

Virginia High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) Training Day One

I. Overview

High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) is a team-based, collaborative process for developing and implementing individualized care plans for children with mental health challenges and their families. The goals of HFW are to meet the stated needs (not necessarily services) prioritized by the youth and family, improve their ability and confidence to manage their own services and supports, develop or strengthen their natural support system over time, and integrate the work of all child serving systems and natural supports into one streamlined plan.

The youth and family are supported by a facilitator who ensures that the process is driven by their voice, that it works effectively and that care is coordinated among the providers and systems. The facilitator also works with youth and family members from the beginning so that the coordination and direction of care is transitioned to them as they build their self-efficacy and are able to facilitate their own team process. This process has proven to be very effective in engaging youth and families. High Fidelity Wraparound empowers them to be in control of a process that gets them the services and supports that they need, without the use of excessively restrictive or intrusive services when community-based alternatives and natural supports can result in better and longer lasting outcomes.

The High Fidelity Wraparound process is a process of supporting youth and families by using ten guiding principles through four phases using the four components of the Theory of Change.

10 Principles → **How** we do our work

Phases and Activities → **What** we do

Theory of Change → **Why** we do it

II. The Guiding Principles from the National Wraparound Initiative

Overview of the HFW Process, Principles and Steps: *The HFW process is how we implement the system of care at the child and family level.* It is based on common personal, community, and system values. It is a process that provides integration of services and supports around the child, youth, and family.

The HFW process is a way to improve the lives of youth with complex needs and their families. The process is used by communities to support children with complex needs and their families by developing individualized plans of care. The key characteristics of the process are that the plan addresses family needs, youth strengths, is developed by a family centered team, is individualized based on the strengths and culture of the child and their family, and is needs-driven rather than services-driven.

The U.S. National Wraparound Initiative has standardized **ten guiding principles**:

1. Family Voice and Choice
2. Team Based
3. Natural Supports
4. Collaboration (and Integration)
5. Community Based
6. Culturally Competent
7. Individualized
8. Strengths Based
9. Unconditional Care
10. Outcome-Based and Cost Responsible

Unlike a medical model of diagnosis and treatment, HFW is a family-driven process in which facilitators assist youth and families to achieve their own visions of a good future. To accomplish this, facilitators must actively listen to youth and families to understand their vision of a good future, the things that must change for them to achieve it, and their strengths and culture (voice). The facilitator must then provide youth and families with options so they can choose what works best for their family (choice). The HFW plan is developed by a HFW team, which consists of the family, the facilitator, other system/agency partners, and the four to eight people who know and care about the child and family best (natural supports). The team is selected by the family and typically consists of no more than 50% professionals. The team represents the principle of **Team-Based**. The plan is child-centered and family-focused with maximum family involvement, with variation depending on the needs of each child and family. The process focuses on strengthening the supports for the family, including extended family, friends and other social support through involving them in the planning and implementation process. These social supports represent the principle of **Natural Supports**.

Many families who are served through the HFW process have needs which have traditionally been addressed by more than one service system (e.g. schools, mental health, juvenile justice, child welfare, and others). In a system of care, these service systems agree to the principle of **Collaboration**, or working together and moving to integration where all parties work in a team with the family to design and implement one plan. Services and supports are **Community-Based**. This guiding principle means that HFW supports youth and families to be involved in the schools and activities of their community. When residential treatment or hospitalization is accessed, these service modalities are used as stabilization resources (not as placements that operate outside of the plan). The next guiding principle is **Cultural Competence**. Services and

supports must be tailored to the unique culture of each child and family. Family culture refers to family race and ethnicity as well as family habits, preferences, beliefs, language, rituals, and dress, and is based on a philosophy of “one family at a time.” The culturally competent HFW workforce discovers the unique cultural aspects of the family and ensures that the plan reflects the culture of the youth and family.

The principle of **Individualization** is at the heart of the HFW process. Each child, youth, and family has an individualized plan. The plan is focused on typical needs in life domain areas that all persons (of like age, sex, culture) have. These life domains are: independence, family, living situation, financial, educational, social, spiritual, recreational, behavioral, emotional, health, legal, cultural, safety, among others. The plan is developed by the team and addresses the needs prioritized by the family. The plan is a blend of natural supports and formal services. The plan may include services (such as therapy or day treatment) that other plans have included, but when they do include these more typical services, the team always evaluates and understands why the service is a precise match for the unique needs of the child, youth, and/or family. The plan is **Strengths-Based**, where the plan is based on the strengths, needs, values, norms, preferences, culture, and vision of the child, family, and community. By building on these strengths, the plan supports who the child is and how the child will positively progress in life.

The facilitator and those providing services and supports must make a commitment to the principle of **Unconditional Care** in delivery of services and supports. When things do not go well, the child and family are not “discharged,” but rather, the individualized services and supports are changed. Planning, services, and supports cut across traditional agency boundaries through multi-agency involvement and funding. Governments at regional and local levels work together with providers to improve services, and commit to the final principle of being **Outcome-Based**. HFW is continually evaluated for quality (fidelity) and outcomes and the information is used for continual quality improvement. Outcome measures are identified and individual HFW plans are frequently evaluated. The collaborative funders of services agree to focus funding on efforts like HFW, which have solid evidence for effectiveness.

III. The Four Phases of High Fidelity Wraparound

1. **Engagement & Team Preparation:** The basis for trust and mutual goals between the family and the facilitator is established.
2. **Initial Plan Development:** Trust and respect are built while creating a youth- and family-driven plan of care using a specific planning process that reflects the HFW principles.
3. **Implementation of Plan:** Activities are repeated until the youth and family’s vision, and the team’s mission is achieved.
4. **Transition:** Plans are made for a transition to formal and natural supports in the community.

IV. The Theory of Change

HFW is driven by a **Theory of Change** (TOC) that enhances the beliefs of the youth and family that they can create a better life and an improved future.

The first component of the TOC is that HFW helps the youth and family identify the *needs* that are most important to them (voice) and then focuses efforts in helping them meet these needs (choice). The second component is helping them to develop and strengthen the *natural support* networks that can help them meet these needs and sustain the youth and family in the future. The third component is helping the youth and family to *develop the skills and confidence* to believe they can do this successfully and continue to do it after the HFW ends. Families with complex needs often have multiple and competing plans and service providers and supports. Bringing these together into a *single and simplified plan* will greatly improve their prognosis of success.

Youth and Family Prioritized Needs: The first component of the TOC reframes Maslow's hierarchy of needs by saying "addressing the needs which are most important to the youth and family will improve their engagement and lead to good outcomes." There are many things the facilitator can do to ensure that HFW focuses on the needs that the youth and family prioritize. They may help the family to articulate a vision and from this identify the needs that are most important to achieve their vision. They may help them frame concerns as needs instead of solutions or services. They can have ongoing conversations with the youth and family to ensure the priority needs are being met and to help them identify emerging needs as the process progresses.

Self-efficacy: It is the belief in one's ability to plan and carry out the courses of action that will work. It is the belief you can make a difference and can be successful in what you try to do. Self-efficacy plays the central role in the cognitive regulation of motivation, because people regulate the level and the distribution of effort they will expend in accordance with the effects they are expecting from their actions. People will be more inclined to take on a task if they believe they can succeed. People with high self-efficacy are more likely to expend more effort, and persist longer, than those with low self-efficacy. Low self-efficacy can lead people to believe tasks are harder than they actually are. This often results in poor task planning, as well as increased stress.

Natural Support Systems: The theory of Human Ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) emphasizes the importance of social influences on human development and functioning. Many research studies demonstrate that people with stronger natural support systems are healthier, happier, and have more positive outcomes than people with fewer natural supports. Children are influenced by their parents and the people who play important roles in their lives. In turn, these people are influenced by the interrelations of their families, social networks, neighborhoods, communities and cultures. When parents have networks of family members and friends who share a commitment to the child, for example, parents' efforts to care for the child are enhanced. One of the central aspects of the theory is that the impact of the child-parent relationship on outcomes for the child is related to strong and positive relationships the parent has had with others.

