Introduction to Child Welfare
The mission of NFC is to build on child, family, and community strengths so that all children and families are safe, healthy, and thriving.
Learning Objectives

• Understand the main population of children and families served by DHHS

• Remember the major roles of Child and Family Services Specialists (CFSSs), Family Permanency Specialists (FPSs), and Child and Family Outcome Monitors (CFOMs) in the case management process.

• Know the tasks identified for the Project Coordinator and how this can be used to facilitate communication with youth we jointly serve.
Child Abuse and Neglect—3(a)
Hotline Call and Intake

- Process by which information comes to the Department’s attention
- Reports made by a variety of sources
- Hotline 1-800-652-1999

- Information is gathered from reporter
- Decision is made about whether report meets screening criteria
  - If criteria are not met, then case is closed
  - Referrals to other community resources are made as appropriate
- Hotline workers are HHS employees

Reporters’ names and identities are confidential!
Safety vs. Risk

Tornado Warning

Tornado Watch
Safety Determination

**Safe**—No safety threats identified

**Conditionally Safe**—Safety threat(s) exist in the home, but a *safety plan has been established* that allows the children to remain in the home

**Unsafe**—Safety threat(s) exist that *cannot be managed* using a safety plan and removal from the home is necessary
Risk Assessment

• Examines the probability that *any* harm will occur in the next one to two years
• Research based risk factors are used to assess the families’ statistical likelihood of future maltreatment
• Requires much more information about the family than then Safety Assessment, can take up to 30 days to complete
Will the case be referred to NFC for ongoing services?

- Safe Children + Low or Moderate Risk = Refer to community resources and close
- Safe Children + High or Very High Risk = Refer to Ongoing Services (NFC)
- Conditionally Safe or Unsafe Children + Refer to Ongoing Services (NFC) = Regardless of Risk Level
Types of Referrals

Court vs. Non Court

Court Involvement
- Children are Wards of the State
- Parent’s do NOT maintain legal rights over their children
- The Department of Health and Human Services has custody of the child
- The family attends regular court hearings to make decisions about what next steps to take in the case

Non Court Involvement
- Children remain in the custody of their parents
- NFC and the Department of Health & Human Services make decisions about what next steps to take in the case
- The family may end services and NFC will have the option to close the case or file an affidavit and the family becomes court involved.
When identifying interventions and strategies

- We need to work with the family to identify informal supports
- Utilize informal supports to assist with interventions and strategies identified in the case plan
- Collaborate with community providers the family already works with: daycare, churches, schools, medical doctors, etc.
REPORT TO DHHS

INTAKE

Intake Screened by DHHS for acceptance
Key Persons – DHHS Intake Hotline Worker

INTAKE

CASE CLOSURE
(report does not meet screening criteria)
Key Persons – DHHS Intake Hotline Worker

CASE CLOSURE
(child is safe)
Key Persons – DHHS Initial Assessment Worker & NFC Family Permanency Specialist

CASE CLOSURE
(child is safe)
Key Persons – NFC Family Permanency Specialist & NFC Aftercare Specialist

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

This is when cases are usually referred to NFC for case management

ONGOING CASE MANAGEMENT

Key Persons – NFC Family Permanency Specialist & NFC Aftercare Specialist

Key Persons – DHHS Initial Assessment Worker & NFC Family Permanency Specialist

Key Persons – DHHS Initial Assessment Worker
It takes a village to raise our children

• CFOM (Children and Family Outcome Monitor) – They are the legal guardian for the child from the Department of Health and Human Services

• FPS (Family Permanency Specialist) – They are the case coordinator with Nebraska Families Collaborative

• Guardian Ad Litem – They are the legal representation for the best interest of the child, they are appointed by the court

• Parents – may be adoptive, guardian or biological
Who Do You Call?
• DHHS CFOM – signs all releases/consents for medical information, mental health treatment or information sharing, makes final decisions regarding the care of the youth *(when they are wards of the state)*

• Parents – maintain educational rights to provide for consent for Special Education Testing and Verification

• FPS with NFC – maintains all case knowledge, is responsible for coordination of day to day services for the family and ensure the child’s needs are met
Project Coordinator Role

• Assist Family Permanency Specialist with communications between schools and parents
• Participate in Truancy Triage, Education Coalition, Statewide Education Systems Team
• Attend school meetings as requested by the FPS, school or family
• Assist school districts with questions regarding services available, state ward status, and collaboration in communication.
Working Together – Project Coordinator Role

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