Family Engagement: Resistance is Natural

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AGENDA

I. Introductions

II. Social Work Relationship

III. Dynamics of Resistance

IV. SHER Model

V. Application
The Protective Authority Model

- Worker sets expectations, monitors, sanctions
- Allows immediate intervention if danger of serious harm
THE ENGAGEMENT MODEL

Assumptions About Families...

- Are partners in protection
- Retain right to make decisions
- Have strengths and capabilities
Activities...

- Families identify problems and strengths
- Family and worker jointly involved
- Worker guides and supports
- Families empowered to find solutions
Integrating Protective Authority and Engagement

- Develop a collaborative relationship
- Remove barriers
- Explain authority
- Use authority if parents cannot protect
- Continue to engage
THE PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP

◆ A vehicle for change
◆ Power differential
◆ Includes defined purpose, roles, ending point and rules
◆ Exists on a continuum
◆ Requires engagement strategies
Engagement strategies are designed to:

✓ Establish worker’s intent to be forthright
✓ Expect family participation
✓ Provide a “road map”
✓ Deal openly with resistance
Developing Initial Rapport

- Use supportive and respectful manner
- Listen
- Communicate sincerity non-verbally

- Express genuine interest
- Communicate non-judgmental attitude
- Use self-disclosure appropriately
Cultural Characteristics to Consider

- Awareness of cultural differences
- Level of trust
- The meaning of eye contact
- Respect
- Decision-making
- Language barriers
- View of outsiders
Client Behaviors that Indicate Resistance

- Client not talking
- Client hostile or angry
- Avoiding worker
- Client denies responsibility
- Client lies
- Client fail to follow through
The Whys...

Fear negative outcome
Threats self-esteem
Threat to clients ability to manage family as they see fit
Previous negative experience
Worker Increases Resistance

- Culturally insensitive
- Not allow enough time
- Too much jargon
- Fail to validate family
- May convey punitive attitude
- Go to problems ignore strengths
- Harsh attitude prevents report building
- More authority than needed
Agency Implied Resistance

- Office hours
- Armed guard at door
- No convenient parking
- Cumbersome bureaucracy
- Poor family contact areas
- No return phone calls
- Long waits see worker, new worker
- Multiple workers
- Lack of interpreters
How Workers Reduce Resistance

- Commit to honesty
- State agency intent
- Give road map
- Discuss openly resistance
- Give up power for influence
- Dress as professionally
- Communicate empathy
- Show clients your written info about them
Reducing resistance (cont’)

- Help client fill out forms
- Be prompt
- Conduct joint case transfers
- Be sensitive to client inconveniences
- Work and contact with children and services
The S.H.E.R. Model

Surface | Honor | Explore | Recheck
Case Application:

Mrs. Smith age 40 has 2 girls age 7 & 10. Abuse of 7 yr. old Ms. Smith doesn’t know how it happened. Thera was a finding of substantial abuse and protective supervision. Ongoing worker has first visit…
My husband ran out 7 yrs ago no man is worth anything
My boss fired me for no reason
I’m broke and the bills are due
The school is constantly yammering at me for money
The kids are awful to me ENOUGH
Now you people are after me
Remember to SHER…

THANKS FOR

COMING

GOOD LUCK!