Integration of Efforts: Many families often have complex and multiple needs that require support from numerous different agencies. HFW is a process that brings all of those providers together with an integrated and simplified plan for the whole family.

The TOC is not just an academic exercise but should guide decision-making by the facilitator as they implement HFW. They should continually ask:

- Have we identified and are we working on the needs that are most important to the family?
- How does what I am doing now impact the confidence and ability of the youth and family to get their own needs met?
- How does what I am doing support building and strengthening the natural support system for the youth and family?
- Are the plans for the family integrated and reasonable for them to implement?

The traditional process of helping youth and families to access opportunities and services often includes several different plans from different systems/agency partners and organizations. The situation is difficult to keep up with when there is one family member with behavioral health issues and multi-system involvement. When there is more than one family member who needs specialized attention, the situation can become impossible to handle, and many families do get overwhelmed. These youth and families can be labeled as ‘non-compliant’ and this reputation can follow them from agency to agency. When this happens, the system/agency partners feel like the family is not following the plans. And even more importantly, the families feel hopeless yet again and their confidence wanes.

V. High Fidelity Wraparound Roles

Depending on the state you live in, a HFW team can look differently. The following offers a brief description of roles in addition to a facilitator.

A **coach** is the skill-based teacher and support provider to the HFW workforce/staff. The coach is also the “guardian of fidelity” to the process of High Fidelity Wraparound.

The **family support partner** (FSP) position is designed to provide intensive levels of peer support for families. These positions are a distinctly different job than the HFW facilitator, but they work closely with the facilitator to support positive outcomes for the family. Often, but not always, the FSP is a graduate of HFW and should always be a family member of a person with complex emotional or medical needs.

This **youth support partner** (YSP) position is designed to provide intensive levels of direct support for youth or young adults. Youth support partners are generally two to five years older than the young adult being served, under the age of 25 when they become a YSP, and are a graduate of HFW or have similar life experiences with the young adults they are working with. Youth support partners have a minimum of a high school diploma or GED, and life experiences

that allow them to form empathetic relationships with the young adults they serve. They receive extensive training in the role and are supported by a coach.

What is a HFW Facilitator?

A HFW facilitator is the person who ensures that the 10 HFW Principles and the activities of the process are delivered with the highest possible fidelity to national best practices. It is their primary responsibility to “juggle” each of the principles so they are balanced. They model the principle of being ‘strengths-based’ by always focusing on “what works”. They skillfully reframe negative comments into a conversation about needs, while at the same time honoring and valuing the person’s comments. They value each youth and family’s individual and unique culture. They need to learn skills that focus on empowering the family to solve their own problems. Facilitators may have to learn to be comfortable with silence and not “jump into” solving a problem or suggesting a service (services are not needs!). Facilitators must learn about the family’s strengths that relate to priority needs. They build on these strengths throughout the process.

A facilitator values the principle of ‘team-based’ in that they make sure all team members are part of the process, involved in robust brainstorming and making sure all team members have action steps supporting the team mission. The facilitator engages the natural supports that will be there for the family long after HFW ceases. They can “rebuild broken bridges” of team members including natural supports and professionals. They engage professionals by understanding and respecting their system mandates. The facilitator must honor their expertise and their involvement on teams. The facilitator ensures family and youth voice and choice by asking the family about their priority needs and what options they think will work best for them. Facilitators work closely with support partners to ensure youth/family voice and choice is honored and appreciated.

A HFW facilitator needs to learn the skills of artfully facilitating the HFW team meeting. They help the family develop their team consisting of both natural supports and professionals. They help the team develop their own, individualized team mission. They prioritize needs and utilize the *discovered* strengths and cultural information that directly relate to the priority needs. They help develop a goal that is worded in “family friendly language” that can be quickly accomplished to build on self-efficacy. Success builds on success. If the family feels they can accomplish the first goal, they will build on this success for future goals and needs. After the goal has been identified by the team, the facilitator obtains a measurement strategy to determine when a goal is met. A facilitator leads the *entire team* in robust brainstormed options based on the youth/family’s strengths and culture. The facilitator empowers the youth/family to pick options that would best work for them. They delegate action steps to the team based on each team member’s strengths, role, and how they support the family. A HFW facilitator maintains team cohesion by obtaining a commitment from all team members to the mission. They must value the team’s time by ensuring an effective and efficient team meeting (aka: keeping everyone on track).

A facilitator maintains the principle of outcome-based by “checking in” or “following up” with all team members (including support partners) to ensure action step completion after the meeting. This requires that they get the High Fidelity Wraparound Plan (HFW Plan) developed in the meeting out to the team soon after the meetings (within days) so the team is clear on the action steps.

Facilitators need to be in continual communication with other team members to ensure family needs are being prioritized in meetings. This communication reinforces that they are all working on engaging natural supports, ensuring team cohesion and making sure the family has the support they need to complete action steps. If an action step is not completed, a facilitator’s first response should be, “What support do you need to complete your action step?” Throughout the process they are supporting the family to think about transition (“Who is going to meet these needs when the professionals are gone?”). They support the family toward transition by teaching them the process, how to call the team back together when new needs arise, how to meet their own needs, and how to have more natural supports than professionals on the team.

Qualifications

A HFW facilitator should have a broad base of experience with life and possess the ability to truly empathize with families and youth. The ideal facilitator has experience working directly with children and their families in a variety of settings, or living with children who have complex emotional needs. Facilitators must have outgoing personalities that support engaging people from different cultures, ages, and backgrounds. Facilitators must be able to ask questions that gather important information about a family’s unique strengths and culture. A preferred facilitator characteristic is understanding of and experience with different systems, including schools, mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, child protective services, health, and others. They must feel comfortable engaging natural supports of the family and youth. Another preferred characteristic is knowledge of community resources and an ability to engage these supports.

Facilitator Roles and Responsibilities Throughout the Process

The facilitator is responsible to make sure the National Wraparound Initiative’s Phases and Activities occur with fidelity. This includes time engaging and supporting the family, time engaging and supporting team members and time nurturing the team as a whole. The facilitator is teaching the family the process. Over time, the family and/or their natural supports assume the role of the facilitator and take on the activities of the HFW process.

The HFW facilitator has the responsibility to ensure each of the four components of the Theory of Change is met. A facilitator helps the family develop a list of their needs. They encourage voice and choice and skillfully help the family prioritize their needs that will also meet the needs of the system/agency partners on the team. They break these needs into small, “baby steps” that the team can accomplish easily. This builds on the self-efficacy of the family and helps them see that they have hope, they can do it, and they have support of the team

(including natural supports and professionals) throughout the process. A facilitator supports the family in choosing their natural supports to be on the team. With family and youth permission, the facilitator engages these natural supports, explains HFW, and discusses their role in supporting the family and the importance of their involvement on the team. The child and family team helps everyone work on one or two needs the family and team agrees upon, and works toward one integrated plan. The facilitator must balance the needs of all team members to ensure team cohesion. They must “check in” with the family, youth, and all team to ensure they are satisfied with the process.

A facilitator needs to look for teachable moments in the form of “readiness” of the family and youth to receive information. Facilitators need to continually assess the work they are doing, returning to the skill-sets often for guidance. Good assessment questions are:

- Meeting a family need, set by the family/youth?
- Increasing the family’s self-efficacy?
- Increasing natural supports?
- Providing integrated planning by considering needs that are on other plans written for the family?

If the answer is “yes” to the above questions, then you are doing what works in HFW!

