

Solution Based Casework (SBC)

Because *“What Happens After The Knock Matters”*

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Learning Objectives

Participants will:

1. Gain an understanding of SBC
2. Appreciate the parallel process associated with SBC
3. Leave with the desire to learn more



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“I want you to find a bold and innovative way to do everything just like we used to do 35 years ago.”



The Heart of Solution Based Casework

We Prioritize
the Family
Partnership

1

2

We Focus on
Pragmatic
Solutions to
Everyday Life
Problems

We Help Families
Document and
Celebrate
Success

3



What is Solution-Based Casework ?

Solution-Based Casework (SBC) is an evidence-informed practice model for Casework Management in Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice. The model provides a conceptual map for a family-centered practice from assessment through case closure. Grounded in a framework of safety, and wedded to full family engagement, the SBC practice model is best thought of as the architecture that holds our practice to a consistent focus on our safety outcomes.

Research on SBC in Child Welfare?

SUMMARY of OUTCOMES

(2005, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2014)

- 30% reduction in removal of children
- Over a 100% increase in goal attainment
- 27% more workers contacted referral sources directly
- 64% increase in identified client strengths
- Families with chronic CPS involvement more likely to be successful
- Clients with Co-morbidity also achieved more goals.
- 35% reduction in recidivism referrals over 6 months
- Full implementation of SBC met all 23 CFSR review items and the 7 outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being (As measured by the CQI tool on 4500 cases over a 4 year period)

(Antle et al, Child Abuse and Neglect, 2012)

More information on other studies at www.solutionbasedcasework.com



Why was Solution-Based Casework Developed ?

The following quotes are from parents who have been in the system of child welfare and are now writing and processing their experiences for an online magazine called RISE.



Why was Solution-Based Casework Developed ?

“Losing my son was the hardest thing I have ever gone through. I felt so alone with no one to care for and no hope whatsoever. My first worker didn’t ask what I needed or explain what I was supposed to learn from parenting classes, or why I needed to go. I felt lost each time I went to court. I didn’t know what to say.”

(With permission from Diana H., RISE parent)



Why was Solution-Based Casework Developed ?

“When you’re involved in the system, as a child or a parent, it seems like people are so ready to diagnosis you. They say you’re mentally unstable, even though sometimes you’re just in a lot of pain. When the system and the courts slap you with a diagnosis without even understanding the situation you’re in or listening to what you think you need, you feel stereotyped and discriminated against.”

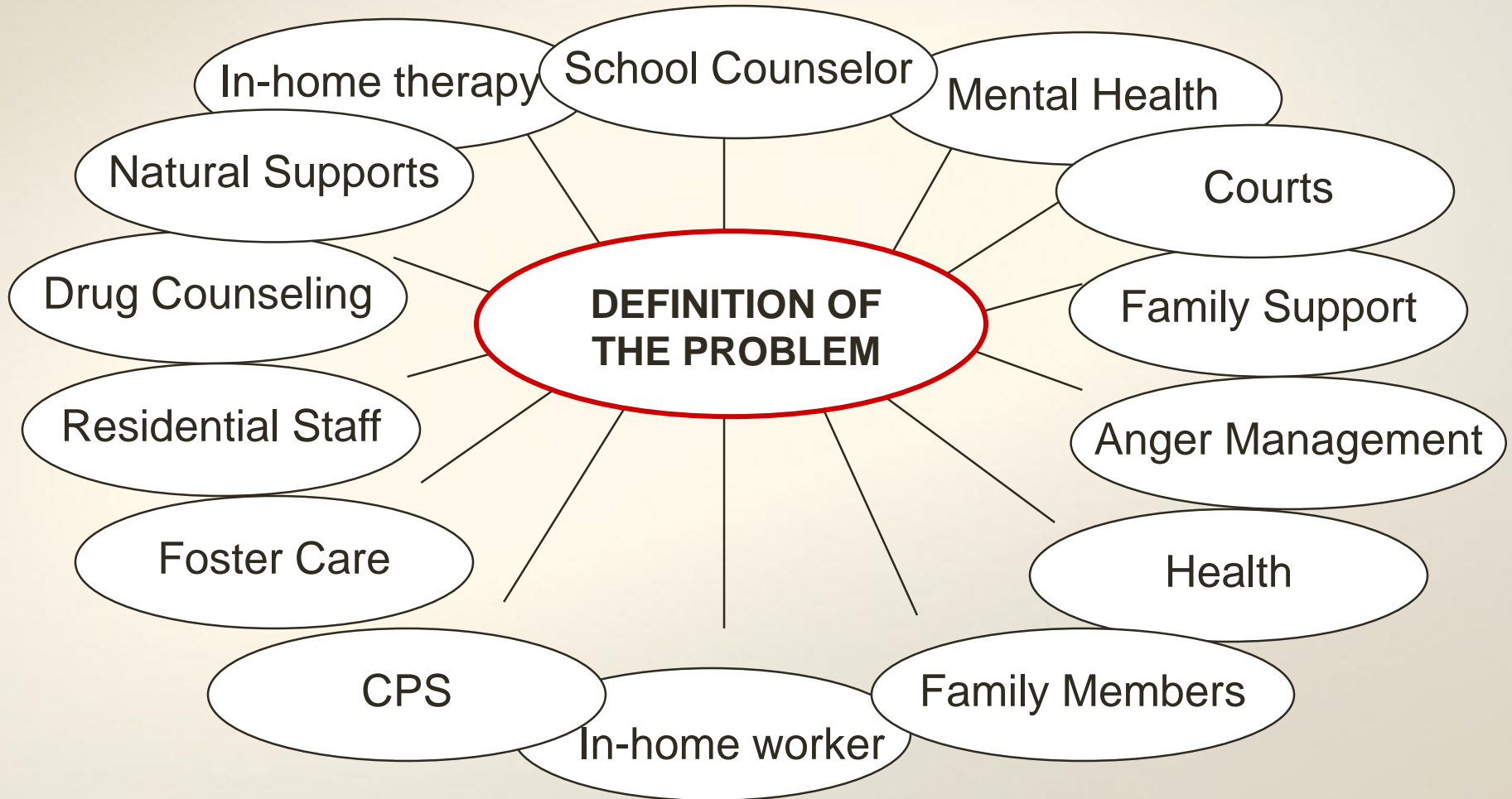
(With permission from Sienna., RISE parent)



