

Our Shared Foundations of Practice
Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Mental Health, Probation Department

Our Departments have developed a shared and evolving model of practice to better integrate services and supports for children, youth, families and communities. Our commitment and approach are cemented in the crucial elements of community partnership, teamwork, family voice and choice, cultural competence, respect, accountability, continuous quality improvement and implementation of best practice.

Key Outcomes: *Safety, Permanence, Well-Being, Self Sufficiency, Organizational Excellence*

Shared Values and Guiding Principles

- **Child Protection & Safety:** Children and youth have the right to live in a safe environment, free from abuse, and neglect.
- **Permanent, Lifelong, Loving, Families:** Children and youth need and are entitled to a safe, nurturing and permanent family environment ideally in their own home.
- **Strengthening Child & Family Well-Being and Self Sufficiency:** Identifying the unique strengths of children, youth and families allows services and supports to be individualized and tailored.
- **Child Focused Family Centered Practice:** Focusing on the child's individualized, underlying needs and strengths, and the strengths and capacities of families provide the best guide to effective intervention and lasting change.
- **Community-Based Partnerships:** Services and interventions for children, youth and families are delivered collaboratively by agencies, providers, community and informal and naturally occurring supports in order to meet each family's needs.
- **Cultural Competency:** We maintain an attitude of cultural humility; honoring and respecting the beliefs and values of all families and recognizing that the cultural, ethnic and spiritual roots of the child, youth and family are a valuable part of their identity.
- **Best Practice and Continuous Learning:** We commit to developing an environment of continuous listening and learning and to ensuring that policy and practice decisions are based on reliable data as well as evidence, research and feedback.

The Practice Wheel: Our Shared Core Practice Model in Action

Our values and guiding principles are applied through a set of practice activities depicted by the Practice Wheel:

- **Engaging** is the practice of creating trustful working relationships a child and their family by increasing their participation, validating their unique cultural perspective, and hearing their voice and choice.
- **Teaming** is the practice of building and strengthening the child and family's support system, whose members meet, communicate, plan together, and coordinate their efforts in a unified fashion to address critical issues/needs.
- **Assessing** is the practice of collaborating with a family's team to obtain information about the salient events impacting children and families and the underlying causes bringing about their situation.
- **Planning and Intervening** is the practice and process of tailoring and implementing plans to build on strengths and protective capacities in order to meet individual needs for each child and family.
- **Tracking, Adapting and Transitioning** is the practice of evaluating the effectiveness of the plan, assessing circumstances and resources, reworking the plan, celebrating successes, adapting to challenges and organizing after-care supports as needed for the child and family.

