

Engaging Families as Partners to Reduce the Risk of Neglect



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Why is this important?

- ⌘ Child neglect is the most common form of child maltreatment reported to public child protective services agencies.
- ⌘ Even though its consequences are equally, if not more damaging, we know less about the assessment and treatment of neglect than about other forms of child maltreatment.

Topics of Discussion

- ⌘ Definitions of neglect
- ⌘ Risks for neglect
- ⌘ Principles of effective intervention
- ⌘ Outcomes of intervention
- ⌘ Review of intervention models

Definitions

- ⌘ (1) Neglect refers to omissions of care to meet a child's basic needs that (2) result in harm or a threat of harm to children
- ⌘ A child is neglected when his or her most fundamental physical or emotional needs have been unmet.

How are children neglected?

- ⌘ inadequate/delayed health care
- ⌘ inadequate nutrition
- ⌘ poor personal hygiene
- ⌘ inadequate clothing
- ⌘ unsafe household conditions
- ⌘ unsanitary household conditions
- ⌘ unstable living conditions

How neglected? (cont'd.)



⌘shuttling

⌘inadequate supervision

⌘inappropriate substitute child care

⌘abandonment

⌘expulsion

How neglected? (cont'd.)



- ⌘ witnessing violence
- ⌘ drug exposed newborn
- ⌘ permitting drug/alcohol use
- ⌘ permitting other maladaptive behavior
- ⌘ inadequate nurturing or affection
- ⌘ isolating
- ⌘ inattention to mental health care needs

How neglected? (cont'd.)



⌘ chronic truancy

⌘ failure to enroll/other truancy

⌘ unmet special educational needs

How to identify neglect?



- ⌘ Use specific operational definitions
- ⌘ Understand risks and protective factors

What contributes to neglect?



- ⌘ Risk and protective factors interact across four levels: (1) the individual level; (2) the family microsystem; (3) the exosystem; and (4) the social macro system (Belsky, 1980).

Risks and Protective Factors - Family Members

⌘ Children, caregivers, other adult household members:

☑ *Behavior*

☑ *Emotion*

☑ *Physical*

☑ *Cognitive*

☑ *Social*

Risk and Protective Factors -Family



- ⌘ Demographics
- ⌘ Role expectations/satisfaction
- ⌘ Communication
- ⌘ Problem solving
- ⌘ Mutual support
- ⌘ Violence

Risks and Protective Factors - Environment



⌘ Social support functions:

- ☑ *emotional support*
- ☑ *child related support*
- ☑ *financial support*
- ☑ *instrumental support*
- ☑ *formal support*

⌘ Adequacy of resources

Environment (continued)



⌘ Helpfulness of network:

- ☑ *extended family*

- ☑ *friends*

- ☑ *formal & informal systems*

⌘ Housing Conditions

⌘ Neighborhood Conditions

⌘ Culture

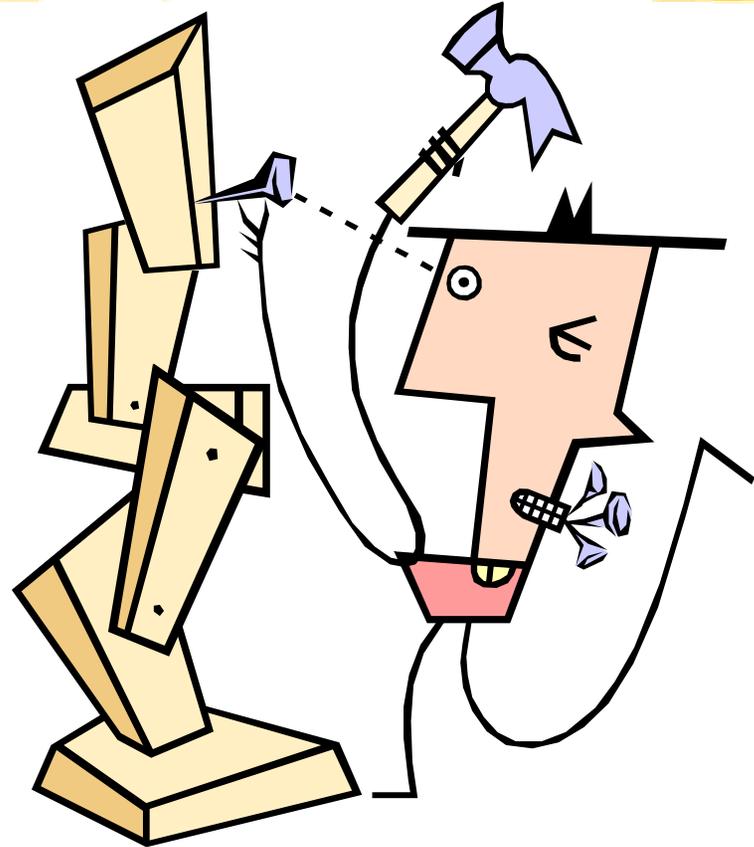
Principles for Working with Families to Reduce Risk



