Welcome!

Enhanced Family Conferencing Initiative (EFCI)
Introductions

Introduce yourself by telling us your:

- Name/Role
- Borough/Division
- Years of service in ACS and experience with Family Team Conferencing
Expectations

Stay focused on this course and be present

Be Open Minded

Actively participate

Avoid multi-tasking: phones on vibrate

Willingly accept feedback

Share thoughts and experience with others

Be on Time

Be willing to be vulnerable and ask questions
Objectives

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

• Explain the key components of the EFCI, the expanded role of the Parent Advocate (PA) and the associated benefits

• Understand implicit bias and the importance of promoting racial equity

• Practice working collaboratively with PAs to promote family involvement and decreased time for children in care
# Course Agenda

<table>
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<th>Topics</th>
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<td>2 Structural Challenges in Child Welfare</td>
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<td>3 The EFCI Model: Expanded role of the PA and impact on Conference</td>
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<td>5 Application of skills in Mock Conference</td>
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History of Family Group Decision-Making

- Grew out of the Community
- Roots tied to anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices
- The disadvantaged defined how decision making should work
- Includes PAs for families at risk for removals
Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP)

Grassroots organization:

- Began in 1990’s in East Harlem
- By African American and Hispanic Mothers
- To counteract policies that affected their community disproportionately

**CWOP puts HEAT on the system, demanding accountability / change**

**HOPE to disenfranchised families already impacted by the system**

**HELP for parents to become organizers, leaders and advocates**
EFCI - Enhanced Family Conferencing Initiative

- Expanded Role of Parent Advocate
- ICSC foundation

→ Improved outcomes for children in care, and a decrease in racial disparity & disproportionality
What the Research Tells Us

Parent Advocates helped other parents **navigate** the system, **educated** them, and **provided guidance**  

Source: Lalayants, 2014

Parents who received support services from other parents with similar but successful child welfare histories were **more than 4X** as likely to achieve positive reunification outcomes as parents in a **comparison group**

Source: Anthony and colleagues, 2009
Issues related to Racial Equity
What’s changed?

CWOP (90’s)

Why was there a need for more parental involvement?

Why was there a need for more community advocacy, involvement and support?

TODAY

Is there still a need?

What’s changed?

What’s stayed the same?
Ethnicity and Path Through The NYC Child Welfare System 2016

Child Population (1,768,111)
- Asian: 11.5%
- White: 25.7%
- Hispanic: 36.8%
- African American: 25.9%

Children in Substantiated Investigations (31,321)
- Asian: 3.5%
- White: 7.1%
- Hispanic: 5.4%
- African American: 44.6%

Children in Preventive Case Openings (22,731)
- Asian: 5.4%
- White: 5.6%
- Hispanic: 50.3%
- African American: 38.6%

Children Placed in Foster Care*
- Asian: 2.0%
- White: 7.4%
- Hispanic: 34.0%
- African American: 56.6%

Children in Foster Care**
- Asian: 1.7%
- White: 5.8%
- Hispanic: 34.1%
- African American: 58.4%

*Children Placed in Foster Care
**Children in Foster Care
What Does The NYC Child Welfare Data Tell Us?

• Black children are overrepresented when compared to their overall representation in the population

• Cases with Black and Latino children are substantiated at a higher rate than their representation in the general population

• Black children are placed in foster care at higher rates

• The length of stay of Black children in foster care is over twice their representation in the general population
Disproportionality in Child Welfare

*Disproportionality* describes the condition that exists when the proportion of one group in the child welfare population is proportionately larger (overrepresented) than the proportion of the same group in the general child welfare population.
Race/Ethnicity & ACS Youth Justice Programs

Youth Population 7-18 year olds (1,168,227)
Youth Admitted to Detention (2,928)
Youth in JJI Case Openings (193)
Youth Placed in Non-Secure Placement (308)

- Asian
- White
- Hispanic
- African American

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>African American</th>
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<td>Youth Population 7-18 year olds</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>23.7</td>
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<td>Youth Admitted to Detention</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>67.2</td>
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<td>Youth in JJI Case Openings</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>66.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Placed in Non-Secure Placement</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>67.0</td>
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What does the NYC Data for Youth In Detention Tell Us?

