This policy establishes the requirements for engaging families involved with the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) through an open Assessment.

**Required Practices**

*Any deviations to the following information must be documented with Supervisory Approval.*

I. Child Protective Service Workers (CPSWs) shall continually assess for risk and danger relevant to all children in the home throughout the course of their involvement with a family.

II. CPSWs shall make concerted efforts to engage all children who are part of the identified household (including non-identified siblings who reside in the home or who visit the home frequently) around their safety and well-being needs. These efforts shall:

A. Continue for the life of the Assessment unless it has been determined it would not be prudent to do so after consultation with a Supervisor; and

B. Be made a minimum of once per month, in children's homes/residences, and shall consist of face-to-face contact (as outlined in procedures) unless there are mitigating circumstances that prevent face-to-face contact from occurring or which necessitate meeting outside the home.

1. Mitigating circumstances may include the mental health needs or unavailability of a child.

2. Additional contact shall be made as necessary to support children and address concerns of safety and risk.

III. Monthly visits with children shall:

A. Include a thorough assessment of safety and well-being; and

B. Include one-on-one time apart from the parent(s)/guardian(s) whenever possible.
IV. CPSWs shall make concerted efforts to identify, locate, and engage all parents whose children are involved with the Division around meeting the safety and well-being needs of their children. This includes custodial parents, non-custodial parents, stepparents who reside in the home or who provide care for children, missing parents, and legal guardians.

V. Efforts to identify, locate, and engage a missing/non-custodial parent shall:
   A. Be made regardless of the disposition of the Assessment or placement status of the child;
   B. Include a variety of approaches when necessary to ensure engagement; and
   C. Continue for the life of the Assessment unless it has been determined, through consultation with a Supervisor, appropriate to cease efforts.

VI. Contact with parents/guardians shall include:
   A. Assessment of safety and risk within the home and of all family members;
   B. Assessment of family needs and consideration of community resources to meet those needs; and
   C. Creation/review of Safety and/or Action Plans (as appropriate) to address ongoing needs or barriers to success, that include family supports and available resources/services as appropriate.

VII. All efforts with parents/guardians and children shall be thoroughly documented, in a timely manner, in the DCYF electronic information system.

VIII. When a case is opened (regardless of court involvement) and transferred to a Family Services CPSW, the Assessment CPSW shall ensure the Family Services CPSW has all available information pertaining to the household and any missing/non-custodial parents. This shall include efforts to engage household members, locate any missing parents, and engage any non-custodial parents.
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