

## What is Team Decision Making?

Team Decision Making (TDM) draws upon the family's strengths, experiences, knowledge, and resources to create a plan for the safety and well-being of children in the family.

A Team Decision Making Meeting is a chance for family members to talk about possible solutions for children whose safety is in danger and who may be at risk of being removed from the home.

The purpose of the Team Decision Making Meeting is to make a decision about safety that focuses on whether the child can safely remain in the home with a protection plan and/or other services and/or supports.



Team Decision Making is based on these six principles:

- Everyone wants respect.
- Everyone needs to be heard.
- Everyone has strengths.
- Judgments can wait.
- Partners share power.
- Partnership is a process.

## What happens at the TDM Meeting?

A DCFS Facilitator (who is not the Family Service Worker who put your protection plan in place or who otherwise initiated the investigation) will lead the meeting.

The facilitator will introduce team members, explain the purpose of the meeting, and ensure everyone at the meeting has a chance to speak and be heard.

Then everyone at the meeting will work together to:

- Identify safety concerns, their direct impact on the child, and what is needed to make sure the child is safe.
- Talk about the family's strengths and how they help.
- Use the team to brainstorm what to do.
- Make a decision together about whether the child can or cannot safely stay at home.

## How long will the meeting take?

TDM Meetings generally take between 1 ½ - 2 hours. How long the meeting lasts depends on what needs to be done.



## Will children go to the TDM Meeting?

Children are often invited to the Team Decision Making Meeting because they have important things to say about what they would like to see happen. You and your Family Service Worker will decide if your children will be part of your TDM Meeting.



Sometimes children do not attend or come for only part of the meeting - especially if they are younger, do not want to participate, or may be negatively impacted by participating in the meeting. DCFS wants your children to participate but only if it is in their best interest.

If children do not attend the TDM Meeting in person, some of their thoughts and ideas may still be communicated at the meeting as appropriate. There are many ways to do this. DCFS can talk to you about these options.

## Who else attends the TDM Meeting?

The Family Service Worker who first came to your home and put the protection plan in place, if applicable, or who initiated the child maltreatment investigation related to an infant testing positive for illegal substances at the time of birth will talk to you about the Team Decision Making Meeting. Together you will identify people who can help you and your children and who may be able to join the TDM Meeting. **You are encouraged to invite anyone you feel will help you and your family develop a plan to keep your child(ren) safe to the TDM Meeting. Please provide the following information to the people you invite:**

Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**It is very important that you come to this meeting. Please arrive on time.**

**Please contact us right away if you need:**

- Transportation
- Child Care
- Translation

**If I have questions, who do I ask?**

Contact the TDM Facilitator if you have questions.

Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

## TEAM DECISION MAKING

### MEETINGS



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*Care*

~

*Commit*

~

*Connect*

***Recognizing the importance of keeping children safe with the help of family and community support!***

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