Among youth ages 7-18 years, Black children in NYC represent 27.6% of the population. Yet, they represent...

- 67.2% of the children admitted to detention
- 66.8% of the children with JJI case openings
- 67% of the children placed in non-secure placements.
Disparity in Child Welfare

Disparity is defined as unequal outcomes experienced by one racial/ethnic group when compared to another racial/ethnic group.

Disparity can occur at various points including:

- Initial report of alleged child abuse and maltreatment
- Substantiation of maltreatment
- Placement into foster care
- Length of stay in foster care
Racial Equity: What We ALL Need to Strive For

*Racial Equity* refers to what a genuinely non-racist society would look like:

- The distribution of benefits and burdens would not be skewed by race
- A person would be no more or less likely to experience benefits or burdens due to the color of their skin
Ways of Addressing Racism and Disproportionality Within Child Welfare

• Name racism when you see it, instead of denying or ignoring it

• Ask yourself, is racism operating here?

• How is it operating in your work with families?

• Organize and strategize with others to educate yourself about racism in order to dismantle it at work, and communities

Source: Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum
Recognize the Importance of Cultural Responsiveness to Reduce Disproportionality

- The Meaning of Culture
- Importance of Cultural Competency
- Importance of Cultural Humility
Learning the EFCI Basics

• What is the EFCI model?

• What type of program is it?

• What are the essential elements?

• Why expand the role of parent advocates?

• What does the research show regarding this model in relation to racial equity?
Enhanced Family Conferencing Initiative (EFCI) Goals and Objectives

- Improve or maintain the safety of the children involved in ICSC
- Reduce the out-of-home placements for children
- Increase the achievement and maintenance of permanency
- Increase family involvement and improve protective factors
- Build credible evidence of the effectiveness of an FGDM initiative
EFCI Practice Principles

- Kinship
- Respect
- Widening family
- Blending Expertise
- Inclusive / Racial Equity
- Support what they create
- Finding Family
- Advocacy
- Families are capable

Child Safety

What they create
What Core Concepts Inform EFCI Practice?

1. An independent, neutral facilitator
2. Family as a key decision-making partner
3. Family caucusing is encouraged
4. Preference is given to the service plan developed by the family
5. Services, resources and supports are provided
6. The FCSC occurs with the presence of Parent Advocates
What’s the Same? What’s Different?

**Same**
- ✓ Family as expert
- ✓ Valuing group decision making
- ✓ CFS as Independent facilitator
- ✓ Consensus based decisions
- ✓ 6-Stage conference structure (with addition of Stages 4.1 and 4.2 – Family Caucus)

**Different**
- ✓ Expanded role of PA
- ✓ Emphasis on Caucusing
- ✓ ~10 hours of PA support
- ✓ PA works to widen family circle
- ✓ PA attends FCSC routinely
- ✓ Facilitator incorporates feedback from PA’s work
- ✓ The family’s preferred plan is used as starting point
Expanded Role of the Parent Advocate in EFCI

EFCI Model: An In-Depth Look
At the Expanded Role of the Parent

The Parent Advocate role varies depending on the particular point reached in the conference process:

- 30 minutes prior to the ICSC Conference
- During the ICSC Conference (6 Stages)
- In-Between the ICSC and FCSC Conferences
- During the FCSC Conference (6 Stages)
Parent Advocate Responsibilities prior to the ICSC include:

Arriving at the location of the ICSC 30 minutes ahead of time, to allow for a meeting with the parent(s)/caregiver(s) and any other family members to:

- Introduce themselves and their role to the parent
- Explain their role in the ICSC in assisting the caregiver in advocacy
- Provide support and referral for services
- Answer any questions they may have preceding the ICSC
EFCI Model: Parent Advocate Role

Parent Advocate Responsibilities during the ICSC include:

- Provide Support
- Ensure Understanding
- Suggest Resources
- Encourage Open Dialogue
- Caucus if requested
- Advocate for the plan developed in caucus
Six Stages of Team Conference Model

1. Opening the Meeting
2. Identify the Situation
3. Assess the Situation
4. Brainstorm and Idea Development
5. Reach a Decision
6. Recap/Evaluate/Close
New Steps in the EFCI Model