- ⌘ Ecological developmental framework
- ⌘ Importance of outreach & community
- ⌘ Family assessment & individualization
- ⌘ Helping alliance with family
- ⌘ Empowerment & strengths based
- ⌘ Cultural competence
- ⌘ Developmentally appropriate

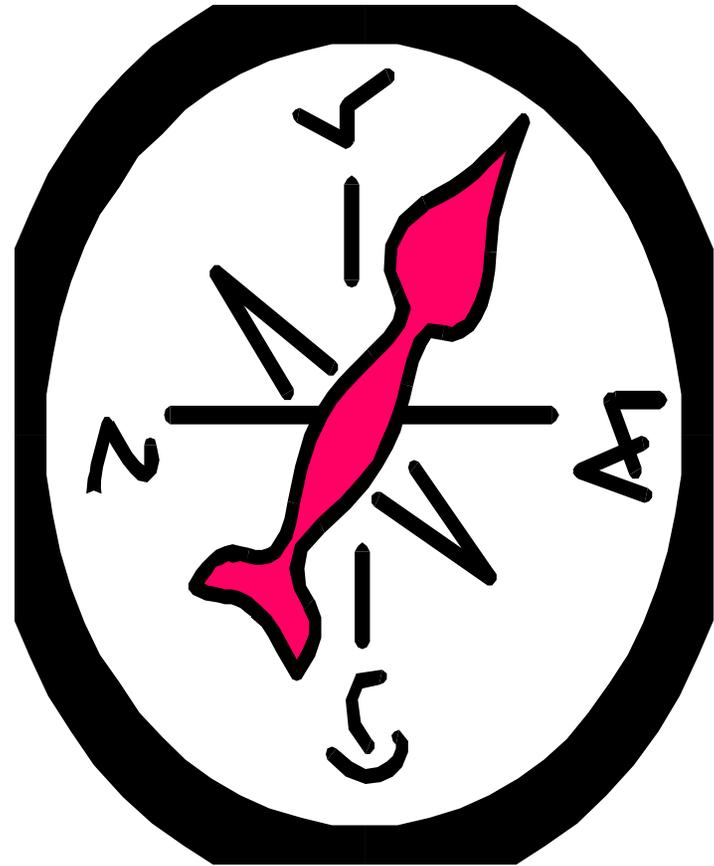
Why is a helping alliance important?

- ⌘ Not developing a partnership with a family can lead to defining disjointed outcomes and interventions.



And then what happens?

⌘ Clients can be lead in the wrong direction.



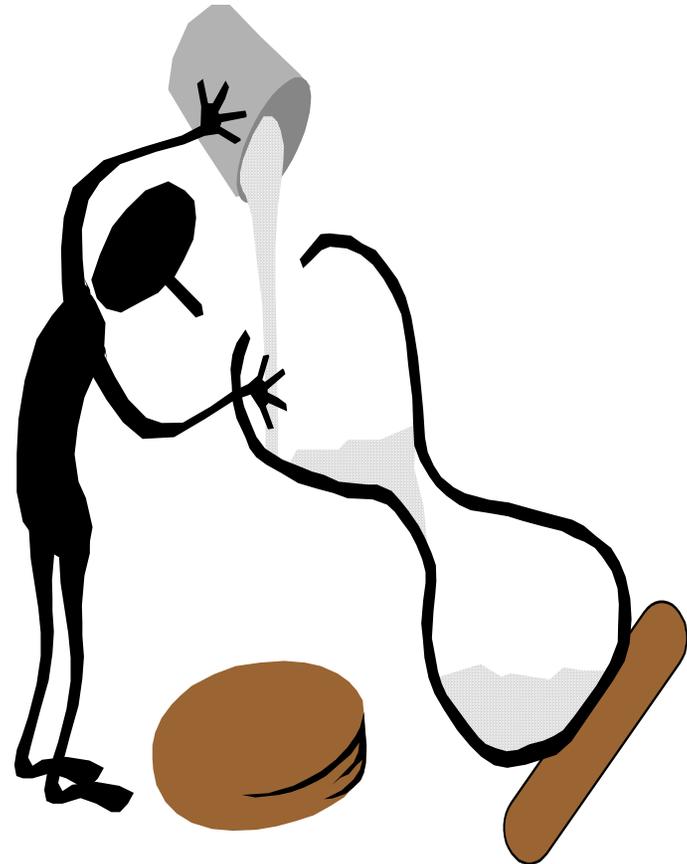
What does this mean?

