



University of Pittsburgh | SCHOOL OF Social Work | Empower People Lead Organizations Grow Communities | PA Child Welfare Resource Center

### Charting the Course towards Permanency for Children in Pennsylvania

Module 3:  
Using Interactional Helping Skills to Achieve Lasting Change

Thursday, May 17, 2018

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### Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to:
  - Identify the four phases of the casework process as well as the Interactional Helping Skills most prevalently used in each of the four phases.
  - Describe the purpose of the Interactional Helping Skills.
  - Describe how to use the Interactional Helping Skills.
  - Describe the types of information associated with each of the six assessment domains.

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### Learning Objectives, (cont'd)

- Participants will be able to:
  - Distinguish the purpose of and identify an appropriate plan and strategy for conducting a quality interview of a child according to the child's chronological and emotional development and special conditions.
  - Distinguish the purpose of and identify an appropriate plan and strategy for conducting a quality interview of custodial and non-custodial caregivers.
  - Identify strategies for locating and engaging absent parents with particular emphasis on absent fathers.

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### Competencies

- 102-5: The child welfare professional is able to integrate the use of authority with the use of casework methods to simultaneously protect children and engage families.
- 102-6: The child welfare professional is able to use casework methods to defuse family hostility and resistance.
- 102-8: The child welfare professional understands the potential effects of cultural and ethnic differences on the development of the casework relationship, and knows strategies to establish relationships with families from cultural backgrounds different from one's own.
- 108-1: The child welfare professional understands the concept of cultural competence; knows how one's own culture affects behavior and values; and knows how cultural and ethnic differences may affect the delivery of child welfare services.

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### The Four Phases

- PRELIMINARY/PREPARATORY PHASE
- BEGINNING/CONTRACTING PHASE
- MIDDLE/WORK PHASE
- ENDING/TRANSITION PHASE



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### Using the Interactional Helping Skills

- PRELIMINARY or PREPARATORY PHASE SKILLS:
  - (to prepare for the work ahead)
- BEGINNING or CONTRACTING PHASE SKILLS:
  - (to develop a contract to assure safety and well-being)
- MIDDLE or WORK PHASE SKILLS:
  - (to assess strengths, safety, risks, and family functioning and to facilitate change that meets the mission of safety, timely permanence and well-being)
- ENDING or TRANSITION PHASE SKILLS:
  - (to close the process)

(Shulman, L., 2006)

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### The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center

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#### Tuning in to Self

- Definition
  - The worker's efforts to get in touch with actual and potential feelings/concerns/beliefs/values that the worker him/herself brings to the helping encounter.
  - This skill can be used in preparation of an encounter with a client (e.g., with a supervisor), and used "live" while interacting with the client during any phase of the relationship.

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#### Tuning in to Others

- Definition
  - The worker's efforts to get in touch with actual and potential feelings/concerns/beliefs/values that the client/family member brings to the helping encounter.
  - This skill can be used in preparation of an encounter with a client (e.g., with a supervisor), and used "live" while interacting with the client during any phase of the relationship.

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#### Tuning in... Group Work

- How would you define Tuning in to Self or Tuning in to Others (based on their assigned skill)?
- With whom do you use the skill and why?
- What does it look like behaviorally when you use the skill?
- What is the outcome expected from using the skill?
- When do you use the skill and why?

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#### Definition of Culture

- Culture represents the vast structure of behaviors, ideas, attitudes, values, habits, beliefs, customs, language, rituals, ceremonies and practices "peculiar" to a particular group of people, and it provides them with:
  - a general design for living; and
  - patterns for interpreting reality.
- Culture determines how we see the world and the way we see the world is reflected in our behavior.

(Wade Nobles)

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#### Tuning in to Self Scenario

As an intake worker, you just received a referral on the Kelly family. Mr. Kelly is a 36-year-old single father of 10-year-old Eileen. Mr. Kelly works the swing shift at a local factory. Eileen's mother passed away two years ago. The referral source reported that Mr. Kelly leaves Eileen home alone for extended periods of time. Additionally, the referral source reported concerns regarding Mr. Kelly drinking alcohol.

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#### Script Feedback Observations

- Greet the person, ensuring to show respect for the person and cultural traditions.
- State your name, job title, and the name of the agency.
- State the reason for the contact.
- State the purpose/outcome of the contact.

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### Dealing with Issues of Authority

- Dealing with issues of authority involves the [child welfare professional's] efforts to clarify mutual expectations, confidentiality issues, and the "authority theme."
- The authority theme refers to "the familiar struggle to resolve the relationship with a nurturing and demanding figure who is both a personal symbol and a representative of a powerful institution."

(Shulman, L., 2006)

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### Protective Authority Continuum

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### Barriers to a Voluntary Relationship

- [Lack of] Respect
- Disagreement
- Negative view of the family
- Cultural differences
- Cross-systems efforts
- Anger/fear and other emotions of the child welfare professional

(DePanfilis, D., Salus, M. K., 2003)

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**Contracting**

- Is a negotiating period involving both the family and the child welfare professional. Reaching for Feedback is an essential skill in this phase.



