Training Goal

At the conclusion of this training, community providers will have a better understanding of the Arizona child welfare process as it pertains to the Department of Child Safety.

Objectives

- Community providers will know where to access DCS’ public policy manual
- Community providers will associate common departmental terms to their case action
- Community providers will apply their insight of the DCS process to their work with families in their communities
Agenda

- Section 1: Defining Abuse, Neglect & DCS Policy Access
- Section 2: Overview of the Intake & Investigative Process
- Section 3: Establishing Ongoing Intervention and Court Intervention
- Section 4: Ongoing Permanency & Well-Being
- Section 5: Continuous Safety Assessments, Case Closures & Aftercare Planning

Definitions of Abuse & Neglect

A.R.S. § 8-201

- Abuse
  - "In infliction of or allowing of physical injury, impairment of bodily function or disfigurement"
  - Examples: Skew dressing, fractures, burns, malnourishment, failure to thrive, injury to internal organs, etc.
  - Sexual abuse
  - Emotional abuse (name calling, berating, targeting, etc.)

- Neglect
  - "Inability or unwillingness of a parent, guardian, or custodian to provide a child with [basic needs] if that inability or unwillingness causes an unreasonable risk of harm to the child"
  - Examples: Domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health concerns, environmental concerns, substance exposed newborns, supervision concerns, etc.
Public Access to DCS Policy

HTTPS://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/

Section 2
Overview of the Intake & Investigative Process

Overview of the Investigation Process

Family Functioning Assessment (FFA)
Analyzing Present & Impending Dangers
Background Information
Interviews
Analysis
Overview of the Investigation Process, cont.

Background Information

- Prior DCS History
- Criminal Background checks
- Court orders limiting or restricting contacts
- Joint investigations and/or police involvement
- Joint investigations of criminal conduct

Interviews

- Source; alleged victim
- Children in the home; Parents/Legal Guardians
- Other adults in the home; Non-Custodial parent
- Alleged perpetrator; Collateral contacts

Analysis of The Safety Threshold Criteria

To Determine: Is there present danger; what are the risks, is there impending danger

- Vulnerable Child
- Unmanaged
- Severity
- Observable
- Imminent

Court Authorized Removals

DCS shall only take children into temporary custody under one of the following circumstances:

- The child's parent or guardian consents to placing their child in the temporary care of the Department.
- A dependency petition is filed and temporary orders from juvenile court place the child in the temporary custody of the Department.
- A court order is obtained from the superior court authorizing temporary custody.
- Temporary custody is clearly necessary to protect the child because exigent circumstances exist.
In-Home Safety Analysis Questions & Conditions for Return

- Question 1: Safety Actions/Services?
- Question 2: Parent/Guardian/ Caregiver Willingness?
- Question 3: Calm/Consistent Environment?
- Question 4: Implement without professional evaluations?
- Question 5: Suitable place to reside?

*Conditions to return are based on the answer "no" to the IHSA Question(s)
*Condition 1: Obtain safety actions/services
*Condition 2: Become a (genuinely) willing Parent/Guardian/ Caregiver
*Condition 3: Are not part of the case plan and are solely focused on the management of the safety threat
*Condition 4: Obtain a suitable place to reside

The level of services provided to a family is determined on a case by case basis and/or by the court:

- High Risk
  - Intensive Services
  - Family Preservation Services
  - Substance Exposed Newborn Safe Environment (SENSE) services
  - 90-120 days
- Moderate Risk
- Low Risk

- Family Support
  - Assistance getting necessary food, housing, clothing or medical care
- Substance abuse testing and treatment
- Counseling
- Child Care
- Parenting skills training

In-Home Services Provided by DCS During or After an Investigation

- The level of services provided to a family is determined on a case by case basis and/or by the court
- A service referral is also based on the level of risk involved in the family:

  - High Risk
    - Intensive Services
    - Family Preservation Services
    - Substance Exposed Newborn Safe Environment (SENSE) services
    - 90-120 days
  - Moderate Risk
  - Low Risk

- Family Support
  - Assistance getting necessary food, housing, clothing or medical care
- Substance abuse testing and treatment
- Counseling
- Child Care
- Parenting skills training

Section 3
Establishing Ongoing Intervention and Court Intervention
Transition from Investigation to Ongoing

Family Functioning Assessment (FFA-O) - Ongoing

- Caregiver Protective Capacities
- Preparation, Introduction & Exploration
- Change Strategy (CFRs) and Case Planning

Analysis of the Caregiver Protective Capacities (CPCs)
- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Emotional

Overview of an Ongoing DCS Case

Investigation & Child Safety Assessment
- DCS investigates allegations of abuse or neglect and gathers information to make a decision about child safety and the need for DCS involvement.
- If the report alleges criminal conduct, the report is investigated jointly with law enforcement.