Characteristics of Effective Facilitators

- Possesses an outgoing personality that leads to engagement with others and trust
- Has a strong desire to help people
- Is genuine and caring
- Has the ability to truly empathize with the needs of the family
- Ability to understand another’s point of view
- Be able to talk in front of a group
- Sense of humor
- Gives attention to detail and follow-through
- Understands that life experience is just as important as academic learning or degrees
- Self-awareness (of potential “blind spots”)
- Knowledge of other child-serving systems
- Ability to suspend own personal culture and judgment
- A keen interest in understanding others
- Be perceptive and observe a family and respond accordingly
- Flexible and has the ability to “think outside of the box”
- Respect and honor for the family
- Deeply understands that HFW is about supporting the family
- Ability to delegate responsibilities to team members
- Ability to be able to appropriately self-disclosure
- Knows when to seek supervision and/or coaching
- Ability to receive feedback while learning skills of HFW

- Feels comfortable asking the tough questions to get to deeper needs and deeper understanding of the family’s culture
- Is helpful to all families and system partners
- Is able to create a safe environment for honesty and mistakes

The High Fidelity Wraparound Team

The HFW team is the youth and family’s team. In some instances, counties and states use the term “youth and family team” to describe the team using HFW. The HFW/Youth and Family Team should include the youth and family, the HFW workforce (a facilitator, in the case of Virginia), the system/agency partners, and the natural supports that will be with the youth and family long after “formal” supports have left. Even in situations where the youth and family feel that they lack natural supports, community and surrogate supports can be included. The HFW team includes professionals working in a significant way with the family and those in the family and community who can support them in specific ways.

Family Support Partners

Some family support partners have been in three days of training for the Virginia HFW process.

The HFW **Family Support Partner** (FSP) position is designed to provide intensive levels of peer support for families. These positions are a distinctly different job than the HFW facilitator, but they work closely with the facilitator to support positive outcomes for the family. Sometimes the FSP is a graduate of HFW. Family support partners should always be a family member of a person with complex emotional/behavioral needs involved in multi-systems.

Early demonstrations of HFW did not always include the FSP roles. However, many family organizations began to take an active role in HFW. At times, FSPs work for family organizations and are then assigned to HFW roles on a contractual basis. In other situations, family support partners work for the same agency as the facilitator, and have the same supervisor and/or coach.

Family support partners can add value to HFW for several reasons. First, as someone who has experienced similar challenges, they can often engage families at levels people without this experience cannot. Second, they can provide peer support to meet the goals of the Theory of Change. For example, the facilitator and family may not identify natural supports for the team through the Strength, Needs, and Cultural Discovery (SNCD or Discovery) process. The FSP might be able to “work deep” to help the family identify and engage some natural supports in the process as it moves forward. Another way in which the FSP can be useful is helping the family navigate uncomfortable environments. For example, the family might be intimidated by school meetings. The FSP might help them understand their rights, role play meetings, go with them to meetings and plan how they will handle future meetings.

What Family Support Partners Can Do

There is more that an FSP can do, than what they can't do. It is important to keep in mind that an FSP is not a friend, or someone who will do whatever the family wants them to do. And, it's important that boundaries and parameters to the relationship be firmly set when the family and the FSP begin to work with each other.

The functions of the FSP can be loosely placed into **three areas of skills**. Although the facilitator has primary responsibility for the HFW process, success for youth and families can often be improved when the **Facilitator and FSP work as a team** to make sure the phases and activities of the process are successful. For example, some families may engage with the FSP more easily, and the FSP may discover information that strengthens the SNCD. If the FSP and facilitator work closely and communicate frequently, they can combine efforts to support the youth and family. The facilitator and the FSP should discuss how they are doing with the Theory of Change. For example, has the family identified priority needs and are they being addressed? Is the family gaining skills and confidence to support self-efficacy? What is the current status of the natural support system for the youth and family and what needs to be done? Planning together in this way, they can work as a team to build on the strengths and preferences of the family to make HFW work.

Family support partners can provide direct support for the youth and family as identified within the action steps on the HFW plan. This might include working with the family and natural supports to strengthen the natural support system. It might include preparing the family to attend meetings with school, child welfare or HFW planning meetings. It can also include other direct supports for the family as identified by the team.

Connecting families with resources can be a very important role of the FSP for some families. Families who already have strong natural support systems may not want this. For other families, this can include helping them identify community resources such as housing supports, recreation programs, child care providers, spiritual groups or community organizations. It can mean helping them to re-establish relationships with extended family and natural supports or reach out to new natural supports. The FSP can also connect the family to other families and family support groups. And, the FSP can orient and recruit interested families in system level work.

The goals of family support are multifold. As family support partners know, raising a child with special needs is a stressful situation. So, helping the family develop a schedule that they are able to function within can help reduce the stress because life becomes more predictable for all family members, and there are set routines. Helping the family members/caregivers develop self-confidence and inner strength to manage the day to day details is important. Ultimately, helping the family improve their quality of life is important. An FSP is able to help in all these areas while honoring the culture of the family, by not blaming and shaming them, and being strength-based.

FSP Functions and Roles

Functions:

- Partner with the HFW facilitator to ensure that the HFW process is successful for youth and families
- Provide direct support to family members and natural supports to carry out actions steps from the HFW plan
- Connect families to other families

Role

- FSP models effective personal interactions and behavior
- FSP supports families to identify their own strengths, needs, culture and vision and get these needs met
- FSP shares their own experiences to build relationships with and help families be successful with HFW
- FSP mentors families to improve their confidence and ability to advocate for and effectively manage the services and supports for their own family
- FSP supports development, reconnection and strengthening of natural supports for families

Skills

- FSP encourages and models commitment to the family and encourages the family to believe in their future, to stick to the process and to be persistent
- FSP honors the culture of the family by keeping their own views in check
- FSP aligns themselves with the youth and family to support their voice and choice without judgment, and works with their natural supports to help them learn to do the same.
- FSP engages in strategic and mutually respectful partnerships with the facilitator or other team members
- FSP models protection of confidentiality by never talking about families involved in HFW outside of the appropriate work settings, without the families' permission and input
- FSP checks in with the family during and at the end of interactions and activities to determine family satisfaction with the process

Supports the Needs of the Family

- FSP helps the family understand that support can take on many different forms and that the family will determine what the support will look like for them
- FSP actively listens to the family and takes notes about support needs, clarifying points with the family and facilitator
- FSP shares experiences with families to help them understand how HFW can help families meet positively framed needs
- FSP educates and supports family members to use their own voice to express their needs and preferences (Do For, Do With, Cheer On)

- FSP supports self-advocacy by providing the least amount of support that will be successful with planned fading of support (Do For, Do With, Cheer On)
- FSP recognizes and values the differences among families, discovering the unique culture of each family and using their information to determine how they can best advocate for their family
- FSP helps family members understand and to explain their culture and strengths to get their plan to match their family culture
- FSP understands family needs, culture, strengths, and preferences and supports families to advocate for them
- FSP helps the family understand the mandates and perspective of other team members, while keeping family perspective at the forefront of team discussions

Sharing Experiences

- FSP shares their own experiences to develop a shared sense of understanding and relationship with families
- FSP may share their experiences of working with other families in the HFW process and how it helped them (with no identifying factors)
- FSP may prepare the family for the Discovery (Strength, Needs and Culture Discovery) conversations through sharing personal and other family experiences
- FSP may give personal examples to help clarify questions
- FSP share their own experience of how being honest and open helped them to get better support

Mentors Families to Improve Self-Efficacy (Confidence)

- FSP observes and interacts with the family to help the family understand and celebrate strengths
- FSP knows available resources within a community and helps the families in choosing and accessing those that address their needs
- FSP educates and supports the family in the importance of maintaining and using documentation to advocate and control the process of service and support
- FSP helps families to understand how to store and use documentation to support services for their children
- FSP helps and encourages families to find and develop effective self-advocacy skills

Supports Development, Reconnection and Strengthening of Natural Supports for Families

- FSP may share personal experiences and reasons why natural supports can be important for families
- FSP helps families identify reciprocal relationships (what each person gets from the relationship) that define and sustain natural supports
- FSP may work with the family to plan for contacting potential natural support team members and orienting them to the HFW process
- FSP may meet with natural supports to get them ready for initial or follow-up meetings
- FSP helps families to plan and reconnect with extended family and natural supports based on family voice and choice

- FSP helps families and natural supports work through barriers to partnership.

