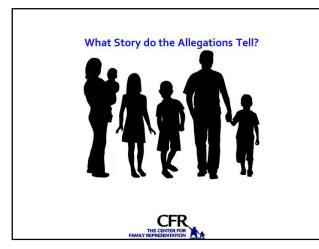


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cfmy.org @EveryFamilyCFR

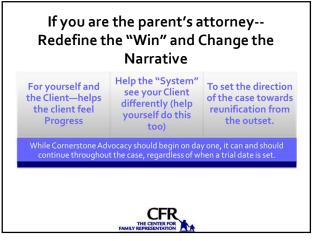














If you are a Judge, an attorney or case planner working for the Department, or a child's attorney...

- Helps Us View every Family as Unique (*really*, *not just lip service*)—reveal a more complete narrative—hope, resiliency
- Helps Us Maintain a Sense of Urgency about Reunification before 15/22 (not for everyone)
- "Better" Permanency Decisions—fewer lost opportunities

7



8

# What does Cornerstone Advocacy Do?

• Sets the direction of the case towards reunification from the very beginning

• Helps the system (and yourself) see the clients differently

• Reframes the narrative to show the parent as an individual who may have made mistakes, who loves their child, who deserves to be respected and treated as you would if your child was removed

• Maintains sense of urgency

### Cornerstone Advocacy is not just Effective, it's LEGAL....! Reasonable Efforts Language (and Case Law) *-plus-*Applicable Regulations, All County Letters *-plus-*Policy Statements, Guidelines and/or Best Practices materials



### Placement

THE CENTER F

- Connections
- Services
- Reduce anxiety and you promote engagement
- Be open to change
- What Q's do you ask?





#### **Easier Relative Placements- SB 354**

- Allows exemptions to be granted toa relative or other adult living in the home for many new convictions (including some non-exemptible ones)
- Broadens the list of criminal convictions that qualify for simplified exemptions
- Clarifies the court shall use independent judgment in placements decisions regardless of status of criminal exemption or resource family approval
- Requires agency to use reasonable efforts to assist relatives/NREFMS in obtaining items needed for placement
- Allows agency to waive income requirements for home approval when appropriate

Amended Health & Safety Code 1521.7, 1522, 1568.09, 1569.17, 1596.871; Amended WIC 309, 319, 361.2, 361.4, 727.05, 11461.3, 11461.36, 16519.5

13

### Services

- No cookie cutter
- Other demands?
- Culture, language
- Trauma-informed and strength based
- No duplication
- With parent's input
- Can change over time





### Conferences ("CFTs") 1. What might parent need from court? From attorney? 2. Preparation 3. Community or Family Supports 4.Expand the "services" 5. Document the Positive 6. Call CFR THE CENTER FOR FAMILY REPRESENTATION

16

#### The Legal Architecture support CFTs

CA Specific Laws and Policies: •"Child and family team' (CFT) means a group of individuals who are convened by the placing agency and who are engaged through a variety of team-based processes to identify the strengths and needs of the child ar youth and their family, and to help achieve positive outcomes for safety, permanency, and well-being. The activities of the team shall include, but not be limited to.\_providing input into the development of a child and formily plan that is strengths-based, needs-driven, and culturally relevant. (Continuum of Care Reform Bill AB-403 (2015-2016)) • "The child and family team activities shall include...providing input into the development of a child and family plan that is strengths-based, needs-driven, and culturally relevant." WIC\_StSocial(s)

#### The All-County Letters:

(remember, implementation ACL's have the same impact as regulations) •"The CFT process is a collaborative, non-adversarial, team-based approach to ensuring...positive outcomes" ACL 18-

23 — "The CFT's process reflects a belief that families have capacity to address their problems and achieve success if given the opportunity and supports to do so...The team must respect and support the power of learning from mistakes when strategies do not work as intended so that the plan can be revised to improve outcomes." <u>ACL 16-84</u>

•\*Individuals with lived experience (e.g. parent partners, youth partners/mentors) can be useful by being mentors and advocates who have personally experienced many of the same challenges and feelings ... Team membership is intentionallyflexible and dynamic. \*<u>ACL 16-84</u>

\*\*The CFT meetings should be scheduled at times and locations <u>convenient for family member participation</u>. Meetings should be conducted in a way that establishes a safe environment that engenders trust and reflects the child, youth, and family's cultural preferences and norms. If needed, CFT meetings could include an interpretor or translator to ensure effective communication and clear understanding. The meetings should have a clear purpose.\* <u>ACL 15-84</u>



