Partnering With Families to Improve Child Welfare Outcomes

Engagement of Lived Experience · https://bridges4mentalhealth.org/hub/youth-family-engagement/partnering-with-families-to-improve-child-welfare-outcomes/

Summary:

Engaging families in the casework process promotes the safety, permanency, and wellbeing of children and families in the child welfare system and is central to successful practice. Family engagement is a family-centered and strengths-based approach to making decisions, setting goals, and achieving desired outcomes for children and families. At its best, family engagement encourages and empowers families to be their own champions and to work toward goals that they developed, with the support of their caseworker, based on their strengths, protective factors, and needs.

Application:

This partnership between caseworkers and families is founded on the principle of communicating openly and honestly in a way that supports disclosure of culture, family dynamics, and personal experiences to meet the individual needs of every family and child.

Additionally, family engagement is recognized as essential to success across the human services and education fields and is considered a core competency in the Council on Social Work Education's accreditation standards.

This bulletin for professionals provides an overview of the foundational elements of the family engagement approach, followed by strategies and promising practices for implementing it. While this publication is intended to provide information for frontline caseworkers who directly engage families, it also provides information about family engagement at the system, program, and community levels, as best practices are grounded in these higher levels of the child welfare system.

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