When Supporting Both the Youth and Family Voice

When a youth support partner is not available and a natural support hasn't been identified yet, the FSP can support both the youth and the family. It is important not to side with one or the other but to be objective while listening to the needs of both. As a family member, it might be easier to understand the point of view of the family, but both perspectives are equal and valid in HFW. It might be helpful to have a discussion with the youth, as you have had with the family member in order to understand them, their culture and what they consider important. As needs are expressed, brainstorming options is an activity that both sides require.

VI. Phases and Activities of HFW Practice

The National Wraparound Initiative (NWI) has developed the concept of phases and activities of HFW practice to describe the overall tasks of the process.

Phase One: Engagement and Team Preparation. During this phase, the groundwork for trust and shared vision among the youth, family and HFW team members is established so people are prepared to come to meetings and collaborate. This phase, particularly through the initial conversations about strengths, needs, culture, and vision, sets the tone for teamwork and team interactions that are consistent with the HFW principles. The activities of this phase should be completed relatively quickly (within one to four weeks), so the team can begin meeting and begin the team-planning process as quickly as possible.

Phase Two: Initial Plan Development. During this phase, team trust and mutual respect are built while creating an initial plan of care using a high quality planning process that reflects the HFW principles. In particular, during this phase the youth and family should feel that they are heard, that the needs chosen are the ones they want to work on, and that the options chosen have a reasonable chance of helping them meet these needs. This phase should be completed during two or three meetings that take place within two to four weeks; a rapid time frame is intended to promote team cohesion and shared responsibility toward achieving the team's mission or overarching goal.

Phase Three: Implementation. During this phase, the initial HFW plan is implemented. Progress and successes are continually reviewed. Changes are made to the plan and then implemented. This is all done while maintaining or building team cohesiveness and mutual respect. The activities of this phase are repeated until the team's mission is achieved and formal HFW is no longer needed.

Phase Four: Transition. During this phase, plans are made for a purposeful transition out of formal HFW to a mix of formal and natural supports in the community (and, if appropriate, to services and supports in the adult system). The focus on transition is continual during the HFW process, and the preparation for transition is apparent even during the initial engagement activities.

VII. Phase One: Engagement and Team Preparation

What is Engagement?

The concept of engagement to marry describes a very near parallel to “engagement” in HFW. People come together to be partners committed to work together toward common goals. The relationship is based on trust, respect and belief that the goals can be accomplished. In clinical language it means the same as “building a rapport or relationship.” A facilitator’s successful engagement with a child, youth and family requires special skills if there is to be a successful partnership that leads to desired outcomes.

For children, youth and families who have had many negative experiences with helping professionals or non-collaborative systems, the engagement process may be slow and lengthy. Take care not to view this as the “fault” of the child, youth and/or family, but rather as their culture with respect to professionals. Consistent and mindful attention to engagement with the child, youth and family over several weeks and throughout the course of the process will help to establish and maintain a needed level of trust. Engagement in HFW describes not only the relationship between youth, family and HFW workforce members, but also the relationship between team members. HFW is a team-based process and engagement means developing this trusting relationship with all team members.

How the Theory of Change is achieved in the Engagement Phase

Let’s look at how the *Theory of Change* is addressed during the *Engagement Phase*:

In the **Engagement Phase**, we begin by helping the family to identify their own needs, concerns, and/or what they are most worried about. We begin by asking them to tell us the concerns that have brought them to HFW and describing how HFW can address their unique concerns and needs. We also help them identify any immediate physiological or safety needs and support to provide immediate crisis stabilization. During the Strengths, Needs and Culture Discovery (SNCD or Discovery) we help the family articulate their vision and prioritize their needs for help to achieve it. We focus on self-efficacy from the beginning. As the facilitator explains the HFW process, they will describe their experience and the successes other families with similar concerns have had with HFW. This has been shown to improve confidence in the family that HFW will work for them, too. The focus on strengths in the Discovery improves confidence by showing that they are already doing many things well. As we do crisis stabilization and the Discovery, we begin to identify natural supports and then engage some of these natural supports in the process as team members. As we do the Discovery we also identify all of the other current and future system/agency partners and service providers and engage these people in the process of developing an integrated plan.

Engagement with the youth, family and team is a critical aspect to successful HFW. Experience shows that the level of engagement directly impacts the proportion of youth and family that successfully complete HFW and successful outcomes. It also directly relates to how well children and families do after the process is over.

The Skills of Engagement

Boundaries are rules of behavior which guides interactions with others. Boundaries are limits that allow the youth or family member to connect safely with the HFW Facilitator based upon the youth/family's needs.

There are definite rules that govern boundary challenges in a therapeutic relationship, and a therapist on the HFW team should honor these rules. HFW facilitators, however, can have boundary challenges that can be more difficult to follow since some rules are more ambiguous. The HFW facilitator can have a different relationship with the youth and/or family than other professionals on the HFW team.

Some rules need to be followed regardless of your working relationship with a youth and/or family. Having personal relationships with those you have worked with professionally are definite ethical violations in any "helping" situation. Self-disclosure is usually frowned upon in a therapeutic relationship. In a HFW relationship though, self-disclosure might be helpful at times if done with a specific goal in mind. Spending time with the youth/family outside of meetings, such as a wedding, graduation, funeral, etc. must always relate to the needs and goals on the HFW plan. These situations as well as any question regarding ethics and boundaries should be discussed in advance with your coach or supervisor.

Ethics help guide your relationships and work with youth and families. In HFW, however, sometimes helping a youth and family identify and meet their "needs" results in actions that may be incongruent with the traditional role of the "helping" professions.

Triangulation is the term and behavior used when one person will not communicate directly with another person, but will communicate with a third person about them. This can result in playing one person off of another (splitting). The concept originated in the study of dysfunction family systems, but can be a part of any relationship, including friends, work, social situations, political situations, etc. A child can become triangulated into a relationship when one parent expresses dissatisfaction with another parent. This can happen inadvertently or as a direct result of the child engaging with the parent in the discussion of how to solve the problem with the other parent.

Triangulation can also occur when a youth or parent tells the HFW facilitator something that can impact the work someone else on the team is doing with them. Confidentiality is important, but when release of information forms are signed, the team and the HFW Facilitator should communicate with each other and not use someone else to convey information. Conversely, a HFW Facilitator can create a situation of triangulation between a youth/family and another system/agency partner or family member. It is important to be aware of the nuances of all relationships.

How do we go about making contact and forming working partnerships with a family and then with the team? Sending and receiving messages that effectively connect one person to another requires a process of exchange that allows for full acknowledgment of the other person, sharing

understanding with that person and having a positive influence on each other. HFW requires the skills that make such a relationship succeed. The skill is called **Engagement**.

Four strategies help the facilitator more consistently engage people in the process. The first is **active listening**. Active listening requires the facilitator to focus on what people are saying and what they mean. The second is **genuineness**, which is being “you” and honest, and following through on what you say. The third is **respect**. Youth and families in HFW may have many challenges but, to partner with them, we must value who they are and who they can be. The fourth general strategy is **empathy**, in which we try to understand the other’s point of view. Respect and empathy are equally important in engaging other team members.

