Competencies

306-01-001 Knows the benefits and challenges of intra-agency, interagency, and interdisciplinary team approaches to serving families and children

306-01-002 Knows the potential intra-system and intersystem barriers to collaboration with other staff, units, departments, or community agencies

306-01-005 Understands the detrimental outcomes to families and children when agencies serving them fail to collaborate or coordinate their work

306-01-006 Understands how an agency’s policies and procedures can increase conflict and prevent collaboration with other community agencies

306-01-007 Understands the typical stages of group development and how to help working groups maintain productivity at each stage of their development

306-01-008 Understands the value and benefits of diversity in teamwork

306-01-009 Knows facilitation strategies that can build and sustain collaboration among staff and their organizations
Child and Family Services Reviews

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) are thorough assessments conducted by the Children's Bureau, within the United States Department of Health and Human Services, designed to monitor the performance of State Child Welfare Services in compliance with Federal requirements.

7 Outcomes Measured

Safety
- Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect
- Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate

Well-being
- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs

Permanency
- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations
- The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children

Introduction

Any adoption or foster care placement that involves the placement of a child outside of Ohio will involve a federal law called the Interstate Compact on the placement of Children (ICPC). All 50 states are members of the Compact. To proceed with an adoption, please note that it is illegal to move a child across state lines without first complying with the ICPC requirements. Ohio is one of the few states to enact a new version of the ICPC that was drafted in 2005. This FAQ should help inform you about Ohio’s ICPC requirements and the differences between the new ICPC and the current ICPC.

The additional information on and proposed legislative language of the new ICPC can be found at: www.aphsa.org/Policy/icpc2006rewrite.htm

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the purpose of the ICPC?

A: The purpose of the ICPC is to ensure that if a child is moved across state lines, that child’s rights are protected as if they were in their home state and all legal requirements are observed. The ICPC is designed to: provide a monitoring mechanism during the transition and placement of the child in another state; ensure the child receives services; ensure compliance with the laws of each state; and provide the child with an alternative should the placement prove not to be in their best interest or if the need for out-of-state services ends.

Q: Who does the current ICPC apply to?

A: The Compact currently covers foster children being placed with a relative or another caregiver, children moving across state lines with their foster parents, children placed for adoption by a public or private agency or by a private attorney, children placed in residential treatment facilities by parents, parents placing children with non-relatives, and pregnant mothers going across state lines to give birth and place their children for adoption. The state where the child is currently residing is called the “sending” state and the state where the child will be placed is called the “receiving” state.

Q: What is the process involved under the ICPC?
A: The sending state must provide the receiving state with notice of its intention to place a child across state lines. This requires the sending state to complete several forms and a case plan. These forms along with the case plan are forwarded to the receiving state’s Compact Administrator for review. Upon careful review and evaluation, the receiving state approves or denies the placement by sending notice of its decision to the sending state. If approved, procedures are initiated to place the child in the receiving state. Services for the child are to continue as if the child were still in his/her home state.

Q: How do I comply with the current ICPC?

A: Compliance differs depending on whether Ohio is the sending or receiving state. The agency or adoption professional that you are working with should complete the necessary paperwork to comply with the ICPC. Each state has a Compact Administrator that oversees the process of interstate placements. Proof that the ICPC was complied with will be requested before an adoption can be finalized. (§5101:2-52-04 & 5101:2-52-06)

Q: What are the responsibilities of the agencies under the current ICPC?

A: The sending agency, although it no longer has physical custody of the child, still retains all legal and financial responsibility. This means the sending agency retains the right to make all decisions regarding the care and custody of the child while the child is in the receiving state. The sending agency also must keep the receiving agency up-to-date on any changes regarding the status of the child during the placement. The receiving agency is responsible for the maintenance and welfare of the child during the child’s stay in the receiving state.

Q: Are there safeguards offered under the current ICPC?

A: There are safeguards in place for the child as well as the parties involved in the placement. The sending agency may request a home study and an evaluation of the proposed placement to ensure the child’s safety. The sending agency also retains jurisdiction during the child’s placement and is entitled to regular, on-going progress reports. The child is guaranteed legal and financial protections by keeping this responsibility with the sending agency. The receiving state is safeguarded by allowing it to apply its own laws and policies to the placement as well as to supervise the placement.

Q: Did Ohio ratify the ICPC?

A: Yes. Ohio along with all of the other states has codified the ICPC in the Ohio Revised Code. Actually, Ohio is one of the few states to adopt the New ICPC. However, the old ICPC is still in full force and effect until 35 states ratify the New ICPC. (§5103.20)

Q: A child placement Compact already exists. Why should we replace it?