4
- Brainstorm and Idea Development

4.1
- Caucus between PA and Family

4.2
- Present Family’s Preferred Plan
Parent Advocate Responsibilities During ICSC Stage 1 include:

- Introducing his/her role in the EFCI process
- Explaining role in the Conferences and between this Conference and the follow-up CSC
- Highlighting his/her child welfare experience and knowledge of resources
- Explaining his/her work to widen the parents’ family circle
EFCI Model: Parent Advocate Role During the ICSC

Parent Advocate Responsibilities in the EFCI model of the ICSC for Stage 2 include:

- Watching for non-verbal cues from the family
- Asking clarifying questions to ensure that the information is clear and understandable, particularly for the family
- Asking the CFS to check-in with the family when it appears there is an insufficient understanding
EFCI Model: Parent Advocate Role During the ICSC

**Stage 3 - Assessing the Current Situation**

*Parent Advocate Responsibilities During the EFCI Model of the ICSC Stage 3 include:*

- Asking solution-focused questions to help identify strengths
- Asking the CPS to re-explain the information, if necessary
- Encouraging the family to be forthright about their needs
- Being alert for verbal and non-verbal cues of the family members that indicate minimal understanding or disagreement
This stage now includes stages 4.1 and 4.2. These stages highlight the new role of the PA in encouraging the family to take part in a caucus, to participate in the caucus if the family agrees, and to support the family in presenting their preferred plan after the caucus.

**Parent Advocate Responsibilities During ICSC Stage 4 include:**

- Checking in to ensure they understand the possible outcomes
- Watching for verbal and non-verbal cues that might signal family disengagement
EFCI Model: Parent Advocate Role
During the ICSC

Stage 4.1  Caucus between PA and Family

Role in Decision

- Explain Benefits of Caucus
- Assist with choosing from following 3 Options:
  - Meet on their own
  - Include PA in Caucus
  - Choose not to Caucus

Role in Caucus

- Help evaluate options
- Clarifying information
- Encourage exploration of resources
- Seek clarification when needed
- Document information that may help in the decision making
Parent Advocate Responsibilities During ICSC Stage 4.2 include:

- Supporting the family in presenting their thinking to the agency
- Being a co-presenter of the family’s thinking, with the family, if requested by the family to do so
- Providing emotional support to the family as presenting their ideas to professionals may be intimidating
Parent Advocate Responsibilities During ICSC Stage 5 include:

- Advocating for the plan developed in the caucus, provided it meets the pre-identified safety concerns
- Encouraging the family to collaborate with ACS to develop plan details
- Asking for clarification about services / supports to meet the safety concerns
- Asking questions to create transparency and support family group decision making
- Offering culturally appropriate input in the development of the safety plan
Parent Advocate Responsibilities During ICSC Stage 6 include:

- Exchanging contact information with the Parent/Caregiver
- Explaining his/her role between the ICSC and the Follow-up CSC
- Encouraging the family to access supportive services identified in the safety plan and to prepare for the FCSC
**EFCI Model: Parent Advocate Role**

**Parent Advocate Responsibilities in between ICSC and FCSC**

**Commitment**
- Continue Support via text messaging, phone contact and/or in person
- Spend an average of 10 hours with family between conferences

**Outcome**
- Increase the # of family participants attending the Follow-up CSC
- Identify community resources to support the family
- Help the parents to navigate the child welfare system

**Referral Process**
- Share the contact information with the CFS for formal invitation
- Identify additional family and community members and extended informal invitations
EFCI Model: Parent Advocate Role

**PA Responsibilities during Stages 1-6 of the Follow Up**

Similar to Role during the ICSC – including the addition of steps 4.1 and 4.2

- ✓ Provide Support
- ✓ Ensure Understanding
- ✓ Suggest Resources
- ✓ Encourage Open Dialogue
- ✓ Caucus if requested
- ✓ Advocate for the plan developed in caucus
# EFCI Model: Case Eligibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate or Impending Danger requiring Legal Intervention</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICSC after Emergency Removal</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker expresses interest in voluntary placement</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibling born to a child already in placement</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive test for illegal substance in 3\textsuperscript{rd} trimester or at birth</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatality occurs and there is a surviving sibling</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other indications Mother is unfit at birth</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Maltreatment including hospital referrals</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Neglect</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents with Legal Representation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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Mock ICSC to include Caucusing