Listening is an active process which requires you to focus on what the family member is saying both in the content and context of his/her message. It is the most powerful interpersonal helping skill for promoting rapport and building trust and engagement. Active listening involves using both verbal and nonverbal messages to communicate your understanding of the family’s experience. Your verbal response can focus on what the person is describing, how the person is feeling or both. You can reflect what the person is saying and/or reflect what the person is feeling. Active listening is used to empower families to explore and discuss topics. It conveys your understanding of their situation. It can help you gather certain information and it develops a broader and deeper understanding of the person’s circumstances. You can demonstrate active listening by:

- Establishing eye contact and an open body posture toward the person.
- Asking questions to understand what the person is saying
- Reflecting (commenting) on what the person has said and what it might mean
- Showing interest by asking for more information about the topic the person is talking about

We also use an acronym, S.O.U.L. to remember important aspects of active listening. The components of S.O.U.L. are:

S = Silence; listening can’t happen when you are doing all of the talking!

O = Observation; watch for things spoken and unspoken (body language)

U = Understanding; listen for understanding (not just for what you will say next)

L = Listening; a great deal more than hearing.



**Observation Form One
Engagement Skills for Orient Meeting**

HFW Facilitator: _____

Site: _____

Reviewer: _____

Date: _____

Youth/Family: _____

Code	M	Met
	P	Partially Met
	U	Unmet
	DNA	Does Not Apply

Standard	Rating	Comments
1. Facilitator introduces self, explains role and shares how referral took place.	M P U DNA	
2. Facilitator actively listens to the family and youth and provides information about how the HFW process could be helpful.	M P U DNA	
3. Facilitator describes HFW simply and briefly in a way that the person(s) understands.	M P U DNA	
4. Facilitator answers questions about HFW and uses relevant examples of how HFW can help (support partners share story). Facilitator helps the person(s) make an informed decision about participation or next steps in the engagement process.	M P U DNA	
5. Facilitator explains confidentiality and information sharing and gets a release of information signed to begin the process of engagement with the professionals and natural supports mentioned in the initial meeting for the Discovery and possible team participation.	M P U DNA	

6. Facilitator skillfully informs the family about his/her responsibility as a mandatory reporter and the importance of safety to the HFW process.	M P U DNA	
7. Facilitator identifies any immediate crisis situations by asking first and then following up on any information shared that could lead to a crisis situation.	M P U DNA	
8. Facilitator helps family determine if these need immediate intervention by reviewing what could possibly happen if a plan were not in place.	M P U DNA	
9. Facilitator gets functional assessment information (triggers, setting events, possible function and environmental response) if crisis concerns a behavior to further clarifies the situation.	M P U DNA	
10. Facilitator assists family to develop a crisis stabilization plan to meet the crisis situation identified. Plan includes action steps for facilitator and service providers and/or natural supports.	M P U DNA	
11. Facilitator ensures that the person(s) has the resources necessary to stabilize the crisis.	M P U DNA	



**Observation Form One
Engagement Skills for Orient Meeting
with Rationale and Scoring Rubric**

Code	M	Met
	P	Partially Met
	U	Unmet
	DNA	Does Not Apply (only use for 9-11 if 7 and 8 are not met and no crisis situation is identified.)

HFW Facilitator: _____

Site: _____

Reviewer: _____

Date: _____

Youth/Family: _____

Skill Demonstration	Rationale (Reason)	Scoring Rubric
1. Facilitator introduces self, explains role and shares how referral took place.	Remember the adage; you never get a second chance to make a first impression! Families deserve a clear explanation of who we are, what we do and how we learned about them.	M= Facilitator takes the time for a thorough introduction and greeting (three parts of greeting are shared) P=Met not satisfied; demonstrates some skills for genuine interest in the greeting (write strengths in comment) U=Introduction is quick, matter-of-fact and unclear (identify needs in comment)
2. Facilitator actively listens to the family and youth and provides information about how the HFW process could be helpful.	This is a meeting to describe how HFW can be helpful. How do we know it can be helpful to this youth/family if we don't first listen to what their needs are?	M= Facilitator begins with open-ended question that shows they are interested in getting to know the youth/family first; initial comments about HFW are in response to questions P=Met not satisfied; demonstrates some skills for active listening (write strengths in comment) U= Facilitator begins the pitch about HFW like they are trying to sell a used car (identify needs in comment)
3. Facilitator describes HFW simply and briefly in a way that the person(s) understands.	All facilitators should have a quick and easy to understand description of the "team planning process that coordinates services/supports and is driven by family and youth voice and choice (parent voice, balanced with youth voice balanced with system mandates)".	M=Is explanation given about HFW jargon free? Clear? Simple? Brief? Does it make sense to you? If "yes" this is a Met P=Write strengths in comment and build "Met" skills U=No clear explanation is stated about what HFW is (identify needs in comment)

<p>4. Facilitator answers questions about HFW and uses relevant examples of how HFW can help. Facilitator helps the person(s) make an informed decision about participation or next steps in the engagement process.</p>	<p>Facilitators should have the ability to answer youth and family questions about HFW process or know where to get the answers. Taking time for questions is an important part of engagement – often if people are not asking questions, they are not engaged. Information given as stories or examples is easier to understand and keeps us from using a lot of jargon and professional sounding language. Youth and families should hear that we give them a choice to participate (or not/or what additional information do they need?) in HFW (voice and choice begins here!).</p>	<p>M= Facilitator asks if there are questions (allowing time for people to think); answer questions and give clear examples of how HFW might be helpful.</p> <p>P=Write strengths in comment and build “Met” skills.</p> <p>U= Facilitator doesn’t engage youth/family in conversation about how HFW can be helpful (identify needs in comment).</p>
<p>5. Facilitator explains confidentiality and information sharing. Facilitator gets a release of information signed to begin the process of engagement with the system/agency partners and natural supports mentioned in the initial meeting for the Discovery and possible team participation.</p>	<p>As we convey our interest in getting to know the youth and family, we also convey our interest in getting to know those that are close and helpful to them for the purpose of understanding the youth/family better and for possible team engagement. We ask permission before we talk to others and a signed release is the permission that is given. We are clear with the youth and family our purpose for communicating with others and again have their permission to do so.</p>	<p>M= Facilitator clearly explains the purpose of communicating with system/agency partners and natural supports and request permission to do so with a signed release.</p> <p>P= Facilitator mentions confidentiality without explaining the process and reasons for communicating with system/agency partners and natural supports</p> <p>U=No mention of confidentiality, reason for communicating with system/agency partners and natural supports or release of information.</p>
<p>6. Facilitator skillfully informs the youth and family about their responsibility as a mandated reporter and the importance of safety in the HFW process.</p>	<p>Safety for all is a non-negotiable need in HFW. All facilitators explain that this is important to the HFW process and will be monitored closely as a need area. Being a mandated reporter is part of the role but this skill done well demonstrates the concern for safety first.</p>	<p>M= Facilitator conveys the high level of concern for everyone’s safety and the particular role they have in ensuring this in part by involving authorities when someone is in danger and the other way is to continually monitor safety needs.</p> <p>P= Facilitator briefly mentions being a mandated reporter without the wider context of safety for all family members (and community).</p> <p>U= No mention of being a mandated reporter.</p>