(Shulman, L., 2006)

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**Stages of Change**

- Stage 1: Precontemplation
- Stage 2: Contemplation
- Stage 3: Determination
- Stage 4: Action
- Stage 5: Maintenance
- Stage 6: Relapse

(Prochaska, J.O., and DiClemente, C.C., 1984)

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**Change**

- To undergo transformation, transition, or substitution



(Merriam-Webster, 2010)

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**Purpose of Questioning**

- Questioning helps families tell their own story. The worker's questions help them to elaborate and clarify not only specific concerns but also inherent strengths that they possess. The worker's questions also promote exploration of solutions.

(Shulman, L., 2006)

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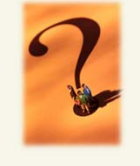
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**General Types of Questions**

- Closed-ended
- Open-ended
- Probing
- Directive
- Redirective



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**Strength-Based, Solution-Focused Questions**

- Past Success
- Exception
- Scaling
- The Miracle
- Follow-Up
- Coping
- Indirect



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**Clifford Quote**

- “It is wrong, always, everywhere, and for anyone to believe anything upon insufficient evidence.”

W.K. Clifford

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**Interview Defined**

- An interview is a purposefully directed interaction between people.



(Adapted from Brittain and Hunt, 2004.)

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**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).
- **Effective engagement** involves the use of strength-based, solution-focused skills and presence of certain conditions:
  - Seeking to understand the client’s point of view
  - Culturally sensitive practice
  - Identification and support of client strengths
  - Clear and accurate response to client questions
  - Investment in client success
  - Outcomes-oriented practice

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### Pre-Work Observations Instructions

- Complete **Handout #18 (Putting the Pieces Together)** individually.
- In your table group, identify a reporter and recorder.
- Use the additional copy of the handout to compile your table group's responses.
- Look at the prepared flip charts, using them to guide small group discussion.
- Following the discussion, each group will report out on their findings.

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### Pre-Work Observations Instructions, (cont'd)

- Examples of the flip charts should look similar to the following graphics:

|        |           |        |          |        |
|--------|-----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Skills | Attitudes | Consis | Inconsis | Change |
|        |           |        |          |        |

Based on pre-work observations | Based on workshop learning

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### Dimensions of Diversity

- Age
- Marital Status
- Race
- Income
- Ethnicity
- Education
- Gender
- Work
- Sexual Orientation
- Parental Status
- Religion
- Physical/Mental Abilities
- Military Experience
- Geographic Location
- Other Concepts

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#### Preparation

- In consultation with my supervisor, with a strength-based, solution-focused perspective, I will consider:
  - Purpose;
  - Cultural considerations (language, functional level and meaning for family);
  - Priority level (safety, risk, balance with workload);
  - Materials (forms, interviewing tools);
  - Location;
  - Sequencing of interviews;
  - Timing;
  - Persons present (family, collaterals, others);
  - Underlying issues; and
  - Flow of the interview.

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#### General Principles to Follow

- Use open-ended questions;
- Ask one question at a time;
- Request an example to help determine the meaning of a word or phrase;
- Restate the person's exact words;
- Give the opportunity to correct the interviewer; and
- Summarize the person's statements.

(Westby, et al., 2003)

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#### The Strengths Perspective

- Every individual, group, family & community has strengths
- Trauma and abuse, illness and struggle may be injurious but they may also be sources for challenge and opportunity.
- Assume that you do not know the upper limits of the capacity to grown and change and take individual, group and community aspirations seriously.
- We best serve family by collaborating with them.
- Every environment is full of resources.
- The context of caring and caregiving supports strengths and solution-finding.

(Saleebey, 2006)

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**Types of Strengths**

- What people have learned about themselves, others & their world.
- Personal qualities, traits and virtues that people possess.
- What people know about the world around them.
- The talents that people have.
- Cultural and personal stories and lore from their cultural orientation.
- The resources of the community in which they live.

(Saleebey, 2006)

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**Other Types of Interviews**

- **Investigative Interview:**
  - a directed conversation between an investigator and a subject in order to gather information about an incident, identifying individuals and resources necessary to assure child safety.
- **Forensic Interview:**
  - narrowly-defined interview process between a specially-trained law enforcement official or interviewer which uses a specific order to the interview process, concentrating on obtaining information relating to evidence and prosecution.
- **Therapeutic Interview:**
  - clinical interview concerned with the child's perceptions of events and how the events affected the child. Typically conducted by mental health professionals or counselors, focusing on helping the child navigate the healing process.

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**Protective Factors**

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of parenting and of child/youth development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports for parents

(Strengthening Families, 2010)

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### Interview Instructions

- Tasks for each person:
  - **Child welfare professional:** Using the interactional skills, address the purpose for your specific interview, taking into account the child or family member's current stage of change, if applicable.
  - **Family member or collateral contact:** In addition to acting in accordance with the history provided, exhibit behaviors oftentimes seen with family members or collateral contacts with whom you work.
  - **Observer:** Using the handouts provided, you will be observing and recording the interactions.

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### Learning Objectives (Revisited)

- Participants will be able to:
  - Distinguish the purpose of and identify an appropriate plan and strategy for conducting a quality interview of a child according to the child's chronological and emotional development and special conditions.
  - Distinguish the purpose of and identify an appropriate plan and strategy for conducting a quality interview of custodial and non-custodial caregivers.
  - Identify strategies for locating and engaging absent parents with particular emphasis on absent fathers.

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### Summary and Transfer of Learning



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