

Engagement

Engage: to obtain or contract for; to obtain and hold the attention of; to pledge or promise; to interlock or cause to mesh (*The American Heritage Dictionary*).

In social work practice, engagement is both a process and an outcome. It requires the effective and balanced use of helping skills and protective authority to produce an ongoing worker/client relationship that results in the pursuit and accomplishment of agreed upon goals. In child welfare practice, those goals include child safety, permanence, well-being and timeliness.