<p>7. Facilitator identifies any immediate crisis situations by asking first and then following up on any information shared that could lead to a crisis situation.</p>	<p>Building on #6 above, if there are immediate safety concerns, the HFW process struggles to move forward if people leave the home or community. We first ask if the youth/family are facing any immediate situations that could cause instability (current high levels of conflict, court hearings that might change placement, evictions or lack of basic needs etc.). Then we follow-up with any further questions given what we have heard thus far in the conversation e.g. “You have said that you have trouble getting along with your daughter and she is coming home for a visit this weekend. What do you think that is going to be like? What might help?”</p>	<p>M= Facilitator asks and skillfully follows-up on any safety concerns that have been stated during the meeting.</p> <p>P= Facilitator asks about safety concerns but does not ask follow-up questions to further understand if concern might lead to a safety risk.</p> <p>U= Facilitator does not ask about a potential safety or crisis situation.</p>
<p>8. Facilitator helps family determine if these need immediate intervention by reviewing what could possibly happen if a plan were not in place.</p>	<p>We all have difficulty anticipating what might happen if we don’t prepare. This skill is going the next step in asking the question. “What could happen if we don’t prepare?” This demonstrates gentle persistence (principle) in our wanting to be helpful and proactive with families.</p>	<p>M= Facilitator asks the question, what could happen in a particular situation that has been identified as a potential crisis/safety issue. General persistence and concern is observed.</p> <p>P=Follow-up question may be asked but general persistence and concern is not observed and families may not receive the help needed to take seriously a “what could happen...” scenario</p> <p>U=No follow-up question is asked.</p>
<p>9. Facilitator gets functional assessment information (triggers, setting events, possible function and environmental response) if crisis concerns a behavior to further clarify the situation.</p>	<p>We can provide a more individualized “band aid” plan if we know some basic facts about behavior (if that is the basis for a crisis). Always gathering more information will help in developing a plan that is individualized (principle) to the youth/family.</p>	<p>M=Functional assessment information is elicited.</p> <p>P=Behavior is identified without functional assessment information.</p> <p>U=No information is gathered about the behavior.</p> <p>DNA=No crisis is identified or crisis identified does not relate to a behavior.</p>

<p>10. Facilitator assists family to develop a crisis stabilization plan to meet the crisis situation identified. Plan includes action steps for facilitator and system/agency partners and/or natural supports.</p>	<p>This skill has the facilitator brainstorming a quick plan that will avert the potential crisis. This crisis stabilization plan is done whenever needed during engagement and until a team is in place that can do a full crisis planning process. It should have clear, simple action steps (who, what, where, when) and be written down and accessible to youth/family.</p>	<p>M= Facilitator develops a strength-based plan (what works based on the functional assessment information) to put in place until team is in place and a more robust crisis prevention plan can be developed. Facilitator listens for potential crises throughout the engagement phase.</p> <p>P= Facilitator develops a band-aid plan but the plan is not reviewed and fails to prevent a crises.</p> <p>U= Facilitator fails to develop a crisis stabilization plan when one is needed throughout Engagement.</p> <p>DNA=No crisis is identified; no crises occurs in Engagement.</p>
<p>11. Facilitator ensures that the person(s) has the resources necessary to stabilize the crisis.</p>	<p>The crisis stabilization plan and action steps are only useful if the resources are available. For example, if a person is listed on the plan as available to help in a crisis, we must know that they are available. This is true for any resources that we put on the crisis stabilization plan.</p>	<p>M=The Crisis Stabilization Plan includes the resources needed to carry out the plan (with a back-up plan should the initial action steps not work.</p> <p>P=Crisis Stabilization Plan is developed but all of the resources necessary to ensure the success are not identified.</p> <p>U=No Crisis Stabilization Plan is developed when one is needed; family or youth have crisis during Engagement and there is not plan.</p> <p>DNA=No crisis is identified.</p>

VIII. Activities and Skills of the Engagement Phase

Orient and Engage the Family and Youth to HFW Process

- A. To orient the family to the HFW process:

In face-to-face conversations, the HFW facilitator explains the HFW philosophy and process to family members and describes the HFW team and the nature of family and youth participation. The facilitator answers questions and address concerns.
- B. Address legal and ethical issues:

Address legal and ethical issues. The facilitator reviews all consent and release forms with the family and youth, answers questions and explains options and their consequences. The facilitator discusses relevant legal and ethical issues (e.g. mandatory reporting), informs youth and family of their rights, and obtains necessary consents and release forms before the first meeting.

Overview of Skill: Introduce yourself to the family and youth and explain your role.

Most often, the HFW facilitator will have introduced themselves on the phone prior to coming to the family home or wherever the initial meeting is held. Most families, but not all, will have been oriented to HFW by the referring agency staff or will have read literature. This first meeting is most often held at the family home, but may be held in other settings based on family preference. The first meeting is held at a time that is tailored to the family's needs.

The HFW facilitator must cover at least the following points during an in-person introduction:

- Re-introduce themselves to the family and state where they work.
- Review what their role is and what this entails – For example, for facilitators “My role is to help coordinate the HFW process for youth and families. I will work with you to get who you want on your team.”
- As appropriate, give a small amount of personal information, such as the town you live in, whether or not you have kids, or other information you are comfortable sharing.
- If the family is uncomfortable with your presence, start with small talk about the community, nice aspects of their neighborhood, their home, etc.

Engagement should occur first. Many people in the helping professions are prone to make quick assessments and provide solutions before understanding the youth and family, their culture, and their comfort level with those trying to help. The HFW method is to help create options and strategies **with** the youth and family and the HFW team. But you need to know the youth and family first.

Note: Be mindful of your use of acronyms, such as CSA, FAPT, HFW, etc. Not all youth and families know what these acronyms stand for.

Genuineness helps to reduce the emotional distance between you and the family member and helps the family member to identify you as another human being similar to him/herself. You can demonstrate genuineness by:

- Being yourself and balancing this with your professional role, and acting consistent with how you feel and what you believe
- Making sure that your nonverbal behavior, voice tone and verbal responses are congruent with each other
- Communicating trustworthiness and acceptance
- Being able to express yourself naturally without artificial behaviors
- Being non-defensive
- Self-disclosing in a purposeful and brief manner

Respect is the belief that there is value and individual potential in each human being. There are two aspects of respect: 1) your attitude or value about people and 2) your ability to communicate respect in observable ways. Respect involves valuing the family member as a person; separate from any evaluation of his/her behavior. Respect is recognizing the dignity and worth in each human being. When communicating respect, there is warmth that is conveyed to people that says you accept them, you like them, you care about them and you have concern for them. Respecting a person does not mean sanctioning or approving his/her thoughts or behaviors of which society may disapprove. Values and beliefs that convey respect include belief in the following: all human beings are worthy; each person is a unique individual; people have the right to self-determination and to make their own choices; and people can change. Respect can be communicated and demonstrated by:

- Communicating warmth
- Showing commitment
- Recognizing and utilizing a person's strengths
- Being open-minded

Empathy is a process in which you attempt to experience another person's world, and then communicate an understanding of and compassion for the person's experience. You develop a sense of what the situation means to the other individual. Empathy is being able to see through another's eyes and understand their world-view. The two-step process involved in demonstrating empathy is:

- Recognizing the person's experience, feelings and nonverbal communication; and
- Communicating with words your understanding of the person's experience. Your communication will reflect understanding of their ideas and feelings. Accurate empathy helps create a climate where the family member is willing and able to explore his/her issues and problems. Communicating with empathy results in greater openness in people.

It is important to understand that the statement “I know how you feel” can never be entirely true. Everyone’s experiences are different, even if they have similarities. It is better to not say this, but rather show empathy by using statements such as:

- “It must have been very upsetting”.
- “Something like that has happened to me and I was sad about it, too”.
- “That seemed really difficult”.
- “I am so sorry you experienced that”.

Overview of Skill: Listen to the family and youth’s concerns to determine if HFW is a good option.

Before introducing HFW in detail, it is often helpful to first ask about and actively listen to the family’s concerns that have brought them to you. Once the facilitator understands these concerns, they can often start with questions like “Have you been told much about HFW? What do you think? Do you think it might help? How do you think it might help your family? Tell me more about...” At times, the family would already have formed an opinion of whether or not HFW might help them. With other families, they may have no idea if HFW is a good option. The key in this skill is to have a conversation about the family perspective regarding their concerns. Some families may want to relate their story in depth; others will not trust the workforce enough to share more than surface details.

One caution: *Some families may have had a difficult time with different agencies or schools. The workforce should be neutral when this occurs, neither arguing against the negative statements nor agreeing with the family perspective. Model strengths-based interactions, “no blame no shame”.*

Overview of Skill: Describe HFW in a way the family understands.