A: The current Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children was adopted in 1960 as an answer to states’ concerns about protecting children placed across state lines. Before the Compact was implemented, states had no authority over the children once the children were placed outside of its borders. The Compact has now been in effect almost 50 years and needs to be updated to keep in line with the ever-changing laws and
technology. This will allow the states to continue to promote safety and permanency for children while promoting timely placements. Signing a new Compact will provide uniformity among the states’ laws in regulating the placement of children across state lines.

**Q: How will the revised ICPC improve the interstate placement of children?**

A: The proposed new Compact will change the following: (1) narrows the applicability of the Compact to the interstate placement of children in the foster care system and those placed across state lines for adoption; (2) requires the development of time frames for completion of the approval process; (3) establishes clear rulemaking authority, (4) provides enforcement mechanisms; (5) clarifies state responsibility; and (6) ensures states’ ability to purchase home studies from licensed agencies to expedite the process.

**Q: Who does the new ICPC apply to?**

A: The Compact currently covers the interstate placement of: an abused, neglected or deprived child; a child adjudicated delinquent or unmanageable and is subject to ongoing court jurisdiction; a child placed by a public or private agency for purposes of adoption. (§5103.20)

**Q: What safeguards are included in the new ICPC?**

A: The new ICPC includes improved legal framework that will strengthen enforcement authority. Compliance and enforcement will be encouraged by a wide range of measures, including technical assistance, alternative dispute resolution, suspension, termination, and legal action in federal court. In addition, the new Compact will have a committee type structure in place that will hopefully allow for speedy identification of potential problems and a timely process for addressing concerns.

**Q: Must all states adopt identical language?**

A: Yes. Generally, the Compact language must be identical in the substantive provisions of the agreement. However, the format of the agreement can be different from state to state; otherwise material differences in language in any state statute purporting to adopt the Compact could render it “void” or “voidable.”

**Q: When will the new ICPC go into effect?**

A: In order for the new Compact to be in effect 35 states must adopt it. Once that has happened, none of these states will be able to operate under the old Compact. States that have adopted the new Compact will only be able to deal with states in a similar situation, meaning that if a state has not adopted the new Compact a contractual relationship cannot exist with a state that has. However, under the terms of the new Compact, the old Compact’s rules will remain in effect among both old and new Compact states for the first twelve months until the new rules can be statutorily adopted. This will allow interstate placements to be made in both new and old Compact states during that twelve-month period. After the initial twelve months, new Compact states will only be allowed to conduct interstate placements with each other.

**Q: What recent Legislative activity has taken place on the ICPC?**
A: As of June 2, 2009, 3 states have introduced the revised ICPC and 8 have enacted the Compact. Find out the legislative activity by viewing the Legislative Activity Map at: 


Q: *Who is the ICPC Administrator for Ohio and how do I contact them?*

A: The Ohio Deputy Compact Administrator is Carrie Anthony, Director, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The Deputy Compact Administrator is James Williams, Bureau Chief, Office for Children and Families.

All correspondence, questions, and telephone calls should go to:

ICPC Unit  
ODJFS - Bureau of Child Welfare Policy  
50 West Town Street, 6th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
Telephone: (614) 752-1255  
Ohio_ICPC_Office@jfs.ohio.gov
INGREDIENTS TO EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

1. **Commitment**
   Requires:
   - Shared goals and vision
   - Establishment of a high level of trust
   - Mutual responsibility for goals held in common

   **Suggestions:**
   - Compromise on important differences
   - Make clear those issues that cannot be compromised
   - Keep the goals and potential positive outcomes of the collaboration in mind at all times.

   **Implications for practice:**
   - Establish administrative buy-in at the onset between both agencies
   - Assure both the child-placing agency and family-serving agency are focused on the goal of safety, permanency and well-being for children and youth

2. **Communication**
   Requires:
   - Open lines of communication

   Enhanced communication is most often the solution to overcoming barriers to collaboration.

