

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY (CFSA)

Family Partnerships

2011 Quick Reference Guide

The inclusion of birth parents and other family members throughout the life of a case is a CFSA core practice value that supports the Agency's [Practice Model](#). CFSA emphasizes this practice value as a standard throughout its policies, procedures, and business practices. All CFSA and contracted agency staff are guided in their daily work by these policies, procedures, and business practices in order to ensure early, consistent, and persistent engagement, communication, and involvement of birth parents and families with social workers.

This quick reference guide highlights the procedures that CFSA and its contracted agency partners follow in their work with families, and reinforces CFSA's commitment to building strong partnerships with families.

Core Practice Protocols

CFSA and private agency social workers, supervisors, and family support workers operate by the following set of procedures ("practice protocols") that direct their daily activities and behaviors for achieving practice goals and positive permanency outcomes:

Practice Protocols	Activities and Behaviors
<i>Teaming</i>	Core component: maximizes involvement of and collaboration with age-appropriate children, youth, and families.
<i>Engagement</i>	Inclusive, trusting, and empowering partnerships to ensure that children, youth, and families feel understood.
<i>Assessment</i>	Continuous look at safety, risk, strengths, and needs to ensure children and youth are reaching permanence.
<i>Case planning</i>	Collaborative development of a roadmap to permanence that includes periodic adjustments to reflect or stimulate progress.
<i>Placement (out-of-home)</i>	Safety first, with minimal trauma, focusing on stability and attention to the needs of the children and youth.
<i>Quality visitation</i>	Keeps children and youth safe in home (or in care) and maintains important relationships in their lives.
<i>Permanence (out-of-home)</i>	Children and youth know who will be there for them for the rest of their lives. Safe case closure.
<i>Safe case closure (in-home)</i>	A planned and natural component of the casework process.
<i>Court (out-of-home)</i>	Opportunity to present team and clinical recommendations and address legal issues.
<i>Supervision</i>	Supervisors and managers ensure that the needs of children and families are appropriately addressed with the support and development of frontline staff.
<i>Training</i>	A strategy to achieve practice change and an activity that supports a transfer of knowledge and skills from supervisor to worker.

(For full descriptions, plans, and applications of practice values and protocols, see the [In-Home Practice Model](#) and [Out-of-Home Practice Model](#) at <http://cfsa.dc.gov/>.)

Resources

CFSA has developed key policies, practice guides, and administrative issuances to provide specific guidance on the importance of partnerships with children and their families, and how to ensure that "families always have a voice in the decisions that affect them" (from the [Out-of-Home Practice Model](#)). Social workers should become familiar with and regularly refer to these and other resources. All documents referenced are located on CFSA's website (<http://cfsa.dc.gov/>).