Once the facilitator understands the concerns of the youth and family, they can then describe how HFW could assist them in addressing their concerns. The facilitator might also quickly mention key HFW principles such as “voice and choice” and “strengths-based”, without detailing each principle. Ask the family about their hopes and dreams and how HFW can help them build a team to support these hopes and dreams. Ask families about their strengths and explain how HFW builds on their strengths, not deficits. Mention the overall four phases of the process. As the family needs more information and asks questions, give examples without violating confidentiality. Don’t overwhelm the family with information – five to ten minutes of explanation is enough. Families in great stress at the time of this appointment often will be too overwhelmed to ask many questions. They may simply want to know if HFW will help their situation. It is important to explain HFW as a positive opportunity for them.

The HFW team should have a copy of the principles and the major activities of the process handy to refer to as they explain the process, and a copy for the family. The skilled facilitator must be ready to explain the process in ways that fit the family members present. For example, a parent with difficulty understanding English may need a translator present. A parent with

learning disabilities may need to have the facilitator use visuals or drawings to explain the process.

Overview of Skill: Answer family and youth questions about HFW.

Quickly answer family and youth questions. Examples of typical questions and answers include:

- Do I have to have a team? *“The HFW team is one of the most important parts of the process and provides support for you long after I am out of the formal process with your family. However, you determine who is on the team.”* (Unless the child or youth is in custody or under court order, in which case team formation is shared with the family.)
- How often does the team meet? *“Typically, more at first, often once a week. Later, the team may meet twice a month or less.”*

Overview of Skill: Assist the youth and family in making an informed decision about participating in HFW.

At this time, feel free to share your experience and opinion about how HFW has helped other families. Be honest about the pros and cons. If the family asks, offer to give them contact numbers of families who have graduated from HFW, if you have permission to do so. If they need time, ask when you should contact them again. Share your own view on the fit of their needs and the process. If this is a family in state custody, under court order to be in HFW, you might share how other similar families have experienced HFW when it was not totally voluntary. Let the family know they can start or stop HFW at any time (or they can ask their case worker or probation officer about not being in HFW). Few families ask to see more information, such as research, but the facilitator should have copies of research or more information available if they ask to see it.

It is very important for the HFW facilitator to “check in” with families and youth to make sure they are heard, what further questions they have, and if they are satisfied with the process so far. This should be done in the middle and at the end of the meeting.

Overview of Skill: Explain confidentiality and information sharing with the family and youth and obtain needed releases.

During the initial meeting with the family it is important to explain legal and ethical issues. This includes the importance of confidentiality and how information is protected by *The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)*. We believe that all medical and other health information is private and should be protected, and families and youth should have a say in who has this information. Under HIPAA, Federal law gives families and youth rights over their health information and sets rules and limits on who can look at and receive their health information. Explaining their rights and taking the time to explain the forms they are signing, in a way they understand, is a good way to increase engagement. Some families have said, “no

one has ever taken the time to explain it to me before. They just throw a bunch of papers at me and tell me to sign.”

It is important for the facilitator to inform families how the HFW process respects family’s voice and choice in information sharing (unless there are legal mandates). HFW workforce members should also explain how confidentiality is protected within the team through *Ground Rules*, such as “Whatever happens in the meeting, stays in the meeting.” Once this process has been described, the facilitator should explain and complete the informed consent and releases of information forms. These should be the only forms that are completed during this initial meeting. HFW workforce should explain that these forms are necessary to gather information for the Strengths, Needs, and Cultural Discovery (SNCD or Discovery).

Skillful facilitators are careful not to bash or blame other system/agency partners or past staff members who have worked with the youth and family. It is important to stress the importance of safety for the child and family and the community. The family should always feel that the HFW facilitator is a complete partner with the family and with the other system/agency partners such as child welfare, juvenile justice, the schools, or other agencies.

Overview of Skill: Explain your responsibilities as a mandated reporter.

Families and youth should know that anyone working with children is considered a mandated reporter. Families need to know about this up front, and presented in the spirit of engagement. A HFW facilitator’s explanation should be informative for the family and said in a way the family understands. If families react negatively to the explanation of being a mandated reporter, stress that it is the law and that the law is there to protect both the child and community, and the parents from false reporting. This may be a good time to share an experience where making a report with a family had a positive outcome.

Don’t forget to “check in” at the end of the meeting to make sure the family and youth feel heard, that they are satisfied with the process so far!

(Tips for this orientation activity, from experienced facilitators)

- Remember the value of first impressions. This first contact is a chance to show the HFW values and principles, and show flexibility and individualization.
- Let the family know that you believe they are the experts about their family.
- Be respectful of the family’s boundaries – they may not want you in their home, and the first meeting might take place in the yard or on the porch. Sit when they ask you to sit, always take offered hospitality when family offers. Honor the family’s culture by keeping your views in check. Watch your body language to ensure that you are being humble and not dominating the conversation. Listen. Listen. Listen.
- S.O.U.L. The importance of *silence, observation, understanding, and listening*

As you practice these seven skills, you will learn:

- To explain your role in the HFW process to the family and listen to their concerns and questions
- To actively listen to the family's primary concerns and explain how HFW might address these concerns
- To talk to families and others about HFW, quickly and clearly
- How to answer typical questions that families may have about HFW
- How to support a family in deciding whether or not to participate in HFW
- How to sensitively but effectively raise the issue of confidentiality and ensure basic family rights to confidentiality as well as to explain the needs for information and purpose for information.

IX. Explaining High Fidelity Wraparound

It's important to develop an explanation of HFW. The idea of an introduction is to have a prepared presentation that grabs the attention of those you are interacting with. The words are clearly thought out to give meaning to what you are describing in as little words possible. The words chosen need to describe what you are presenting in detail, but respecting the individual/s time. This discussion hits all the major points of the process and given with some personal experience. This can be what you have experienced in the process or what you have heard through others.

X. Activities of Crisis Stabilization in the HFW Engagement Phase

NOTE: Crisis stabilization doesn't just occur at the first meeting but throughout the entire process. A Crisis Stabilization Plan can occur during any of the four phases of HFW.

1. Address pressing needs and concerns so the family and team can give their attention to the HFW process:
 - Ask youth/family about immediate crisis concerns. Facilitator elicits information from the family and youth about immediate safety issues, current crises, or crises they may anticipate happening in the very near future. These may include crises stemming from a lack of basic needs (e.g., food and shelter).
2. Elicit information from agency representatives and potential team members about immediate crises or potential crises:
 - Facilitator elicits information from the referring sources and other knowledgeable people about pressing crisis and safety concerns.
3. If immediate response is necessary, formulate a response for immediate crisis stabilization:
 - To address pressing needs and concerns so the family and team can give their attention to the HFW process.

Collaboration on Crisis Stabilization Plans

It is important to be in contact with other system/agency partners about crisis stabilization or safety plans they may have already developed. It will be very difficult for the youth and family to become engaged in the process if there are immediate and pressing needs that are not being addressed. It will be equally difficult for the youth and family to know what to do if several plans exist.

Three Steps for Crisis Stabilization

Step One:

As the facilitator gets to know the youth and family during the engagement process, an important task is to determine if any immediate safety issues or crisis issues need to be addressed with a crisis stabilization plan. A person in great stress or who is concerned about personal or family safety cannot enter fully into an important relationship or begin the Strengths, Needs and Culture Discovery (Discovery) part of the HFW process. Therefore, the facilitator continues to listen and inquire about any potential safety or crisis concerns.

Safety and crisis concerns may take many forms but the two most frequent are: 1) concerns about the safety of a child; and 2) concerns the child may do something that puts others in jeopardy. If other systems are involved (e.g., child welfare, juvenile justice, or education) they may have already developed a safety plan. Even if they have not, they will want to know about the plan and may want input. Sometimes these concerns are basic to the needs of families (housing, food, safety) and sometimes these are situations like going to court when important decisions may be made about the family that could lead to a crisis.