- ⌘ All case plans tend to look the same.



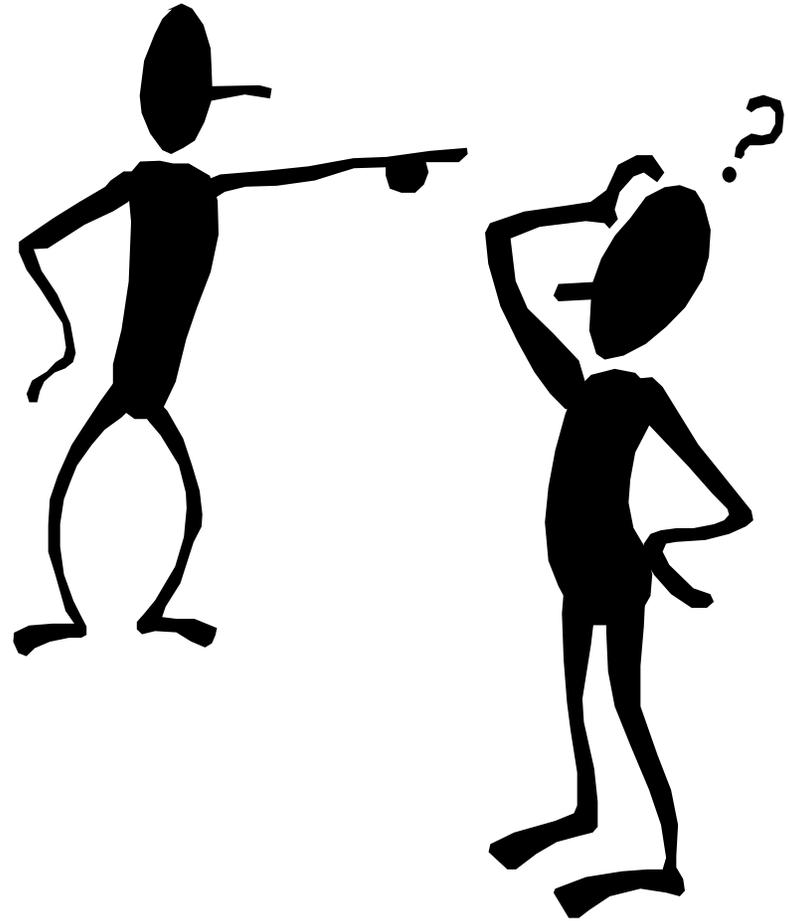
What are the consequences?

⌘ Precious time is lost toward achieving the right outcomes and reducing risk.