#### What Makes a Visiting Plan Good?



## Frequent Long

 Supervision as Minimal as is Necessary
 Outside the Agency
 Activities that Mimic

- Family Life
- 6. PROGRESS
- 7. Discuss at EVERY court appearance

19

#### Visit Hosts: What are they and why should I advocate for one?

- Someone in the parent or child's life who could be considered trustworthy by the court and department AND who understand that they have to end a visit or report a parent if something goes wrong?
- Allows for flexibility, creativity, and PROGRESS
- When we started, potentially controversial, but now... Judges routinely ask the Department to find & explore visit hosts
- Most of the time, things DON'T go terribly wrongthey help the case & the family!



#### What Would You Do?

Sarah's daughter was removed from her care because of allegations of domestic violence and alcohol abuse. She immediately enrolled in a substance abuse program and has been sober for 45 days. She is also living apart from her perpetrator.

Before being removed, Sarah and her daughter attended church together regularly and the pastor knows Sarah and the struggles she has recently had. Right now, Sarah is only seeing her daughter once a week for two hours because of school and work schedules. Both Sarah and her daughter ask their lawyers how they can more time together. As their lawyers, how can you advocate for the pastor to be a visit host?

22

#### Learn From our Success and Mistakes

- Don't Get Crazy—
- Review your own laws, regulations and policy
- Orders are your Friends...Attorneys and Judges
- What Creates Incentives? (Data and Evaluation)
- Be Vigilant about Mixed Messages—for parents and for case planners
- Spend Some time with like minded people—Serve Food (Invest in T-shirts and Buttons)

23

#### Small Adjustments You Can Do Now, No Matter Your Role:

- Raise visiting whenever and wherever you can
- Think about visits from a child's view
- Explore your own biases- every family is unique
- Learn the research and the tools/borrow from work that has already been done—in your own state and in others
- Change the narrative and redefine the "win"
- Maintain a sense of urgency about reunification



#### What Might that Story Be?

Ice cream Chili Nintendo Hip-Hop Nurse Construction Bilingual Likes Math Afraid of Dogs Pet Mouse "Frozen" The Mets Church Bake Sales **Early Intervention** Florida CFR

FAMILY



25



26

#### **More Helpful Resources**

- RISE Magazine: https://www.risemagazine.org/2017/05/noticing-trauma-in-visits
- RISE Magazine: https://www.risemagazine.org/2015/09/standing-in-your-childs-shoes The Neglected Transition: Building a Relational Home for Children Entering Foster Care by Monique Mitchell (available on Amazon and other websites)
- Child Welfare Information Gateway Information Brief, "Family Reunification: What the Evidence Shows" https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/family\_reunification.pdf
- Child Welfare Information Gateway, "Supporting Reunification and Preventing Reentry into Out-of-
- Chino werare intro. The second second
- Dependency Quick Guide: A Dogbook for Attorneys Representing Children and Parents: https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/dogbook.pdf
- Family Engagement-maximizing family resources, kinship connections, and active participation of families in decision making, http://childlaw.unm.edu/assets/docs/best-practices/Family-Engagement-



<u>2011.pdf</u>.

#### More helpful Cornerstone Resources

- Preserving Cultural Connections: relative placement, see <u>http://childlaw.unm.edu/assets/docs/best-practices/Cultural-Connections-2011.pdf</u>
- Education Advocacy: school stability, see <a href="http://childlaw.unm.edu/assets/docs/best-practices/Education-Advocacy-2011.pdf">http://childlaw.unm.edu/assets/docs/best-practices/Education-Advocacy-2011.pdf</a>, and
- Family Engagement-maximizing family resources, kinship connections, and active participation of families in decision making,
  - see http://childlaw.unm.edu/assets/docs/best-practices/Family-Engagement-2011.pdf.
- Child and Family Visitation: A Practice Guide to Support Lasting Reunification and Preserving Family Connections for Children in Foster Care (placement, visitation) https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Legacy/DHS-5552-ENG
- Protecting and Promoting Meaningful Connections: The Importance of Quality Family Time
  in Parent-Child Visitation
- http://www.state.nj.us/childadvocate/reports/other/OCA%2oVisitation%2oBrief%2o-%201-14-10.pdf

