

Working Agreement

Engagement

Talk about what has been working for you as you meet with families. What are your needs? If you are ready to improve your skills in using the working agreement, this guide can support you as you assess and plan.

Explore:

When you think about the working agreement, what are your strengths?

What improvements would you like to make in your use of the working agreement?

Assessment

Scaling:

On a scale of 1 (need to learn) to 10 (can mentor), where would you place yourself?
(Record on the Functional Assessment.)



Scaling Continuum:

<u>Learning</u> Learning the Skills	<u>Working</u> Using the Skills with Families	<u>Mentoring</u> Using the Skills to Mentor
1. Make personal expressions when talking to a group or beginning a conversation.	1. Utilize personal expressions in introducing self or having discussion with other(s).	1. Use the working agreement often in mentoring.
2. Develop shared concerns in group work or training with colleagues.	2. Develop shared concerns in meeting with families at child and family team and pre-conference work with team members.	2. Use the working agreement to create solutions.
3. Express to supervisor, unit team members, and trainers what you want from them and what you can offer to make that happen.	3. Listen as family expresses what they want and have to offer and express your wants and offers.	3. Point out places and situations where the working agreement could be used.

<u>Learning</u> Learning the Skills	<u>Working</u> Using the Skills with Families	<u>Mentoring</u> Using the Skills to Mentor
4. Affirm the work you have completed and acknowledge their help and your commitment to what you are doing.	4. Acknowledge help from family and family team and the family and team's commitment to the work you are doing. Express your commitment to support what the family and the team are doing.	4. Affirm the work each time with caseworker.
	5. Accept mentoring from families.	5. Express to caseworker your offers and what you want from them and ask caseworker what they want and what they can offer.
		6. Accept mentoring from caseworker.

Planning

1. What will it look like when you use the working agreement as you would wish?
2. What steps can you take that will lead to the desired result?

Practice Opportunities

Mentor with Caseworker	Caseworker with Family	Family with Family
Create working agreement around how mentoring will be conducted.	Model the creation of a working agreement.	Coach family through creating a working agreement between parents and child(ren) on an issue the family is working on.
When making a visit to a family, create a working agreement about how the visit will be conducted so that the worker can be supported yet gain the needed experience.	Create a working agreement with a family around an issue that you are working on together.	Coach family through creating a working agreement with an extended family member or neighbor when there is a disagreement or they have a task to complete together.

Knowledge Base

Concept:

Working agreement

Basic Elements:

Personal expression

Understanding the problem

Wants and offers

Gaining agreement

Assessing what could go wrong

Affirm the work

Definitions:

Personal expression

Express how you feel about being with the person(s). A personal disclosure will convey your genuine interest in resolving or addressing the issue at hand. It is effective modeling to take the risk to express emotions.

Understanding the problem

Express what you view as the immediate issues to be addressed. You will talk about the reasons you are working together. Your understanding of the problem can help you develop empathy if you and the supervisor, caseworker, or family members view the problem in a similar way. If there is not full agreement about the problem, it opens the discussion so that reflections or other interpersonal helping skills can be used to gain clarity and mutual understanding.

Wants and offers

This is the time when you will clarify what you want from supervisor, caseworker, or family members and what you are willing to provide the supervisor, caseworker, or family members. You will also clarify what they want from you and are willing to offer you. Sometimes you may want to start by asking, "What is it that your want from me?" Or you may want to be more direct and tell them what you can provide and what you want from them.

Gaining agreement

Clarify what steps and tasks will be done and by whom. If there are things that you want from them that they cannot provide, this should be clear. If there are things that they would like from you and you cannot provide, that should be clarified.

Assessing what could go wrong

Determine if there is anything that you foresee that could go wrong. Ask the supervisor, caseworker, or family member if they can think of anything that might go wrong. If they have any concerns, you can go back to steps 3 and 4 and determine what you could provide to help with this concern. As your work

progresses, update what you want and can provide one another to accommodate the new issues.

Affirm the work

Let the supervisor, caseworker, or family members know what they have done well. Restate your agreement and be specific about who will do what and specify time frames.