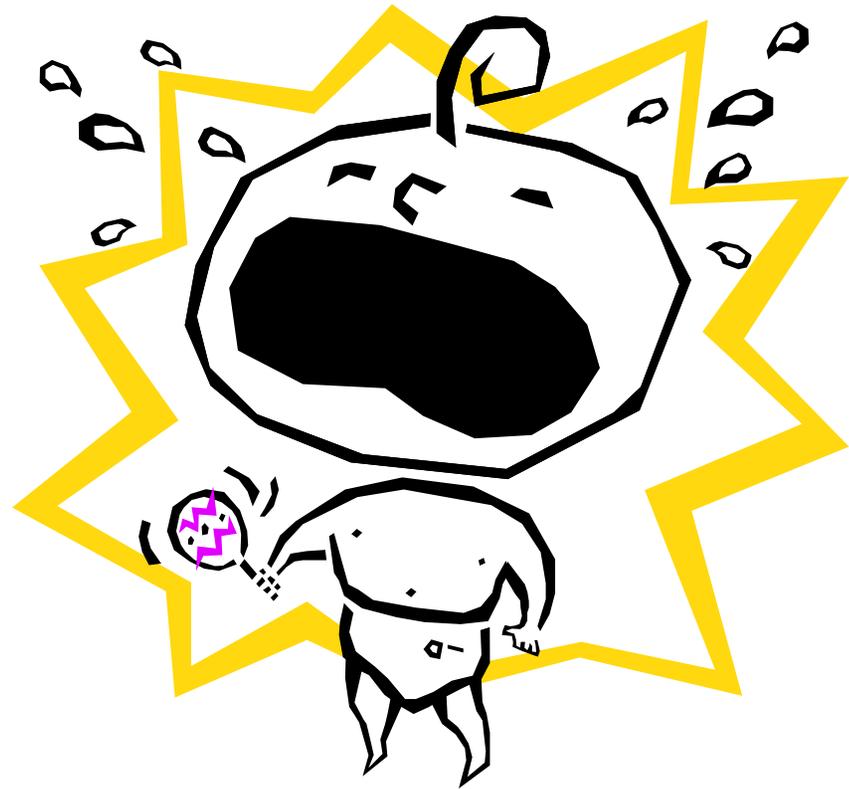
How do clients feel?

⌘ Clients are very confused and may appear “resistant” to intervention.



How does this affect children?

⌘ Children may be extremely vulnerable and unsafe.



Effective Helping*



⌘ is the “act of enabling individuals or groups (e.g., a family) to become better able to solve problems, meet needs, or achieve aspirations by promoting the acquisition of competencies that support and strengthen functioning in a way that permits a greater sense of individual or group control over its developmental course”.

*Dunst & Trivette, 1994, p. 162.

Help is empowering if the help-giver:



- ⌘ Is both positive and proactive.
- ⌘ Offers, rather than waits for help to be requested.
- ⌘ Engages in help-giving acts in which locus of decision making clearly rests with the help-seeker, including decisions about the need or goal, the options for carrying out the intentions, and whether or not to accept or reject help that is offered.

*Dunst & Trivette, 1994, p. 167.

.. empowering if help giver:



- ⌘ Offers aid and assistance that is normative in terms of the help-seeker's own culture.
- ⌘ Offers aid and assistance that is congruent with the help-seeker's appraisal of his or her problem or need.
- ⌘ Offers aid and assistance in which the costs of seeking and acceptance of help do not outweigh the benefits.

*Dunst & Trivette, 1994, p. 168.

.. empowering if help giver:



- ⌘ Offers help that can be reciprocated and sanctions the possibility of “repaying” the help-giver.
- ⌘ Bolsters the self-esteem of the recipient, and helps the individual experience immediate success in solving a problem or meeting a need.
- ⌘ Promotes the help-seeker’s use of natural support networks and neither replaces nor supplants them with professional services.

*Dunst & Trivette, 1994, p. 168.

.. empowering if help-giver:



- ⌘ Conveys a sense of cooperation and joint responsibility (partnership) for meeting needs and solving problems.
- ⌘ Promotes the acquisition of effective behavior that decreases the need for help, thus making the person more capable and competent.
- ⌘ Helps the recipient to view self as an active, responsible agent who played a significant role in solving problems, meeting needs, and improving his or her own life.

*Dunst & Trivette, 1994, p. 168.

Important Assumptions



- ⌘ Helping is strongly influenced by cultural biases.
- ⌘ Helping relationships are multicultural since our identity is complicated by differences in socio-economic status, age, ethnicity, gender, lifestyle, etc. of the helper or client.
- ⌘ The culturally competent helper will mediate effectively between different cultural perspectives and communicate meaning effectively.

Family Assessment



- ☒ A time when we join with the family to understand their strengths and needs.
- ☒ This process helps us arrive at specific intervention outcomes and service plans that will empower families to strengthen their capacity to meet the basic needs of their children.

Family Assessment Outline



- ⌘ Demographics
- ⌘ Family's view of needs & problems
- ⌘ Risks & strengths related to children
- ⌘ Risks & strengths related to caregiver(s)
- ⌘ Risks & strengths related to family
- ⌘ Risks & strengths related to community

Self report measures



⌘ Family Functioning Style Scale

- ☑ Measures 3 aspects of family functioning style: family identity, information sharing, and coping resource mobilization.
- ☑ The 12 qualities of strong families comprising the content of these categories are based on an extensive review and integration of the family strengths literature.