Child Safe/Case Closed.
- Circumstances do not warrant continued DCS intervention.

Child Safe/Case Open.
- Circumstances warrant DCS services, but do not require the child's removal from the home.

Child Unsafe.
- If the investigation determines the child is unsafe, a Safety Plan is developed with the parent.

In-Home Services.
- DCS provides in-home services and supports to the parents and children through contracted or community providers to help ensure the safety of the child. A comprehensive plan is developed to address the critical risk factors and ensure the child's safety. Safety Planning is required.

Safety Planning.
- Safety Plan (In-Home, Out-of-Home or Combination) is finalized and implemented. An Out-of-Home Safety Plan may include a 90-day voluntary foster care placement.

Case Closed.
- Critical risk factors addressed: child safe, family referred to community resources/services (after care plan), and case closed.

Continue through the ongoing process.
**Overview of a DCS Case Requiring Court Intervention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Decision Making (TDM) Meeting.</th>
<th>Temporary Custody.</th>
<th>Petition Filed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A child is removed or may be removed, a TDM Meeting is held with the family to make decisions about the child's safety, custody, and placement.</td>
<td>- If an in-home present danger or safety plan cannot sufficiently address the safety/danger threats, the Department will secure temporary custody of the child.</td>
<td>- A Dependency Petition is filed with the Juvenile Court.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The Court does not make a finding of dependency &amp; the child remains in the home with supervision &amp; services.</td>
<td>- The Court makes a finding of dependency &amp; the child remains in the home with supervision &amp; services.</td>
<td>- The Court makes a finding of dependency &amp; the child remains out-of-home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Team Decision Making (TDM)**

- Strength-based decision making process to address the safety and the least intrusive & restrictive placement of children.
- Driven by the Family Functioning Assessment (FFA) which discusses safety, concerns, & needs.
- Collaborative process involves DCS, family (custodial and non-custodial parents, foster parents, group care providers and the child, age 12 and older), family support, community members, educational staff, partnering agencies including, as applicable, tribal representatives, etc.
- Educational needs of the child are discussed at the TDM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remain with Family.</th>
<th>Reunification.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A case plan is developed. Services and interventions are provided to the family to ensure child safety and maintain the family unit.</td>
<td>- A case plan is developed. Reunification services and interventions are provided to the child and family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overview of a DCS Case Requiring Court Intervention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Decision Making (TDM) Meeting.</th>
<th>Temporary Custody.</th>
<th>Petition Filed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A child is removed or may be removed, a TDM Meeting is held with the family to make decisions about the child's safety, custody, and placement.</td>
<td>- If an in-home present danger or safety plan cannot sufficiently address the safety/danger threats, the Department will secure temporary custody of the child.</td>
<td>- A Dependency Petition is filed with the Juvenile Court.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The Court does not make a finding of dependency &amp; the child remains in the home with supervision &amp; services.</td>
<td>- The Court makes a finding of dependency &amp; the child remains in the home with supervision &amp; services.</td>
<td>- The Court makes a finding of dependency &amp; the child remains out-of-home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remain with Family.</th>
<th>Reunification.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A case plan is developed. Services and interventions are provided to the family to ensure child safety and maintain the family unit.</td>
<td>- A case plan is developed. Reunification services and interventions are provided to the child and family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During DCS involvement, parents are expected to:

- Participate in recommended services as outlined in the case plan
- Actively participate in planning meetings (case plan staffings, team decision making meetings, child and family team meetings)
- Attend and participate in FCBR reviews and court hearings
- Provide DCS with information about the children
- Keep DCS informed about changes such as a new address, telephone number, job income, marriage, or other living changes
- Follow court orders
- Visit children regularly when they are in out-of-home placement
- If able, contribute to the cost of children's out-of-home care
- Keep appointments made with DCS, attorneys, therapists and others who are working with the family

Parent Responsibilities

Dependency Timeline

Served TON

File petition within 72 hours of removal

Deliver Notice of the PPS to parents

Preliminary Protective Conference and Hearing (PPS)

Initial Dependency or IFP Hearing (21 days)

Mediations and Pretrial Conferences

Publication Hearings

Adjutication and Disposition Hearing

Review Hearings

Permanency Hearings

Under 3 – 9 months

Over 3 – 15 months

Ongoing Permanency & Well-Being

Section 4
Permanency & Well-Being
- Responsible for implementing case plan
- Monitoring the child’s well-being, including placement services
- Report to the court and FCRB
- Assure child’s social, emotional, educational, and physical needs are met
- Engaging parents and facilitating the progress in making the necessary behavioral changes that will improve their Protective Capacities.

