

The Phases of an Interview

1. Preparing for the work:

- ✓ We must know about cultural differences so we are to be able to greet the other person with respect.
- ✓ We must review information already in the case record.
- ✓ We must know the law that mandates our work, the regulations that govern it, the standards that guide it, and the ASFA outcomes to be achieved.
- ✓ We must know what paperwork we are required to complete to document our work and have copies of that ready.

2. Beginning the work:

a. Greeting and engaging the client with respect:

- ✓ We must know about how to greet different people in culturally appropriate ways.
- ✓ We must know how to engage families in the process, using a variety of strategies to meet individual differences.

b. Setting a clear purpose:

- ✓ We must know how to explain our work without using jargon.
- ✓ We must know what the purpose is for each visit.
- ✓ We must know how to help the client/family members to express their goals and needs, matching risks to safety with outcome statements that described desired ends.

c. Developing a contract for change:

- ✓ We must know the stages of change.
- ✓ We must know what behaviors are consistent with each stage.
- ✓ We must know how to help the client/family members to develop a clear plan for change, identifying activity steps that will assist them in reaching the desired outcomes.
- ✓ If the client does not “contract” with us for the change, we cannot really move out of this phase. We must learn to check for agreement and not proceed without addressing the disagreement if agreement cannot be achieved. We do not have a “client” without their agreement.
- ✓ We may need to use protective authority to take steps to protect the child(ren) if agreement is not reached—but we must be clear that we have stepped outside of the framework when we exercise this authority.

d. Planning for how the changes will be made:

- ✓ We must know how to help the client/family members to develop a plan to make the changes needed to assure safety, permanency and well-being.
- ✓ We must know how to document this plan in the required format.

The Phases of an Interview (continued)

3. Doing the work:

a. Helping the client/family to make the needed changes:

- ✓ We must know how to help the client/family members to change their behavior and to make the changes needed to assure safety, permanency and well-being.
- ✓ We must know what resources and services are available in the community.
- ✓ We must know how to help families to access those services.
- ✓ We must know how to help families to use the resources of their extended kinship network and to maintain healthy relationships with others.

4. Ending the work:

a. Evaluating the progress and outcomes:

- ✓ We must know how to assess progress on goals.
- ✓ We must know what the intended outcome will look like when it is achieved.
- ✓ We must know how to help the client/family members to assess their progress and to identify continuing needs for service.

b. Closing the process:

- ✓ We must understand the grief process and how to assist individuals and families to move through these stages of grieving so that they can move towards independence at the closing of the case.
- ✓ We must know how to help families to celebrate their successes.
- ✓ We must know how to assess a family's ability to maintain safety, permanency and well-being without our assistance.
- ✓ We must know how to document the work we have accomplished, including telling a supervisor about what we have done and writing the notes or filing reports in the record or with the court. (The specifics about documentation will be covered at a later time as each type of documentation is taught and some are practiced (such as intake reports, progress notes, risk assessment summaries, family service plans, etc.).)

