have strengths. Families are best served when they are actively engaged; their voices are heard, valued and considered with regard to all decisions. In order to achieve this, DCYF agrees that engaging and including all family members in the case planning process results in better outcomes.

The goal of the solution-based family meeting is to bring important family supports, in addition to the birth parents and age-appropriate children, around the table with DCYF to discuss safety, permanency and well-being matters with the current in-home case.

**Solution-Based Family Meetings** are a formal In-Home Family Engagement Strategy. Similar to Family Assessment and Inclusive Reunification (FAIR) reviews, which are used by Child Protection and Juvenile Justice with out-of-home cases, Solution-Based Family Meetings (SBFM) will be used to engage the family and work towards solutions.
What are Solution-Based Family Meetings?

They:

• Are Solution-Based in nature;
• Draw on past successes of the family in problem solving; and
• Work in partnership with the family to achieve safety, permanency and well-being.
In a Solution-Based Family Meeting it is Important that:

- Partnerships between the family, family supports, community members and DCYF are at the core of the Solution-Based Family Meeting process;
- The family is highly involved in the decision-making process; and
- Families determine who attends the meetings, based on who they view as their natural supports.
The Objectives of the Solution-Based Family Meetings are to:

- Promote family engagement for all in-home cases;
- Improve critical decision-making by including people important to the family’s life, key community supports and agencies with whom the family is involved; and
- Assess service needs of children and families, focusing on safety, permanency and well-being.
Key Principles

• All families have strengths;
• Families are the experts on themselves;
• Families deserve to be treated with dignity and respect;
• Families can make well-informed decisions about keeping children safe when supported;
• When families are involved in decision-making, outcomes can improve; and
• A team is often more capable of creative and high quality decision-making than an individual.
Meeting Format

• Introduction
• Ground Rules
• Purpose/Focus of Meeting
• Eco-mapping & Genogramming
• Identifying the Danger/Harm & everyday life situations the family is struggling with
• Identification of Strengths, Skills & Protective Factors

• Development of Family Level Objectives (FLO)
• Development of Individual Level Objectives (ILO)
• Development of Action Steps
• Scaling of Confidence Level with Plan
• Recap/Close
Format Description

• The format on the previous slide is a visual intended to guide the flow of the meeting.

• This format may be individualized, depending on the timing of the meeting, case circumstances and needs of the family.
Role of CPSW or JPPO

• Pre-meeting work in identifying familial supports and preparing meeting participants.
• Facilitate the meeting;
• Provide family with support;
• Facilitate discussion to focus on primary safety factors, case planning & the family’s well-being & service needs;
• Ensure that child/youth and community safety is paramount.
• Monitor family’s dynamics to ensure that individuals are not treated unfairly or overpowered.
Role of the Parents

• Work with all family members to determine who will be invited;

• Share what they feel the purpose of the meeting is; and

• Have a say in action steps created and share responsibility to achieve identified case goals.
Role of the Child

- Encouraged to attend & participate in some portion of the meeting;
- Given age appropriate roles & tasks to ensure they are provided the opportunity to engage in the process.
Role of Family Supports

- Relatives, friends and other community supports identified by the family must be encouraged to attend;
- Families are encouraged to invite people they see as a formal or an informal support in their lives.
Role of Other Team Members

- CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)/GALs (Guardian ad Litems), attorneys, case managers, therapists, providers and other community members involved with the case may be invited. Their role is to:
  - Focus on solutions;
  - Support the family, and
  - Assist in developing strategies to help ensure the safety of the family, children, & community.
Steps for Facilitating the Meeting

1. Welcome (all should have agenda and Genogram)
2. Givens and Confidentiality
3. Ground Rules
4. Family Story and Outcomes
5. Summary of Outcomes
6. Strengths
7. Brainstorming Ideas
8. Developing the Specific Action Plans
9. Confidence in the Plan/ Getting Volunteers to Assist
10. Celebration Tasks
Role of CPSW/JPPO After Meeting

1. Check with the family to see how it went for them
2. Follow up with key participants on their tasks
3. Schedule next visit with note about what to check on
4. Enter the meeting and outcome in case notes
5. If supervisor was not there, inform them of meeting outcome, particularly progress
## Timeframes for Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPS</th>
<th>JJS</th>
<th>Meeting Focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within 30 days of case transfer or reunification</td>
<td>30 days after case criteria is met</td>
<td>Eco-mapping, Safety planning, Finding connections, Service initiation</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 month</td>
<td>4 month</td>
<td>Continued safety planning, Finding and maintaining connections, Service review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 month</td>
<td>10 month</td>
<td>Continued safety planning, Continuing connections work, Planning for transition to case closure, and Utilization of community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every 6 months</td>
<td>Every 6 months</td>
<td>Continued safety planning, Continuing connections work, Planning for transition to case closure, and Utilization of community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Meeting</td>
<td>Final Meeting</td>
<td>Review support network, Recommendations for community resources</td>
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What does Case Transfer mean for CPS?

- When an Assessment becomes a case, either through a non-court agreement or through court, and is subsequently assigned to a Family Service CPSW.
What are Case Criteria for JJS?

- Any in-home case that has a paid service involved with the family from the onset of the case.
- Any in-home case that has a paid service start during the case. The SBFM timeframe “clock” will start at the same time the paid service starts.
- Any in-home case that may not have a paid service involved, but the J PPO and their supervisor have determined it to be in the best interest of the case to utilize Solution-Based Family Meetings. Once this decision is made, the subsequent timeframes will apply.
Frequently Asked Questions

- **When will we start seeing SBFMs in cases?**
  - It was rolled out statewide July 1, 2013.

- **What about placement cases?**
  - The Division currently utilizes FAIR (Family Assessment and Inclusive Reunification) meetings for placement cases.
For more information contact:

For case specific information, please contact your local district office.

For programmatic information, please contact:

Mike Donati, Administrator
603-271-8159
Thank you