Overview of Skills: Identify immediate and/or potential crisis and/or safety concerns; and help the family and youth recognize which concerns need immediate attention and which concerns can wait until the team convenes.

The facilitator may take a more directive role during this stage of the HFW process if there is a significant crisis or safety issue that needs immediate attention. The facilitator should elicit as much information as possible about the nature of the potential crisis and the specific safety concern. This includes doing a brief functional assessment and identifying potential supports to help the family through the crisis. The facilitator's role at this juncture is to develop a stabilization plan with the family and then mobilize all necessary resources to ensure the safety concern is fully addressed, so the family will stabilize. Specific steps for more detailed crisis and safety planning will be taught later in the training.

All crises do not need to be addressed at this point in the process. A later step in the process allows the team to do a very detailed crisis prevention plan. Because of the personal nature of crisis, a family may feel like all of their crises may need to be addressed right now. The task of the facilitator at this point is to help the family sort out which crises truly are immediate. For example, review the following crises:

1. A student is often truant from school and if he misses five more days will not advance to the next grade.
2. A youth is attacking his brother and places his safety at risk.

Both situations are important but development of the full crisis plan has a much better chance of long term success. For that reason we would probably do crisis stabilization for the safety

issue but bring the team together after getting to know the youth and family better to work on school attendance.

Another example:

1. A single mother of a toddler is out of money and diapers.
2. A single mother is out of work.

Which of these crises is immediate? Of course, both the diapers and the work are important, but the eventual HFW team can work with the mother to help her find her calling and get work. The diapers are an immediate need that must be addressed prior to the HFW process moving much further.

Overview of Skill: Conduct a brief conversational functional assessment that clarifies what occurs before, during, and after the crisis or safety situation; the assessment also identifies the best guess of the function of the crisis or safety situation and possible replacement behaviors.

A functional assessment is a structured process to determine the triggers and functions for crisis behaviors and situations. This helps us to predict and prevent crisis situations and develop crisis response plans based on youth/family and community strengths and culture. The process of the functional assessment will be covered in-depth on day three of this training. Successful service and support plans that target changing challenging behavior are more likely to be developed after the facilitator has gained a comprehensive understanding of the behavior and the context within which the behavior occurs. Understanding the behavior and context of the behavior maximizes the potential that plans will effectively address underlying needs, interrupt repeating sequences of undesirable behavior and/or reinforce and amplify desired behaviors.

Step Two:

Overview of Skills:

1. Facilitator assists family to develop a crisis stabilization plan to meet the crisis situation identified. Plan includes action steps for facilitators and system/agency partners and/or natural supports.

Rationale: This skill has facilitators brainstorming a quick plan that will avert the potential crisis. This crisis stabilization plan is done whenever needed during engagement and until a team is in place that can do a full crisis planning process. It should have clear, simple action steps (who, what, where, when) and be written down and accessible to youth/family.

2. The facilitator ensures that the person(s) has the resources necessary to stabilize the crisis.

Rationale: The crisis stabilization plan and action steps are only useful if the resources are available. For example if a person is listed on the plan to be available in a crisis, we must know that they are available. This is true for any resources that we put on the crisis stabilization plan.

HFW is sometimes initiated after families are already receiving other services, or have received services in the past. These entities may have referred the youth and family to HFW. If these system/agency partners have concerns about crisis situations when the referrals are made, it may help team engagement – if the family agrees – to involve them in the crisis stabilization process.

During this part of the crisis stabilization, the facilitator would begin by engaging system/agency partners and potential team members if the youth/family has consented to allow these partners to participate in the process. Potential team members are those who have been mentioned by the family during initial activities of the process. These skills are a repeat of what the facilitator did with the family.

There are several important aspects of completing this skill. First, unless the youth is in custody or has significant court involvement, the family has to give permission for you to talk to agency representatives or potential team members. Even if the youth is in custody, an experienced facilitator will get the family's permission and get any input the family has about how or what the facilitator will ask the agency staff or potential team members. Second, it is important to do a quick orientation on HFW to any system/agency partners or potential team members whom you will ask about crisis situations and who have never been exposed to HFW. Third, it is vital to avoid any triangulation between system/agency partners, unhappy potential team members, and the HFW families. If system/agency partners or unhappy potential team members say negative things about the family, remain neutral in affect and body language.

Step Three:

This is the part of the crisis stabilization where the facilitator actually works with the family to develop the immediate crisis stabilization plan, lets other system/agency partners and potential team members know what the plan is, and makes sure the plan can be implemented as needed.

Overview of Skill: Develop a stabilization plan with the family and youth that address immediate crisis need(s) or safety situations as necessary.

To complete this skill, the facilitator has enough conversation with the youth/family to know some of their strengths, so these strengths can be used in the crisis stabilization planning. For example, a family with an immediate crisis of a family member with a violent temper, with family members at risk of harm, may have successfully coped with this situation before. The facilitator should ask the family about what they have done in the past that worked in this area.

The conversation should include the brief functional assessment and identification of services and natural supports already available to the family. The process of developing the plan should include brainstorming multiple options and selecting the ones that the family feel will best work for them.

Remember, this level of HFW process is truly just a “band-aid” that keeps the family stable and safe while the HFW process continues. Extensive crisis and safety planning will occur later on.

Overview of Skills: Coordinate and communicate crisis stabilization plans with other system/agency partners and potential team members; and ensure the family has the resources necessary to stabilize the crisis.

To complete these skills, the facilitator would call system/agency partners and potential team members and share the initial crisis stabilization plan with them. Again, a facilitator must get family permission to do this step – family members may have concerns about what system/agency staff may do with the information. Talk this issue out with the family. If the youth is in custody, be sure the family understands that role of the caseworker or the probation officer has to be fulfilled, and that they are (by court order) partners. Hopefully, by this time, the facilitator will have enough engagement with the family that the family has some trust of the facilitator’s judgment. However, if this is not the case, the facilitator may need to call a meeting of the family and the workers and clarify boundaries, roles and responsibilities.

In addition, the facilitator would need to have confidence that the crisis stabilization plan will be carried out. Some plans are as simple as “Call 911,” but others are fairly complex with multiple steps. The family may need other resources to carry out the crisis plan. The facilitator must help the family get these resources. Again, use family strengths and resources wherever possible. These assets will be in the picture long after formal HFW goes away, and this is a chance to get to know the skills of the family and their resource

One caution at this phase of the process: *it is critical that well-meaning facilitators do not step in and create dependency in the family by “doing it all”. In fact, the skilled facilitator will be careful not to do anything in the crisis stabilization plan that cannot be done by the family or the family’s resources.*

– “Band Aid” Crisis Plan –



Name:

Date:

Crisis/Safety Concern:

Is there a crisis behavior? Describe:

Triggers (setting events, environment, behavioral, physiological?)

Function of the behavior?

What has helped in the past? What might work now?

Action Steps (What and Who)

Skills for Crisis Stabilization

Facilitator

- Identify immediate and/or potential crisis and safety concerns.
- Help the family and youth recognize which concerns need immediate attention and which concerns can wait until the team convenes.
- Conduct a brief conversational functional assessment that clarifies what occurs before, during, and after the crisis or safety situation; the assessment also identifies the best guess of the function of the crisis or safety situation and possible replacement behaviors.
- Assist agency representatives and potential team members to identify immediate and/or potential crisis and safety concerns.
- Help agency representatives and other potential team members recognize which concerns need immediate attention and which can wait until the team convenes.
- Conduct a brief conversational functional assessment with agency representatives and potential team members to understand the details of the crisis or safety situation.
- Develop a stabilization plan with the family and youth that addresses immediate crisis need(s) or safety situations as necessary.
- Coordinate and communicate crisis stabilization plans with other agency staff and potential team members.
- Ensure that the family has the resources necessary to stabilize the crisis.

Remember, “Do For, Do With, and Cheer On”