Case Planning & Case Plan Staffings
- Case Plans provide a clear and specific guide for the Specialist and the family for changing the behaviors and conditions that influence safety.
- A Case Plan Staffing is a scheduled meeting in which all members of the service team shall be invited to participate.

"Families who believe that their feelings and concerns are heard are more likely to engage in the case planning process"

Court Involvement: Services for the Family
- DCS provides services to aide the family in making the necessary behavioral changes that will achieve and maintain permanency on behalf of the child, strengthen the family and provide prevention, intervention, and treatment for abused and neglected children
- DCS reviews family-requested informal services to include in the case plan
Visitation

- DCS shall facilitate visitation and ongoing contact between a child in out-of-home care and the child’s parents, siblings, and kin.
- Visitation shall take place in the most natural, family-like setting possible and with as little supervision as possible while still ensuring the safety and well-being of the child.

Medical & Dental Coverage

Comprehensive Medical Dental Program (CMDP)

- Health care program for Arizona’s children and youth placed in out-of-home care.
- Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) acute care health plan for children and youth placed in out-of-home care who are Medicaid eligible.
- Statewide and covers children out of state through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) until they are enrolled in another state’s Medicaid plan.

Coordination of Care

Regional Behavioral Health Authority

- At this time, RHBA’s cover Behavioral Health Care for children in out-of-home care.
- CMDP Behavior Health (BH) Unit helps to coordinate with each region.
  - Steward Health Care
  - Mercy Care
  - Arizona Complete Health
- If a child is in need of coordination and advocacy please reach out to our BH Unit: (602)351-2245, Option 2 or CMDPBHUnit@AZDCS.gov
Co-Pays are not required for any CMDP covered services
- CMDP covers all medically necessary health care services for the infant, child, and adolescent (0-21)
- Online you can:
  - Check Member Eligibility
  - Search for Providers
  - Find PA Forms
  - Review PA Matrix
  - Check claims status
  - https://dcs.az.gov/services/comprehensive-medical-dental-program-cmdp/providers

Contact Us
CMDP Main Line: (602) 351-2245
Medical Fax: (602) 351-8529
Provider Services: CMDPProviderServices@azdcs.gov
Medical Services: CMDPNurse@azdcs.gov
Member Services: CMDPMemberServices@azdcs.gov
CRS: CMDPProviderServices@azdcs.gov
Continuous Safety Assessments, Case Closures & Aftercare Planning

Section 5
Continuous Safety Assessments

The Family Functioning Assessment (FFA) provides the "Story" of the family while in DCS, from the start of the investigation until now.

The FFA - Progress Update is updated and documented in the C-CSRA at various points during the case:
- minimally every 90 days;
- at case plan reassessment and revision;
- when there is an indication that the child may be unsafe;
- when circumstances indicate a substantial change has occurred or is anticipated to occur within the family, including: changes in household composition (additions or departures of individuals from the household);
- when changing the permanency goal;
- when considering unsupervised visits;
- when considering reunification; or
- when considering case closure.
Successful Reunification:
- The safety threats are resolved
- Family reunification services may be provided to assist with the transition of the children back into the home
- The children may remain in the legal custody of DCS for a period of time after the physical custody of the children is returned to the parent(s)
- This allows the Court to oversee the transition and ensure the children remain safe
- Ultimately, the court dismisses the Dependency Petition and returns legal and physical custody of the children to the parent(s)
- Aftercare plan developed 30 day prior to court dismissal
- The DCS case is then closed

Case Closure: Out-of-Home Dependency – Family Reunification
Case Closure: Other Permanency Options
Adoption.
- Parental rights are terminated and the child is adopted.

Guardianship.
- Permanent Guardianship between a child and the caregiver when adoption is remote or not in the child’s best interest.

Independent Living.
- Permanent living arrangement which includes specialized services for adolescents to transition to adulthood.

Case Closed. Court dismisses Dependency Petition and case is closed. Team Decision Making (TDM) Meeting.
- A TDM Meeting is held to discuss the option of a Voluntary Agreement or a Discharge Plan for a youth who exits foster care at 18 or 21.

Case Closed. If a child does not wish to sign a Voluntary Agreement, the case is closed. Aftercare Planning.
- Occurs either at the close of an investigation, in-home services (voluntary or court ordered), reunification, & transition into the Arizona Young Adult Program (AYAP).
- Provides a roadmap for the family to continue to strengthen their Caregiver Protective Capacities.
Your support and collaborative efforts in protecting Arizona’s children and improving outcomes for families are appreciated.

For questions, please contact Patricia Wenzel - Program Specialist, Central Region
Patricia.Wenzel@azdcs.gov - (602) 771-0677