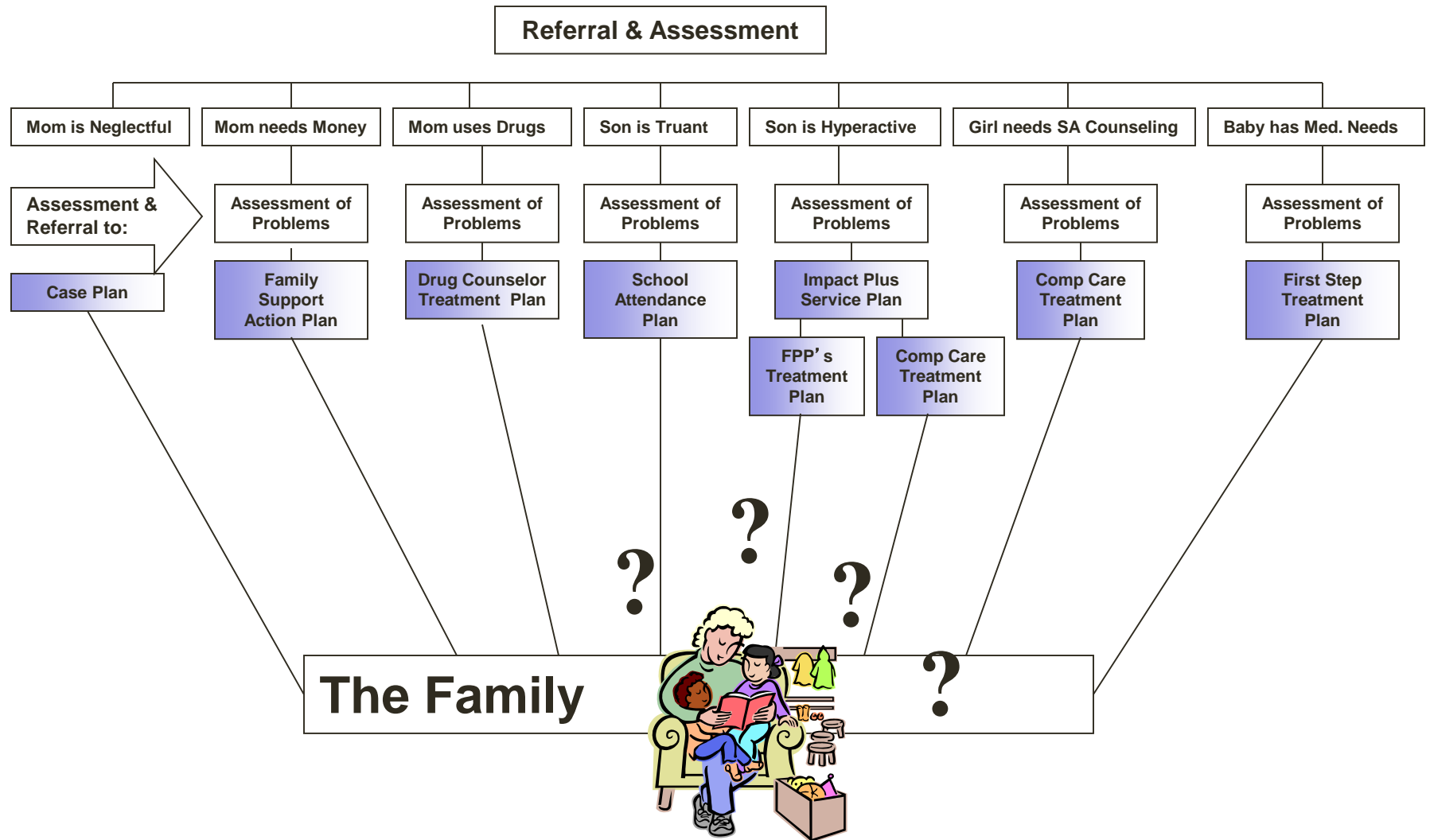
Why was Solution-Based Casework Developed ?

