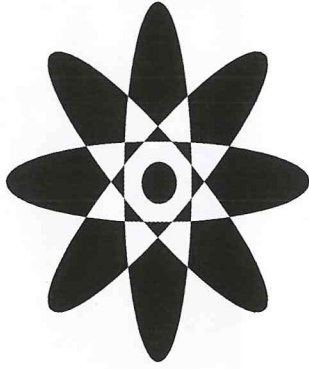


AT THE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP MEETING, A FACILITATOR GUIDES THE PROCEEDINGS.

- **Preparation:** Being respectful and preparing the family for the meeting is important for positive outcomes.
- **Team Members:** Birth parents and extended family, including non-relative supports as family chooses; child (as appropriate), service providers, assigned social worker, involved agency staff (i.e., supervisor). Typically CASA or GAL (not attorney).
- **Facilitator:** Trained facilitators with strong strengths-based orientation and excellent group processing skills.
- **Length of meeting:** One to two hours.
- **Some core values of family meetings:** All families have strengths. Families are the experts on themselves. Families deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- **Goal of meeting:** To make best possible plans by using a solution-focused team approach and ensuring a family's voice is central.



Child and family-centered practice will influence and enhance the way everyone in the system views and works with clients and with each other.



"Feelings of worth can flourish only in an atmosphere where individual differences are appreciated, mistakes are tolerated, communication is open, and rules are flexible – the kind of atmosphere that is found in a nurturing family."

– Virginia Satir

Washington
County
Department of
Social Services

Family
Partnership
Meetings



"Connecting kids and families for life"

Washington County
Department of Social
Services
15068 Lee Hwy., Suite 100
Bristol, VA 24202
Phone: 276-645-5000



Washington County
Department of
Social Services

What is family engagement?

A key building block of the transformation that identifies a structured and deliberate approach to partnership with families. Family engagement recognizes that:

- All families have strengths.
- Families are the experts on themselves.
- Families deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Families can make well-informed decisions about keeping their children safe and supported.
- Outcomes improve when families are involved in decision-making.
- A team is often more capable of creative and high-quality decision-making than an individual.

Purpose of family partnership meetings:

A team collaboratively develops ideas and establishes a decision making process for the child or family to use throughout the family's involvement with the agency.



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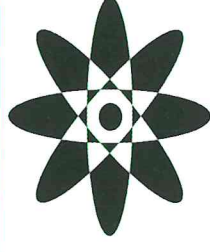


"Families are the compass that guide us. They are the inspiration to reach great heights, and our comfort when we occasionally falter."

– Brad Henry

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS OFFER MANY BENEFITS

- Child:**
 - Center of attention with clear focus on safety, permanence, and well-being (best interests)
 - Voice in decision making (when age appropriate)
 - Greater stability, reduced trauma
- Parents:**
 - Strong voice on decision making
 - Choices
 - Respect and encouragement
- Extended Family:**
 - Inclusion in decision making
 - Information, insight, opportunity
 - Engagement, involvement, empowerment
- Social Worker:**
 - Improved family engagement
 - Support throughout teamwork
 - Meaningful outcomes, increased job satisfaction
- Service Providers:**
 - Information, insight, opportunity
 - Inclusion in decision making
 - Improved family engagement
- Legal Partners:**
 - Information and insight
 - Better decisions flowing from more thorough and higher quality information
 - Teamwork and support



"A man never stands as tall as when he kneels to help a child."

– The Knights of Pythagoras

Family Partnership Meetings are a proven method of engaging and empowering families, resulting in better outcomes for children and all other stakeholders.