WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TEAM DECISION MAKING MEETINGS?

- More people being involved leads to creative ideas and “real-life” solutions
- Your child sees that people important to them are involved, respected, and invested in them
- Sharing responsibility for decisions makes everyone feel important and needed
- Team decisions about what is best lead to more safety and stability

“EVERY CHILD DESERVES A SAFE, STABLE, NURTURING FAMILY EVERY DAY”

CONTACT US

Your input and the participation of your support team is important to us.

Please let your family’s caseworker know immediately if you or anyone on your team needs help with transportation, child care, or any other assistance that will make involvement in the Team Decision Making meeting possible.
WHAT IS TEAM DECISION MAKING?

Team Decision Making meetings are held whenever the Division of Children and Family Services has concerns about a child's safety which might require temporarily placing a child into foster care. The purpose of the meeting is for agency staff and family members to come together to make a decision about a child's safety that focuses on whether to keep the child safely in the family home, if possible, by providing needed services and identifying a support network for the family or temporarily placing the child in foster care while those supports and services are provided to the family.

WHO IS ON THE TEAM?

The team begins with you and your family's caseworker, along with a specially trained agency staff member to lead the meeting. Your caseworker also will talk to you about who else you would like to attend — perhaps a relative, neighbor, family friend, church member, or school staff — to begin developing and strengthening your support network. Bringing your support team with you is very important, so choose people you trust to be there for you and your family. Information from your child is welcome, too. Your child can have important things to say about what he or she would like to see happen. You and your family's caseworker can talk about whether your child should attend in person or provide input in another way.

HOW LONG IS A TEAM DECISION MAKING MEETING?

Team Decision Making meetings generally last between 1-2 hours. We want to give everyone a chance to offer their thoughts and be heard. Also, every effort is made to schedule the meeting at a time and place that fits your schedule and your support team members' schedules.

WHAT HAPPENS AT A TEAM DECISION MAKING MEETING?

A trained, experienced agency staff member, who will not be involved in your family's case, will lead the meeting.

He or she will ensure that everyone at the meeting understands why the meeting is being held and what the goals of the meeting are. The meeting leader also will make sure that everyone is given an equal opportunity to speak and be heard with respect and openness.

The meeting leader will help the team work together to:

- Identify the safety concerns that led to the meeting and their direct impact on your child
- Talk about your family's strengths and how those strengths can help protect your child and keep him or her safe moving forward
- Brainstorm with your support team about other ways to help keep everyone safe and stable
- Make a decision as a team about the best way to keep the child safe

TEAM DECISION MAKING IS BASED ON SIX IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES

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