1. Agency “Values and Principals” didn’t translate to Practice in the field
2. Investigations led to problem checklists and a reliance on mere service compliance rather than actual behavioral change to ensure safety
3. Assessments focused only on what was wrong and often led to underestimate family fears of being unfairly judged
4. Problems could be seen just as labels, and safety concerns were not fully understood in terms of how they actually occurred in everyday life
5. Lack of clarity and focus on safety priorities created too much outcome drift
6. Case planning was more worker-driven and “owned”
7. Families, Caseworkers and Providers didn’t share a common road map to help the family create safety

An Example of How Families Get Left Behind



The All-Too-Familiar Approach





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Mental Health: MH Clinic

Work Issues: Family & Child Support

Supervision: Family Members

School Attendance: School

Substance Use: AA Counselor

Home & Child Cleanliness: FPP

Protection issues:
Courts and P & P



A Family-Friendly Interface that Helps to Organize Complex Issues and Multiple Partners

Action Plan

High Risk Situation(s)
Getting up late and rushing around, waking up with a head ache, when my son talks back.

Warning Signal(s)
Feeling anxiety and tension in my body, then I become more upset. I start to feel sorry for myself and then I start to blame

Prevention Plan

- Get to bed each night by 10:15PM.
- Read until 10:30 and lights out
- Create a better morning routine for myself by getting up earlier so I will have 15 minutes of quiet time and get in a better framed mind
- Take a walk with the dog in the early morning to get fresh air.

Task(s) to Be Accomplished

How is it Measured?
Create and use a daily calendar where I record when I want to bed, when I get up, and whether I walk with the dog.

Interruption Plan
If I do oversleep or wake up with a headache, I will remind myself, "It's ok, I have been here before. Stick to the plan and take deep breaths."

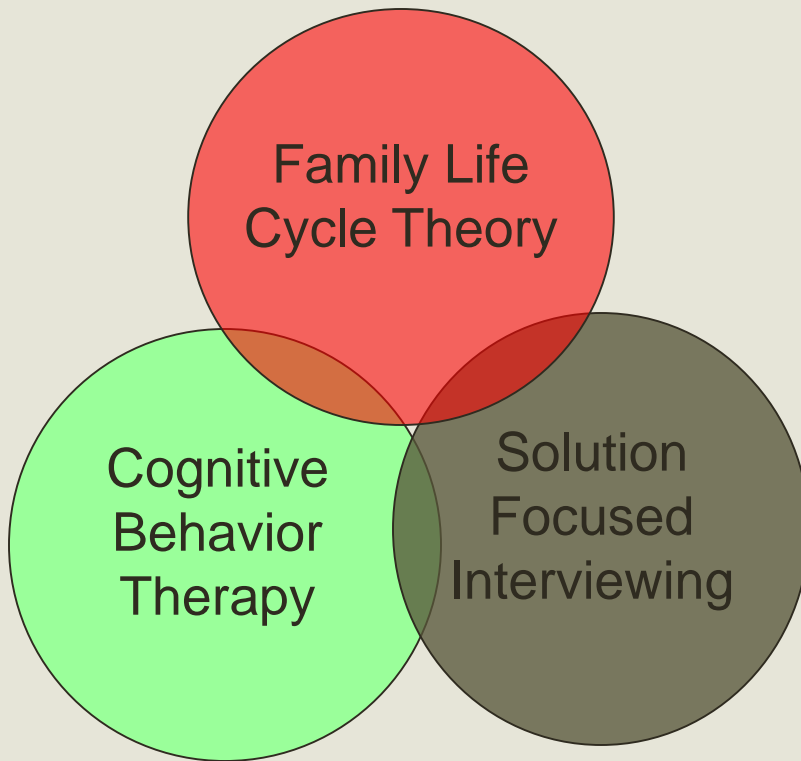
Escape Plan

- I will signal to my husband if I feel like I am going to blow up.
- We agreed what the signal would be
- He has agreed to let me leave the room and let him take over.

Safety (Backup) Plan
I agree not to hit or spank my son no matter what happens, or whether he behaves or not. If I need extra help and my husband is away, I will call my mom and she has agreed to come over and help out when I need it.

Signed
Witnessed By

Integrated Framework from:



