

Essential Element 4
Your Role: Enhancing Family Well-being and Resilience

Enhancing Resiliency and Well-Being in Parents/Caregivers:

- Understand that families are a critical part of both protecting children from harm and enhancing their natural resilience
- Facilitate partnership between birth and resource parents
- Facilitate frequent and ongoing contact between the child and people who are important to the child (e.g., family, friends, teachers, etc.)
- Help caregivers ensure that the child has at least one positive attachment relationship with an appropriate adult
- Identify and build on parent and caregiver protective factors:
 - Nurturing and attachment
 - Knowledge of Parenting and Child and Youth Development
 - Parental Resilience
 - Social Connectedness
 - Social and Emotional Competence
 - Concrete for Parents

In order to explore.....	Ask the parent.....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parent's view of the most immediate need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to [stay in your house, keep your job, and pay your heating bill]?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps the parent has taken to deal with the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have you handled this? • What kind of response have you gotten? • Why is this working or not working?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways the family handles other problems • Current connections that might offer help for the new problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has worked well in the past? • Are there community groups or local services that have been or might be able to offer assistance? • Do you belong to a faith community? Do you have a relationship with a pediatrician?

Communication:

- Engage the caregiver(s) and children in court discussion about their strengths, what they are good at, and what they enjoy
- Ask for their ideas/suggestions on what will help their family

Judge's Comment	Perception of Trauma Survivor/Belief in Invisible Suitcase	Trauma-Informed Approach
A judge discusses the circumstances that led to the abuse/neglect	The parent/caregiver/child may believe that this event(s) defines who they and their family are. They internalize being awful, horrible, and that it was willful	<p>Acknowledge that the incident occurred but help the family identify when this did not occur in the family</p> <p>Acknowledge what is working well for the family</p>

Court Processes:

Comments/Process	Perception of Trauma Survivor/Belief in Invisible Suitcase	Trauma-Informed Approach
Discussing the court/legal process quickly and/or alone with the caregiver(s)/children	<p>The parent/caregiver/child may be in a heightened state of arousal due to past trauma. Therefore they hearing and/or understanding what is being said. They may feel confused, incompetent, and unempowered.</p> <p>Reinforces negative self-image in their suitcase</p>	<p>Help the adult/family identify individuals, either family members or friends that can be with them when the court process is explained or accompany them in court.</p> <p>This not only can lessen their anxiety and allow them to hear and understand better but it also allows for someone else that they trust hear the information presented to them.</p>
Developing a visitation plan with caregivers(s)	<p>I don't deserve to see my kids, and they are not safe with me</p> <p>Overwhelmed with visitation schedule and services-immediately can feel like a failure unable to do it all</p> <p>Inability to think about other positives adults that are connected to their children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that babies and children under age 3 need to visit with their primary caregiver several times per week to encourage typical attachment. Once a week is not enough in most cases. • Discuss visitation with both caregivers and other important adults in their children's lives • Explore what will work from the child's perspective and ask for input from the child • Visitation schedule should be successful in creating stability and permanency for the child. Ensure that it is workable for the caregiver(s) and meets the child's needs • Break down and simplify steps with caregiver(s) to promote success

Comments/Process	Perception of Trauma Survivor/Belief in Invisible Suitcase	Trauma-Informed Approach
Making recommendations for parenting programs and services	I am an inadequate parent and not capable of caring for own children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the caregiver(s) what parenting skills they would like more support with as well things that they do well make recommendations after parent given's input
Asking the caregiver about previous system/court involvement. Asking the caregiver indicate why previous interventions were not successful	I can never do anything right and I am not capable enough. I failed again.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the caregiver to identify any barriers in completing previous interventions. What would have helped them be more successful What will help them now

Well-Being Indicators for Families	Trauma Informed Approach
Family Inclusive-ness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help families identify who in their immediate and extended family can assist in ensuring their children are safe
Caregiver(s) trauma histories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that trauma history is very common and assess its impact on parental functioning Educate parents/caregivers on the impact unresolved trauma can have on their parenting Ask about their experience Screen birth parents for trauma history and current trauma-related reactions and symptoms Refer for trauma-informed treatment
Previous treatments and caregivers responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the caregiver has had Trauma-Informed Treatment if it is needed.
Cultural Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that strong cultural identity can also contribute to the resilience of children, their families, and their communities. Ask about cultural identity Connect children and families to culturally appropriate services
	References: Promoting Healthy Families in Your Community: 2008 Resource Packet, Administration for Children and Families. www.hhs.gov