

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Strengthening Families Practice Model

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Policy

The Department of Children and Families shall operate within the framework of the Strengthening Families Practice Model, which is a description of the agency's shared values and the strategies applied to the work with families. The Practice Model is built on a foundation of engagement and assessment.

Strategies

DCF staff shall employ seven strategies as part of the Strengthening Families Practice Model:

- family engagement;
 - purposeful visitation;
 - family-centered assessment;
 - supervision and management;
 - initial and ongoing assessments of safety and risk;
 - effective case planning; and
 - individualized services
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Seven Cross-Cutting Themes

The following cross-cutting themes shall guide all DCF operational units in advancing the mission and strategies of the agency:

1. implementing strength-based family policy, practice and programs;
 2. applying the neuroscience of early childhood and adolescent development;
 3. expanding trauma-informed practice and culture;
 4. addressing racial inequities in all areas of our practice;
 5. building new community and agency partnerships;
 6. improving leadership, management, supervision and accountability; and
 7. becoming a learning organization
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Desired Outcomes

Implementation of the Practice Model shall ensure consistent, effective engagement of families across offices and shall improve the quality of work and supervision.

Desired outcomes include:

- prevention - fewer families shall need DCF services;
 - children shall remain safely at home whenever possible and appropriate;
 - children who must come into DCF care shall achieve more timely permanency;
 - improved child well-being - all children in DCF care and custody shall be healthy, safe and learning; successful in and out of school; and be helped to find and advance their special talents and to give something back to their communities; and
 - youth who transition from DCF care shall be better prepared for adulthood.
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