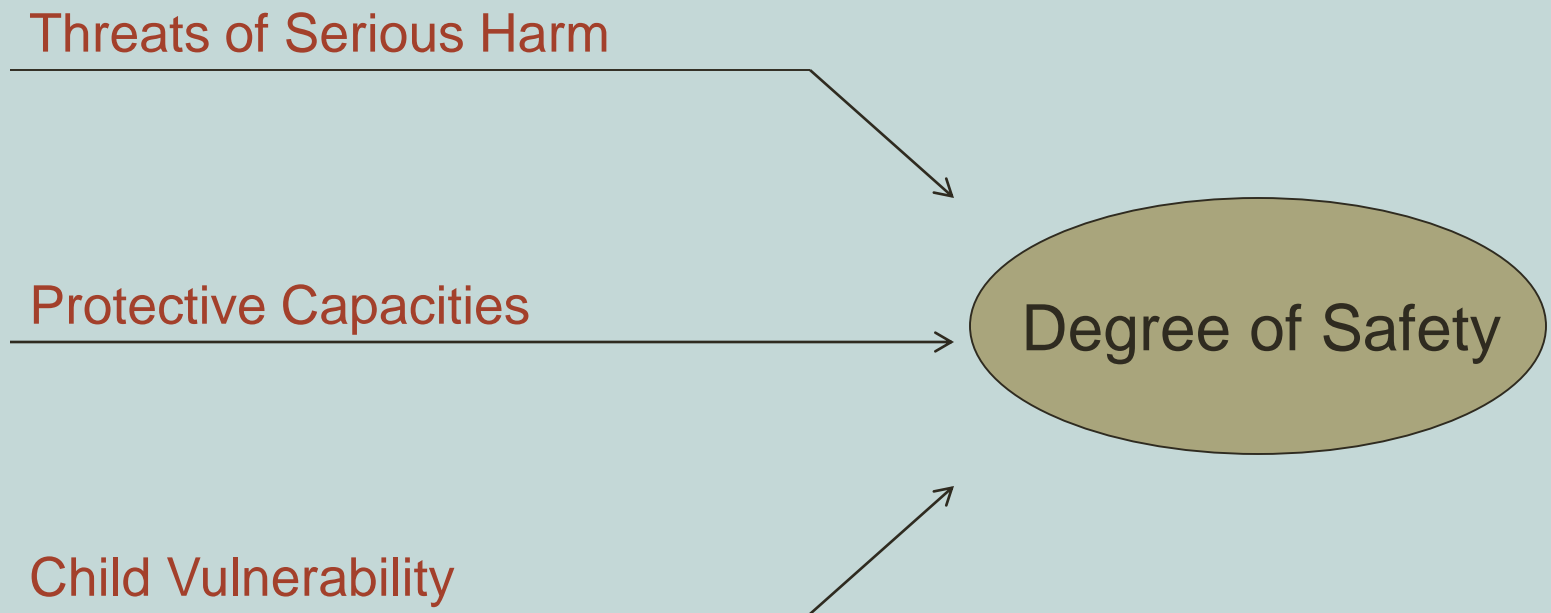
- **Family Life Cycle Theory**
(Carter and McGoldrick, 1999)
- **Relapse Prevention
(Cognitive Behavioral Theory)**
*(Marlatt & Gordon, 1985, Pithers, 1990,
Beck, 1993)*
- **Solution-Focused Therapy**
(Berg, 1994, DeShazer, 1988)

All three models have their own well-documented evidence base.

Assessment continues to be a balance between:

1) assessing the threats to safety, and ...

2) engaging the family in a consensus on how to resolve them....





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*Is this really our job to provide HOPE
to Child Welfare Clients?*





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Safety is
our
Common
Goal

We anchor our work and our supervision in the:

How does SBC help us stay focused and organized in our work with challenging families and over a number of cases?

4

Milestones of Solution Based Casework



1

Milestone 1 : Building a Consensus

- Having honest conversations about family safety, parental capacity, and child vulnerability in a safe way that builds toward family engagement in change.

2

Milestone 2 : Getting Organized on Outcomes

- Moving from talking about what needs to change to formalizing specific and measurable outcomes that the family (and their providers) will work on.

3

Milestone 3 : Specific ACTION Plans

- Working with families and providers to co-develop specific Action Plans to help them realize their outcomes amidst the challenges of their everyday lives.

4

Milestone 4: Documenting and Celebrating

- Working with families and providers to problem-solve challenges and notice their successes in ensuring family safety and individual self-management.

Building a partnership for Change:

It Changes the Meaning of Assessment Interviewing

“From the beginning she showed me respect. When she walked into our home she didn’t turn her nose up at it. Instead she sat down on our ripped furniture seemingly without any thought. She took time to build a relationship with me. She showed me the good in myself I just couldn’t see”

(with permission from Jeanette V., Rise parent)

Research has shown:

*Partnerships are the BEST
way to gather complex
Safety Information*

Milestone

1

(Antle et al, Child Abuse and Neglect, 2012)

(van Zyl et al, Journal of Public Child Welfare, 2014)

So, how is SBC Assessment Different ?

- **When & Where?** We begin by defining problems as difficult situations in everyday life.
- **What Happens?** Then we try to understand how these situations “go down”, how they actually happen in everyday life, and how they’ve evolved over time.
- **Are there Exceptions?** Then we explore “exceptions”, i.e. situations when they are doing something similar but it goes better (safely)



How does SBC organize assessment ?

1

1. What developmental stage are they in?
2. What everyday situations does the family struggle when it comes to caring for their children?
3. How does that situation actually happen when it works, and when it doesn't.

Family Plan

2

1. What personal issue(s) does one or more parent have that makes caring for the children difficult?
2. What is their Pattern of unwanted behavior?
3. What skills do they have about managing their personal behavior issue?

Individual Plan



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why
both?

What kind of Family Plans ?

A Better Plan to...

Supervise the Kids

Set Rules For
Curfew

Get Medical Care

For Disciplining Kids

Keep The
House Clean

A Home Safe from
Violence

What kind of Individual Plans ?

A Better Plan to...

Stop their **C**riminal
Behavior

Manage their **A**nger
or Control Issues

Manage their
Substance Abuse

Stay **E**motionally Stable

Manage their **S**exual
Behavior Problems

Family Plan

Action Plan

Name: Our Long-Term Plan to be a FAMILY! Family Individual

Difficult Situation(s)
Whenever we argue, whenever we are under stress from staying up w/ Sadie, when Shaun's been with his buddies and using, when bills are due, problems at work

Warning Signs:
Raised voice, heart rate ↑, one of us starts to shake
Facial Expressions, Tara gets scared, too much worry

Task(s) to Be Accomplished
(Prevention, Interruption, Escape)

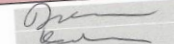
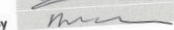
No (E): The following plan is our long-range plan to begin once good progress has been made on our Individual Action Plans:

- 1) Tara and Shaun to work w/ a Financial Counselor to reduce financial stress
- 2) Tara + Shaun to keep seeking stable, long-term housing to reduce stress + be stable
- 3) Tara + Shaun to get familiar with iron + each other's warning signs about anger
- 4) Tara + Shaun to consider getting some communication/relationship skills to increase their abilities to work thru stress.

