

HAWAII CHILD WELFARE SERVICES (CWS)

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT PRACTICE MODEL

The Family Partnership and Engagement Practice Model defines how CWS, our families and our community partners collaboratively engage children and families in developing and delivering services and assistance to meet the unique needs of the children and families whom together we serve. Our Model defines standards of practice and identifies how practice supports the achievement of positive outcomes for children and families.

Values and principles are defined so staff, families and our community partners know what our values and principles look like in practice. Values are qualities or characteristics that we believe are important to serving children and families to help guide decisions and practice. Our principles will serve as guidance to staff, families and our community partners in defining how we work together.

MISSION

The CWS mission is to ensure, in partnership with families and communities, the safety, permanency and well-being of those children and families where child abuse and neglect has occurred or who are at high risk for child abuse and neglect.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

How we do our work is as important as the work we do.

OVERARCHING CULTURAL PRINCIPLE

Children and families are to be engaged within the context of their own family rules, traditions and cultures.

Value: Child Centered

Principle: Children are entitled to live in a safe and permanent home and need families to be successful.

Children deserve:

- to be heard and understood
- a voice to participate
- family connections, family finding and relative/kinship placements

CWS Family Partnership and Engagement Practice Model

- monthly contact with their CWS worker
- services that are appropriate to their age, developmental stage, and culture as well as responsive to their strengths, values and needs

Our Practice:

- provides support and services to maintain children safely in the family home whenever possible
- initiatives family finding and search for relatives
- provides a family visit within 48 hours of removal from the family home
- keeps siblings safely together in placement whenever possible
- supports safe and appropriate visits and contacts with parents and siblings while in foster care
- maintains safe and appropriate family and community connections while in foster care
- supports children's participation in Ohana Conferences, Youth Circles, and Family Court Hearings

Value: Family Focused

Principle: Families have the right and responsibility to raise their children.

Families deserve:

- to be engaged in a respectful, non-judgmental and fair manner
- to understand why the agency is involved
- to be heard and understood
- to have their strengths and abilities valued
- to participate in case planning
- to receive services that are culturally appropriate and responsive to their strengths, values and needs
- to be encouraged and acknowledged for their efforts and accomplishments

Our Practice:

- provides support and services to maintain children safely in the family home whenever possible
- provides a family visit within 48 hours of the children's removal from their family home and ongoing visits for children in foster care
- enlists and welcomes help from both maternal and paternal families and the parents' advocates to support the children and their parents
- provides a referral for an Ohana Conference within 5 working days from the date of CWS involvement (i.e., the onset of a CWS investigation or a referral for a differential response service provider) and ongoing as requested to plan for their children
- provides services and support that are necessary to keep the children connected to their parents and families

Value: Culturally Competent

Principle: We have a responsibility to understand and provide services to children and families within the context of their beliefs, values, race, socio-economic class, ethnicity, history, culture, religion and language.

Our practice:

- incorporates cultural strength and values into our work
- enlists support from within the family's culture and community

Value: Family Engagement

Principle: We believe that the child, the family, and individuals in the child's life bring invaluable perspectives to the planning and decision-making process. The foundation of family engagement is the belief that families are capable of change and it is our responsibility to engage families to be active participants in case planning.

Our practice:

- engage families to be active participants in their case plan
- uses positive, culturally appropriate engagement practices such as Ohana Conferences and frequent contact by CWS workers with families.
- establishes respectful relationships with families to accomplish goals and outcomes
- provides families with an opportunity to advocate for themselves when there are disagreements or concerns about the services they receive

Value: Trustworthy and Accountable

Principle: We shall be fair and compassionate, act with respect and integrity, perform reliably and demonstrate competence in all interactions.

Our practice:

- strives for fairness in all case work decisions
- is inclusive and collaborative
- is open, honest, upfront and objective
- provides families with a *family journal* to track their progress and important dates
- listens to families and acknowledges their hurts or anger
- is responsible for our actions

Value: Continuous Quality Improvement

Principle: We recognize our responsibility to assess and manage our performance and self-correct to achieve positive outcomes. We are responsible for creating and maintaining a supportive working and learning environment.

Our practice:

- conducts ongoing quality case reviews with staff and community partners
- uses information and data to promote continuous improvement
- provides a process for child, family, staff and community input
- reviews performance and supports best practice and outcome-based performance with staff and contracted providers
- provides opportunities for continuous learning
- responds to the needs of the children and families we serve

Value: Collaborative

Principle: We recognize the need to work in collaboration with stakeholders and the community to promote safety, permanency and well-being for children and families.

Our practice:

- acknowledges the importance of partnering with community to fulfill its rights and responsibilities in protecting children
- believes that the community has a right and responsibility to support children and families in the community
- acknowledges that community partners have a right to feel heard and understood by CWS and vice-versa
- acknowledges communities are entitled to cultural autonomy and deserve self-determination and access to resources and non-traditional supports
- honors and respects the uniqueness of community as defined by the child and family