

## Optimizing Use of Case Consultants

- Explain the role of the Case Consultant to professionals, family members, and children/youth.
- Explain how you are members of the same team and how that will work.
- Discuss communication styles and preferences with the CC at the outset.
- Regular communication between GAL/CFY and CC helps avoid misunderstandings and increases efficiency.
- Request case consultants early in the case.
- When in doubt reach out to Alex to discuss. Better to ask early and have no need than delay engagement.
- Use a case consultant to assist with:
  - Evaluate mental health diagnosis and treatment
  - Evaluate and locate resources/services
  - Review documents/evaluations to get social science perspective
  - Engaging and ongoing contact with children/youth
  - Observation of parent-child interaction
  - Attending staffings/ meetings
  - Evaluating education needs and communicating with schools
  - Investigating potential placements
  - Help to ensure the child/youth understands the legal issues in a developmentally appropriate way.
- Use a Case Consultant, among other reasons, to investigate/inform your position on the following topics:
  - Temporary Custody/Safety Planning/Long-term stability
    - Talk to all possible parties.
    - Build relationships (sooner the better).
    - Explore additional family/friends.
    - Look for consensus between parties.
    - Identify multiple safe resources.
    - Create concrete step safety plans.
    - Where are emergency short-term options?
    - What is the ideal long-term resource?
    - Is there bias for or against resource options?
    - Can some family/community connection be maintained?
    - Review and assess Safety and Risk assessment throughout.
  - Placement: Foster home/Facility (More detail in Placement Advocacy Guide):
    - What are the services provided, what modality?
    - Who provides the services, their qualifications?
    - Are services addressing need?
    - Are there better resources in the community available?
    - What are rules and expectations?
    - Which staff have connections with child?
    - Develop good communication with providers.
    - What level of normalcy does the placement providing?

- What are plans for holidays and special occasions?
  - What is the plan for leaving or independence?
  - What are the support systems for leaving?
  - Help to ensure family is meaningfully involved in visits/meetings/plans.
  - What extracurricular activities are possible nearby?
  - Visiting placement to stay current on youth's needs.
  - Identify resources and support systems for kin placement.
- Family Time:
  - Evaluate safety vs. imperfect family.
  - Evaluate DHS/other party's proposed plan.
  - Evaluate increase in time/frequency and/or unsupervised (Ongoing).
  - Are there helpful family resources that can participate/help?
  - Search for additional family/community resources
- Siblings:
  - Evaluate desires/needs/best interests of the individual siblings.
  - Family/community resources that could help connect siblings?
  - Are visits tailored to interests and in natural settings?
  - Explore use of technology to facilitate.
- Non-custodial Parents:
  - Build relationship.
  - Understand their role, stated and practically.
  - How can they be supportive?
  - What is their side of the family's involvement?
- Relatives, Kin, Diligent Search:
  - Explore all possible family, revisit over time.
  - Evaluate child/youth's opinion on family members.
  - Who are potential resources/supports?
- Disposition, Treatment Planning:
  - Does it meet need/s?
  - Are there unnecessary parts?
  - Anything additional needed?
  - Think proactively to influence/get DHS buy in.
  - Who/what are morale supports?
  - Does it address short- and long-term goals?
  - Help to ensure child/youth understands and participates in planning.
  - Identify long term support and connections.
- Education, Disabilities, & Accommodations:
  - Evaluate needs and services.
  - Gather historical and family information.
  - Are there additional family/community resources that can be a support?
  - Develop relationships with professionals.
  - Coordinate with OCR education specialists.