Self report measures



⌘ Family Needs Scale

☑ identifies the family's view of their needs or problems.

⌘ Family Resource Scale

☑ measures the adequacy of different resources in households with children.

Self report measures



⌘ Support Functions Scale

- ☑ Identifies the degree to which families have people in their lives to meet five social support functions: (1) emotional support; (2) child support items (e.g., cares for child regularly or in emergencies); (3) financial support; (4) instrumental support (e.g., someone to fix things around the house); and (5) agency support (e.g., obtains services for child).

Self report measures



⌘ **Family Support Scale**

- ☑ Measures the helpfulness of sources of support to families with children.

⌘ **Personal Network Matrix**

- ☑ Determines the types of help and assistance that are provided to a respondent by different individuals and agencies that make up a person's personal social network.

Observational Measures



⌘ Child Well Being Scales

- ☑ specific sub-scales

⌘ Family Risk Scales

- ☑ specific sub-scales

Intervention Outcomes



- ⌘ Family Maintenance and Safety
- ⌘ Family Member Functioning
- ⌘ Family Functioning
- ⌘ Problem Solving
- ⌘ Social Support
- ⌘ Care of Children

Family Maintenance and Safety



- ⌘ The family demonstrates the ability to meet the basic needs of the family for food, clothing, housing, and health care.

Family Member Functioning- Caregiver



- ⌘ The caregiver demonstrates abilities to achieve self sufficiency, cope with daily stresses, manage emotions, and control impulses.

Family Member Functioning-Children



- ⌘ The children demonstrate developmental appropriateness in all areas of functioning.

Family Functioning



- ⌘ The family demonstrates strength in multiple areas such as family-identity, information sharing, coping and resources and uses non-violent methods to resolve family conflict.

Problem Solving



- ⌘ Family members demonstrate abilities and motivation to accurately identify and solve problems.

Social Support



⌘ The family has access to and effectively uses extended family, friends, and other systems to meet social support functions, i.e., emotional, child related, financial, instrumental, and formal.

Care of Children



- ⌘ Caregivers demonstrate appropriate attitudes and skill to meet the unique needs of their children.

Selecting Interventions



- ⌘ Concrete resources
- ⌘ Social support
- ⌘ Developmental focus
- ⌘ Cognitive/behavioral
- ⌘ Individual focus
- ⌘ Family system focus

Concrete Resources



- ⌘ Housing assistance
- ⌘ Emergency financial, food, clothing, household items, etc..
- ⌘ Hands on assistance to increase safety and sanitation of home
- ⌘ Transportation
- ⌘ Quality child and health care

Social Support



- ⌘ Individual (parent aide, volunteer)
- ⌘ Social support groups
- ⌘ Social networking
- ⌘ Recreation programs
- ⌘ Mentoring programs
- ⌘ Cultural festivals/activities
- ⌘ Connections to religious groups

Developmental



- ⌘ Therapeutic day care
- ⌘ Individual assistance with role achievement, e.g., parenting
- ⌘ Home visiting by public health nurse
- ⌘ Peer groups geared to developmental tasks
- ⌘ Mentors for nurturing, recreation, etc.

Cognitive/Behavioral



- ⌘ Social skills training
- ⌘ Communication skill building
- ⌘ Home management, meal preparation, parent-child interaction training
- ⌘ Teaching new thought processes regarding childhood history
- ⌘ Financial management counseling, problem solving training

Individual focus



- ⌘ AOD in-patient and out-patient counseling
- ⌘ 12 Step programs
- ⌘ Mental health counseling
- ⌘ Crisis intervention
- ⌘ Stress management
- ⌘ Play therapy

Family System



- ⌘ Home based family centered counseling regarding family functioning, communication skills, home management, roles & responsibilities
- ⌘ Center based family therapy
- ⌘ Nurturing family camps
- ⌘ Modeling positive caregiving behaviors



APSSAC

American
Professional Society
on the Abuse of
Children

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The Mission of APPSAC is to ensure that everyone affected by child abuse and neglect receives the best possible professional response.

APPSAC FACTS



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⌘ Now over 5,000 Members

⌘ Chapters in most states

⌘ Members in all 50 states and in many U.S. territories and other countries.

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- ⌘ **Promoting research and guidelines to inform professional practice**
- ⌘ **Educating the public about child abuse and neglect**
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⌘ The support of a national organization focused on child maltreatment

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