

Best and Promising Practices in Case Management

First 5 Kern Position Statements

Case Management:

Case management will focus on family strengths to enable the family to become stable and improve their family functioning. Case management is a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, care coordination, evaluation, and advocacy for options and services to meet an individual's and family's comprehensive health and social needs through communication and available resources to promote outcomes (CMSA, 2009).

The strength-based approach is the belief that children and families have unique talents, skills, and life events, in addition to specific unmet needs (Olson, Whitebeck, & Robinson, 1991 as cited in Epstein, 1999). A strength-based assessment approach provides several advantages for practitioners and those individuals they serve. First, focusing on strengths allows practitioners to involve children and their families in service planning in a positive way by underscoring what is going well in a family's life. Second, strength-based assessment provides a method for documenting a child's strengths and competencies and offers a way for establishing positive expectations for the family. Third, through a strength-based approach family members are empowered to take responsibility for the decisions that will affect their family's life (Johnson & Friedman, 1991; Saleebey, 1992).

Case management will consist of a defined action plan or care plan that incorporates SMART (Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Tied to Timeline) goals. *SMART Goals* is a practice by which goals are:

Specific – simple and clearly defined

Measurable – measurable and specific outcome

Attainable –achievable

Realistic – realistic and relevant based on available resources

Tied to Timeline – have a time frame by which goal will be achieved

The action plan or care plan must be a collaborative effort. The case manager and family must work together to develop the action plan or care plan. Specific action items and follow up activities should be included in the action plan or care plan to ensure that the family is moving towards stability. Along with the strength based approach and setting SMART goals, a Family Resource Center engaged in case management activities will seek to incorporate recommendations provided in the Kern County Network for Children (KCNC) *Recipes for Success: A Guide for Improving the Condition of Children and Families in your Community* into practice.

Case Management Process:

The case management process has several key processes. These processes allow case managers

- I. Introduction
- II. Intake and Assessment
- III. Strength Identification
- IV. Goal Development
- V. Barrier Identification
- VI. Activity Plan Development
- VII. Implementation
- VIII. Linkage and Consultation

- IX. Assistance in Accessing Services
- X. Crisis management / Safety Planning
- XI. Monitoring and Evaluation (periodic review)
- XII. Re-evaluation and Closure
- XIII. Follow-up
- XIV. Possibility of re-opening

Staffing for Case Management:

Staff members engaged in case management activities should have the following qualifications and qualities:

- I. High School graduate or GED
- II. Have a current driver's license
- III. Successfully pass a drug screen/test
- IV. Successfully pass live scan and background check
- V. Knowledge of community and experience in social services and/or child development
- VI. Bilingual (preferred)
- VII. Ability to work independently or as a team.

These qualifications are important, as they provide the staffing to effectively support the needs of the families. Staff will have the education and skills to create the family plan and implement needed assessments. The staff will be able to provide comprehensive case management through transportation, knowledge of their community, and effectively communicating to the clients and service providers; all while being a positive role model to the families.

Resources:

Case Management Society of America, 2010. *Standards of Practice for Case Management*. Little Rock, Arkansas.

Epstein, M. 1999. *The Development and Validation of a Scale to Assess the Emotional and Behavioral Strengths of Children and Adolescents*. Remedial and Special Education, 5, 258-262.

Kern County Network for Children. *Recipes for Community Success: A Guide for Improving the Condition of Children and Families in Your Community*.