Interruption:
5) On our visits, if frustration arises, Tara and Shaun will have a 10-minute break

Escape:
6) If any situation, now or later, builds up, either one or both agree to walk away + talk when both are calm

Safety (Backup) Plan
Short term, not be together or live together until progress on individual outcomes. Only supervised visitation for now, once it is approved.

Signed: 
Witnessed By: 
Date: 3-3-14

Individual Plan

Action Plan

(Milestone 4 example)

Name: Stay Calm and Clean Plan (Shaun) Family Individual

Difficult Situation(s)
When things don't go my way. If I'm high when Tara is upset with me, or yelling at me. When I feel blamed, like I'm a failure

Warning Signs:
I start thinking/dwelling on the negative, get the shakes
Heart rate goes up, blood rushes to my head

Task(s) to Be Accomplished
(Prevention, Interruption, Escape)

Prevention:

- 1) Continue to walk each night with Bob
- 2) Keep the trailer picked up and in repair
- 3) Attend 2 aa meetings (of my choice) each week
- 4) Ask CW to do a random drug check on me
- 5) Find and engage an individual counselor for my anger (have an appt. within 2 weeks!)
- 6) Keep a nightly journal of my thoughts about my progress and hopes for the future

Interruption:

- 1) Use my "don't think, just do it" card when I start to notice my early warning signs
- 2) If I start to feel blamed on a visit, I'll say "I'm sorry, I need to take a short break"
- 3) I need to catch myself dwelling on the past with negative thoughts, and find something else to think about that is positive

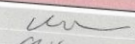
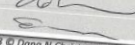
Escape:

- 1) If I ever feel like using or feel explosive I'll call for support (and not try to solve it myself!)

Safety (Backup) Plan
Continue to honor the I.O. and stay away from Tara until given permission to do a supervised visit. Not, stay off drugs!!

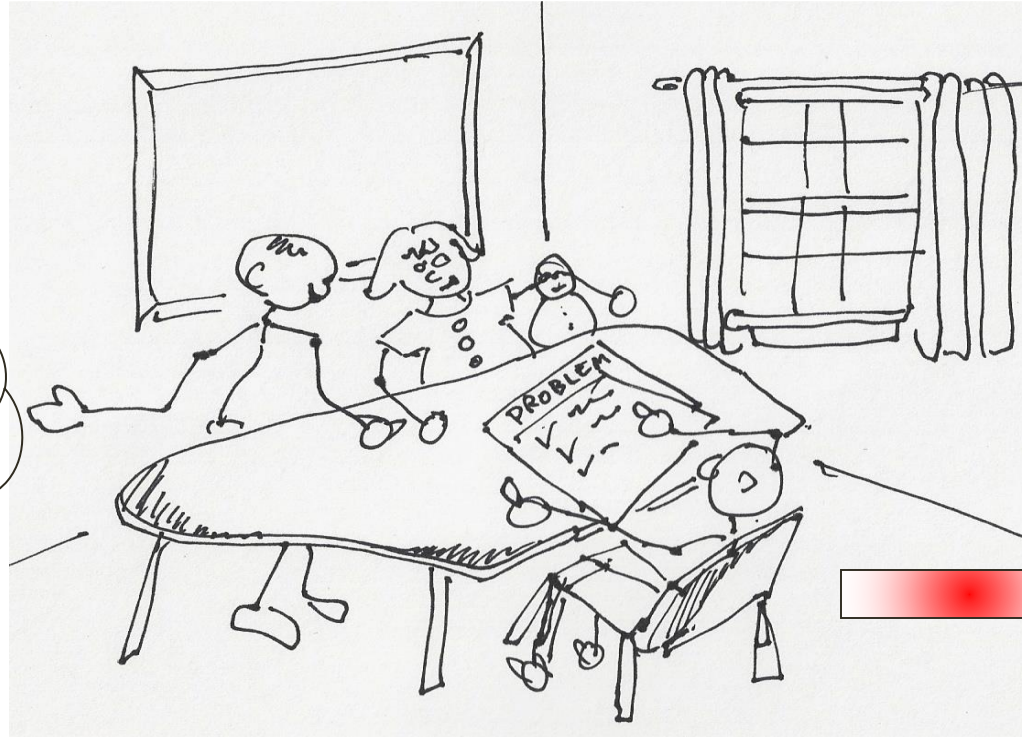
How Is Change Noticed/Measured?

Calendar checks (✓)
Caseworker notes
Calendar initiated by AA
Caseworker notes
Counselor records
Personal journal (Shaun w/ Counselor)
Record a number (1-10) in personal journal each day
Tara will notice if I do this on a visit
Talks to counselor & record in my journal
Call CW, counselor Bob J, work

Signed: 
Witnessed By: 
Date: 5-12-14

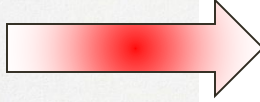
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Assessment Interview



Safety & Risk

Consensus
Summary



Let's sort
this out...