• All participants will be engaged in Conference

• Roles:
  • 4 Family Members
  • 1 CPS Worker, Ms. Duncan
  • 1 CPS Sup II, Mr. Holland
  • 1 Parent Advocate, Ms. Leonard
  • 1 CFS per Conference Stage (6), Ms. Frederick
  • Coach (remaining participants)

• Roleplay will follow full cycle conference (~60 Min)

• Periodic pause in action to allow coaching and debrief
Practicing EFCI during the ICSC Role Play

**Prepare – 20 Min**
- Read Family Scenario (10 mins.)
- Pay special attention to your assigned Role
- Take 10 Minutes to prep (with assigned coach if applicable)

**Practice – 70 Min**
- Parent Advocate meet with family (10 mins.)
- Practice all 6 stages of the Conference including Caucusing (~ 60 min)

**Debrief – 20 Min**
- Occasional Pause in Action to confer with Coaches
- Full class debrief at end of activity
Concepts To Consider....

Safety & Risk

Family Strengths

Supports & Resources

Caucusing

Least Restrictive-Intrusive

Self-Awareness

Engagement

Thinking Group Skills

Family Group Decision Making

Effective Questions

Cultural Sensitivity

Disproportionality & Disparity
Role Play Job Aids

(Facilitator to post appropriate slide to guide Role Play Participants throughout the 6 stages)
Introduction

- Welcome
- My Name – Role
- *Purpose Of Meeting*
- Members – Relationship To Child
- Agenda – Timeframe
- Caucusing
- Ground Rules
- Cooperative Intention
- Family/Youth As Experts
- Confidentiality vs. Privacy
- Consensus-Based
- Ask Questions
Stage 2: Identify the Situation

What Brought the Family and Team to the Table?
Stage 3 – Assess The Situation

✓ Encourage Team Assessment
✓ Assure Full Evaluation of Safety Factors, Risk Elements and Strengths
✓ Facilitate “Straight Talk”
✓ Clarify Facts From Opinion
✓ Summarize, Identify and Link Differences and Common Ground

Document Concerns and Strengths on the chart (using full sentences and add examples)
Stage 4 – Develop Ideas

- Brainstorm
- Don’t evaluate or Judge
- Focus on Quantity not Quality
- Access the family’s past successes
- Identify ways to utilize identified strengths

*Ensure ALL ideas are written on the chart sheets*
Stage 4.1—Family Caucus

- Professionals leave the family and PA alone for 15 mins.
- Professionals depart conference to break-out room
- Family and Parent Advocate meet to discuss information presented in the conference
- PA encourages family group to develop realistic plans
- Family has an opportunity to apply their expertise
Stage 4.2—Presentation of the Preferred Plan

- Attend to the family and create a comfortable non-threatening environment

- The family presents their preferred plan to the group

- The family’s preferred plan is given consideration

Ensure all concerns related to all children are addressed
Stage 5: Reach a Decision

✓ Least Restrictive / Intrusive
✓ Consensus Based
✓ Reality Tested to ensure it will keep the children safe
✓ Actions are directly tied to concerns to reduce risk
✓ All members can support this decision

Chart the Action Plan - Task, Who, Time Frame
Stage 6- Recap / Evaluate / Close

✓ Check Understanding
✓ Ask / Respond to Questions
✓ Include criteria for measuring success
✓ Ensure emotions / responses addressed
✓ Set further meeting dates
✓ Close appropriately
✓ Thank members of the group
The Debrief

1. How do you feel?
2. What happened?
3. What did you learn?
4. How does this relate?
5. What if ...?
6. What next?
In-Between ICSC and FCSC

How will the PA assist with the agreed upon actions?

What additional family members that should be contacted?

What local community services/resources might be engaged?

What steps should be taken to prepare the Smiths’ for the FCSC?

How will the PA prepare Ciara to participate in decisions?

What other actions should the PA take?
Reflection

• I Learned ............
• I Re-learned ........
• I appreciated ........
• I wonder .............
• I feel challenged ........
• I feel confident ........
Thank You!