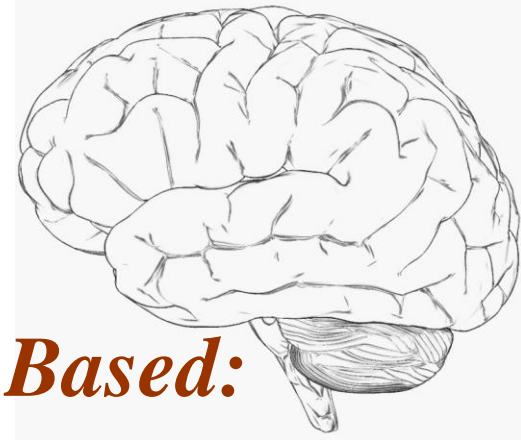


So How do we GET There?



Consensus Building Interviewing Techniques

1. Normalizing Developmental Challenges
2. Tracking the Sequence/History
3. Searching for Exceptions to the Problem
4. Separating Intentions from Actions



Training Your Mind to Think Solution Based:

- *I'm not here to diagnose, but to "sort out"*
- *I can listen for safety, **and** build a partnership*
- *Most parent's intentions are better than their actions*
- *I wonder what they have tried?*
- *What are their everyday life struggles?*
- *I'll bet they're discouraged and probably scared*
- *It's always difficult at first....but we'll get it done*

4

Milestones to Solution-Based Casework

Assessment	Case Planning (General) (Specific)		Casework
<p>Sorting Out Situations of Concern</p> <p>1</p> <p>Consensus Summary</p> <p>What is not working & how we can be helpful.</p>	<p>Getting Organized On how to proceed</p> <p>2</p> <p>Case Plan Outcomes</p> <p>Family Level Outcomes (FLO's) & Individual Level Outcome (ILO's)</p>	<p>Getting Specific Behavioral Tasks</p> <p>3</p> <p>Specific Action Plans</p> <p>ACTION PLANS to meet those Outcomes</p>	<p>Documenting & Celebrating</p> <p>4</p> <p>Documented Competence</p> <p>Documenting specific tasks of the ACTION PLAN</p>



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Milestone

2

Planning is:

Getting Organized.

First Generally, then Specifically.

Partnership



Co-Constructing a Case Plan



Why Safety Outcomes versus compliance with services?

From the voice of our clients:

“When my daughter was 4, the system sent me to a parenting class where I was taught to burp and swaddle a baby. In anger management class I was taught to count to ten, but what I really needed was meds for my mood swings.....If parents are going to succeed, they need to feel like someone really knows them. Not just cookie cutouts but as real people.”

(with permission from Piazadora, Rise parent)

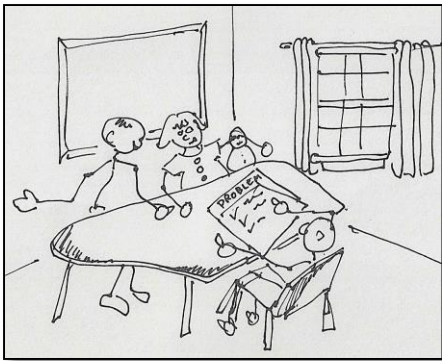
“During treatment I worked diligently to get my life in order. I finished all my services on the case plan: parenting, substance abuse treatment, a domestic violence program. But the story kept changing.....even when I had succeeded in finding employment and housing, they still didn't return my kids to me.”

(with permission from Ashley B., Rise parent)



SBC Case FLOW

Assessment



- Normalizing
- Tracking family life
- Exceptions
- Separating Intentions



Let's sort this out...

How might we help?



Family Agreement (Case Plan)

FAMILY AGREEMENT (preventive)

Family Members: _____ Date: " ____/____/____" Draft Update: _____

PROBLEMS / CONCERNS
 Describe what you have learned from tracking the sequence of events with the client, record the behavior or presentation that caused your concern and refer to the attached Family Agreement document in the outline of response plan to address the client's needs and concerns. Use clear, simple, specific, and measurable language. Are there any safety concerns that you have yet to find?

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____

FAMILY STRENGTHS
 Describe what you have learned from working for exceptions with the family system when they have done well to keep the children safe, healthy, and successful.

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____

OUTCOMES
 Describe what the family has agreed to do to prevent or respond to the situation that is causing the concern. List up to the child's age, reading, and skill level.

Desired Family Level Outcomes (FLO)

UO 1: _____
 UO 2: _____
 UO 3: _____

Desired Individual Level Outcomes (ILO)

UO 1: _____
 UO 2: _____
 UO 3: _____

Action Plans

Action Plan

Family Plan

Task(s) to be completed: _____ How(s) to be completed: _____

Start Date: _____ End Date: _____



Action Plan

Dad's Plan

Task(s) to be completed: _____ How(s) to be completed: _____

Start Date: _____ End Date: _____



Let's get Organized!

Let's Get Specific!



Overview of Family Agreement /Case Plan in SBC

FAMILY AGREEMENT		
Family Members	Date of Initial Agreement	Date Updated
FAMILY CHALLENGES Describe what the family has done to keep the child(ren) safe, healthy, and in school in the past and what resources were used.		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
PROBLEMS / CONCERNS Describe the family's behavior or circumstances that create safety concerns and/or risk to the child(ren). Think of the concerns in the context of caregiver events (e.g. getting kids ready for school, dealing with job-related stress, keeping the house clean).		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
OUTCOMES Describe what the family (as a whole) and the parents or caregivers (as individuals) need to achieve that will keep the child(ren) safe, healthy, and in school.		
Overall Family Level Outcomes (FLO)		
FLO 1.		
FLO 2.		
FLO 3.		
Overall Individual Level Outcomes (ILO)		
ILO 1.		
ILO 2.		
ILO 3.		

- Family Agreements (Case Plans) build on Consensus Summary
- Always at least one Family and one Individual Outcome (FLO & ILO)
- Family Outcomes call for a NEW Plan to manage situations that are safety or serious risk concerns
- Individual Outcomes call for NEW Plan to manage personal issues that threaten the Family Outcome's success
- Outcomes are “what will be happening” to create safety
- Plans are Co-constructed and Family Ownership a Priority.

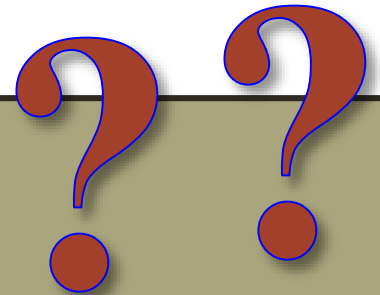
Phrasing an Outcome in SBC

3 PARTS to Each Outcome

WHO will Use	WHAT Plan	WHY (<i>Safety Purpose</i>)
The family will use..	...their plan to safely discipline their children ortheir “Family Chores Plan” to safely discipline their childrenso that the kids learn to do their chores and everyone is safe from physical harm
Dad will usehis “Keep Cool Plan” to manage his temper	particularly when disciplining his children so that they are safe from physical harm.

What do you do with Lower Priority Concerns

Where do you put items that are important to the family, represent good social work, but are not true safety or high risk issues and therefore won't keep a case open?



Simply work those into tasks where they fit:

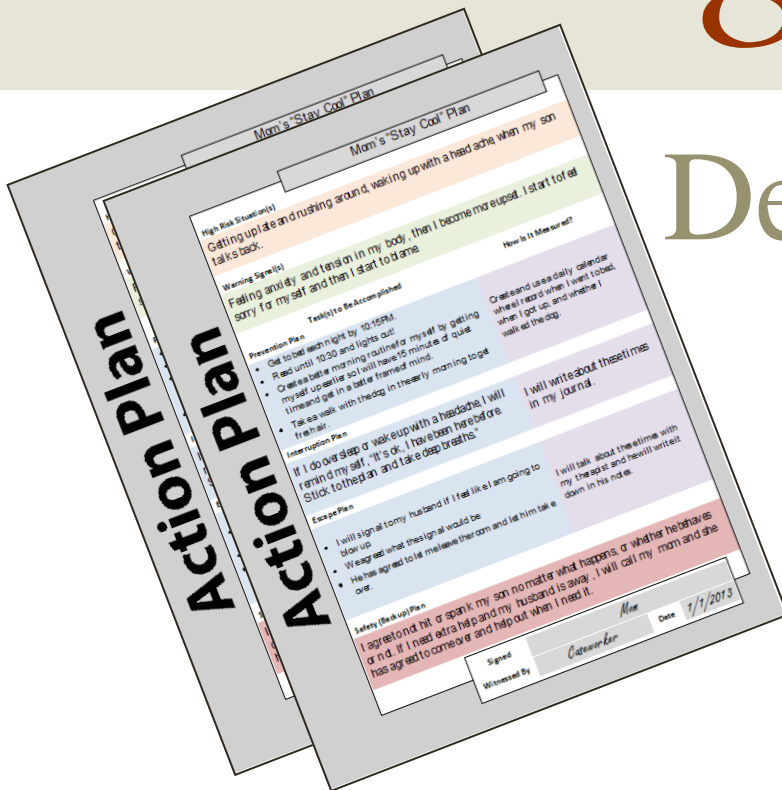
- Family or Individual Outcomes
(or in Foster Care cases, Child Well-Being Needs)
or
- Just take care of them and place in case notes.

4 Milestones to Solution Based Casework

Assessment	Case Planning (General) (Specific)		Casework
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Getting Specific:



Developing Specific ACTION Plans

*“Success seems to be connected with **action**. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit.”*

— Conrad Hilton

Action Plan

Mom's "Stay Cool" Plan

High Risk Situation(s)

Getting up late and rushing around, waking up with a head ache, when my son talks back.

Warning Signal(s)

Feeling anxiety and tension in my body, then I become more upset. I start to feel sorry for myself and then I start to blame

Task(s) to Be Accomplished

How Is It Measured?

Prevention Plan

- Get to bed each night by 10:15PM.
- Read until 10:30 and lights out!
- Create a better morning routine for myself by getting myself up earlier so I will have 15 minutes of quiet time and get in a better frame of mind.
- Take a walk with the dog in the early morning to get fresh air.

Create and use a daily calendar where I record when I went to bed, when I got up, and whether I walked the dog.

Interruption Plan

If I do oversleep or wake up with a headache, I will remind myself, "It's ok, I have been here before. Stick to the plan and take deep breaths."

I will write about these times in my journal.

Escape Plan

- I will signal to my husband if I feel like I am going to blow up.
- We agreed what the signal would be.
- He has agreed to let me leave the room and let him take over.

I will talk about these times with my therapist and he will write it down in his notes.

Safety (Backup) Plan

I agree not to hit or spank my son no matter what happens, or whether he behaves or not. If I need extra help and my husband is away, I will call my mom and she has agreed to come over and help out when I need it.

Signed

Mom

Witnessed By

Caseworker

Date

1/1/2013



What Skills are We Talking About ?

Able to:

- Identify high risk or difficult situations
- Identify early warning signals
- Prevent high risk situations
- Interrupt risk situations not avoided
- Escape situations not interrupted

4 Milestones to Solution-Based Casework

Assessment	Case Planning (General) (Specific)		Casework
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Milestone

4

Documenting and Celebrating:

Noticing and Anchoring
Real Change



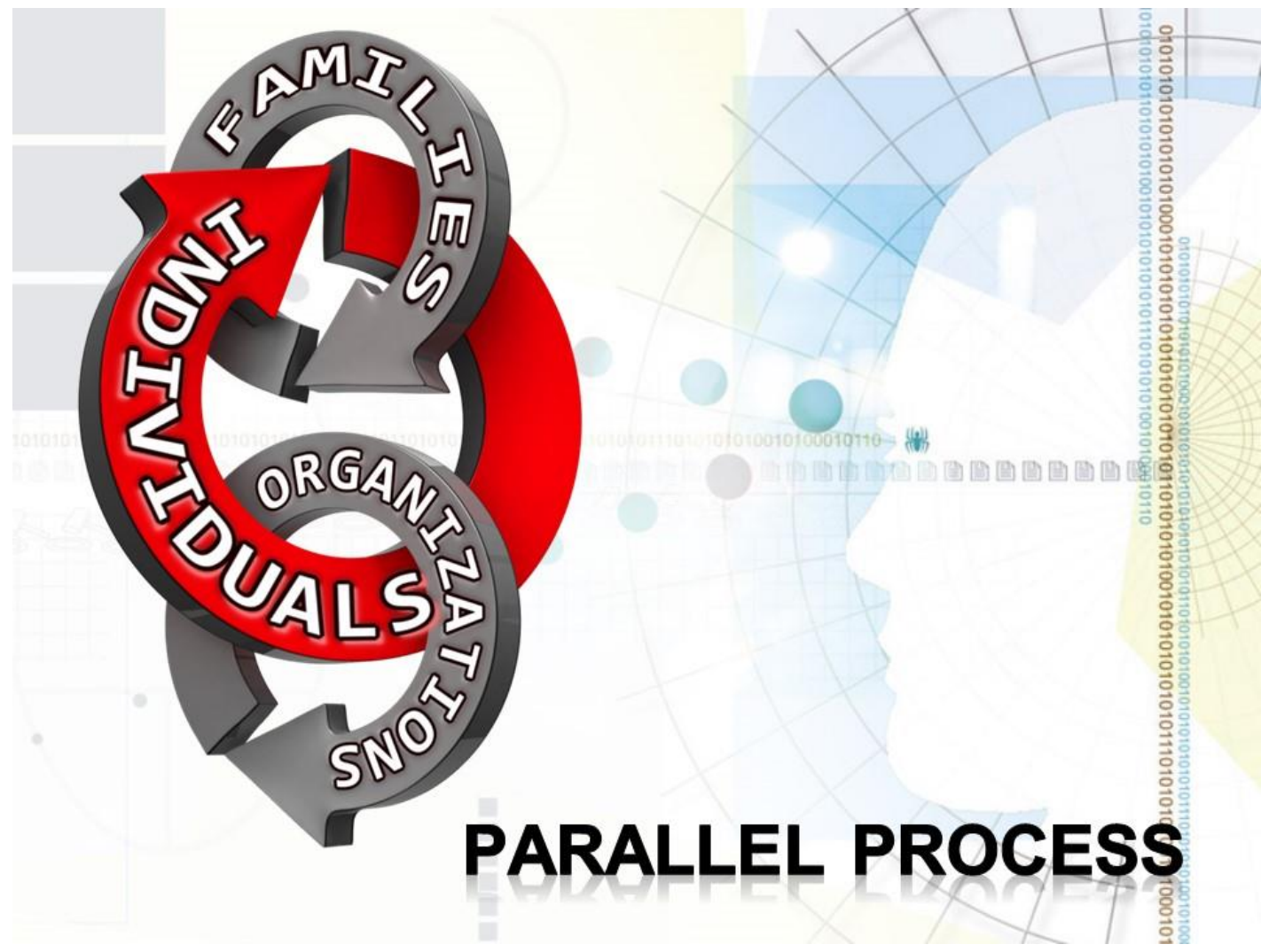
Suggestions for Celebration of Change

1. Anticipate change
2. Verbal acknowledgment
3. T-charts
4. Collect stories and examples
5. Call an FTM (or an FSTM)
6. Have a celebration party
7. Provide a certificate
8. Memory book of change
9. Write and mail a card
10. Share good news with support team

(Click next for video on Anchoring Change with Celebration)



PARALLEL PROCESS



4 Milestones to Solution-Based Casework

Assessment	Case Planning (General) (Specific)		Casework
<p>Sorting Out Situations of Concern</p> <p>1</p> <p>Consensus Summary</p> <p>What is not working & how we can be helpful.</p>	<p>Getting Organized On how to proceed</p> <p>2</p> <p>Case Plan Outcomes</p> <p>Family Level Outcomes (FLO's) & Individual Level Outcome (ILO's)</p>	<p>Getting Specific Behavioral Tasks</p> <p>3</p> <p>Specific Action Plans</p> <p>ACTION PLANS to meet those Outcomes</p>	<p>Documenting & Celebrating</p> <p>4</p> <p>Documented Competence</p> <p>Documenting specific tasks of the ACTION PLAN</p>

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