   **Suggestions:**
   - Be up front with the issues
   - Talk about the differences
   - Make sure everyone is aware of the problems
   - Update partners with necessary information in writing to minimize miscommunication (especially early in the collaboration)
   - Create frequent opportunities for communication (regular meetings, phone calls, mail, e-mail)
   - Develop personal connections to promote a cohesive working relationship
   - Informal communication links (lunch, cup of coffee)

   **Implications for practice:**
   - Return phone calls and emails in a timely manner
   - Assure clear and explicit delineation of roles during placement activities
3. **Strong leadership from key decision-makers**

**Requires:**
- Upper management involvement and commitment to the collaboration

**Suggestions:**
- Involve someone who truly understands the agency’s position and priorities
- Involve someone with enough authority to make decisions on behalf of the agency
- Involve someone who can provide immediate and direct assistance when problems arise.
- Involve someone who can authorize the utilization of their agency’s resources to support collaboration

**Implications for practice:**
- Administrative support (both services and subsidies) to post-adoptive families
- Assure that staff are complying with Assessor training requirements

4. **Understanding the culture of collaborating agencies**

Each agency has its own organizational culture (language, values or priorities, rules and regulations, ways of doing business, and even definitions of collaboration)

**Requires:**
- Understanding of each agency’s culture
- Adopting a cultural perspective encourages one to seek solutions that are sensitive to the unique culture of the agencies involved in the collaboration
- Assuring worker is familiar with the contractual agreements between agency administrators regarding the scope, nature, and expectations of the collaboration

**Suggestions:**
- Take time to learn and understand each agency’s mission, priorities, and technical language.
  - Develop a staff loan program (housed at the other agency’s office)
  - Have each agency provide a presentation at the start of the collaboration
- Make sure the definitions of what may appear to be common terms are understood by collaborating agencies.
- Review pertinent laws and regulations prior to the collaborative effort.

**Implications for practice:**
- Recognize holidays observed by faith-based organizations
- Demonstrate awareness of work rules imposed for bargaining unit staff in agencies with union representation
- Demonstrate sensitivity to differences in funding and administration between public and private agencies

5. **Provide adequate resources for collaboration**

It is important that leadership recognize the difficulty of the collaborative process and provide individuals with adequate resources and support needed to be successful.

**Suggestions:**
- Provide time and additional resources for those engaging in the collaboration
✓ Assure upper level management in both agencies negotiate and clarify roles and responsibilities of each
✓ If needed, look for additional funding sources to avoid the pitfall of asking individuals to engage in a difficult task while still being held accountable for their full load of tasks prior to the collaborative effort.

Implications for practice:
✓ Regularly provide information to supervisors and caseworkers regarding agencies that provide foster care, adoption kinship services within the state/region
✓ Encourage participation in regional adoption exchanges, foster care liaison meetings and statewide advocacy groups

6. Minimizing turf issues
Recognize that turf issues are likely to occur and cannot be ignored. It is important to anticipate their appearance and develop a plan for addressing them as they emerge

Suggestions:
✓ Provide staff with a positive view of the collaboration by highlighting the potential positive outcomes of the collaboration.
✓ Disseminate examples of positive outcomes of previous collaborations that worked effectively.
✓ Implement a system of rewards and consequences for individuals participating in the collaborative effort.
✓ Engage in serious preplanning to anticipate and minimize potential “turf issues”.

Implications for practice:
✓ Avoid competition between agencies for foster and adoptive family resources
✓ Notify public child welfare agencies when placing a child with special needs in their county

7. Engaging in serious preplanning
It is important to build a foundation that will enhance the chances of success

Suggestions:
✓ Form a steering committee to identify potential problems, key issues and similarities/differences between the cultures of participating agencies.
✓ Clearly articulate the developing goals and anticipated outcomes of the collaboration.

Implications for practice:
✓ Prevent disruption by clarifying roles and responsibilities of each agency in placement planning
✓ Develop a back-up plan in the event one of the partners would break a commitment

CIRCLES OF CONTROL

Developed by the National Resource Center for Youth Development, “Positive Youth Development: Vital Link” Curriculum
Why Collaborative Efforts Fail

- Role Confusion
- Scheduling Problems
- Lack of Mutual Respect
- Lack of Participation
- Power/Control Issues
- Lack of a Sense of Humor
- Lack of Direct Communication
- Lack of Cooperation
- No Leadership
- Lack of Flexibility
- Attitudes
- Resistance to Change

--Adapted from work by The Rapid Response Team, 1994
Children’s Protection Section Attorney General’s Office
# DESCRIPTIVE INVENTORY - WORK STYLE PROFILE

Check the word or phrase in each set that is most like you.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. __ Competitive</td>
<td>1. __ Tries new ideas</td>
<td>1. __ Will power</td>
<td>1. __ Daring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. __ Joyful</td>
<td>2. __ Optimistic</td>
<td>2. __ Open-minded</td>
<td>2. __ Expressive</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. __ Considerate</td>
<td>3. __ Wants to please</td>
<td>3. __ Cheerful</td>
<td>3. __ Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. __ Harmonious</td>
<td>4. __ Respectful</td>
<td>4. __ Obliging</td>
<td>4. __ Diplomatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. __ Powerful</td>
<td>1. __ Restless</td>
<td>1. __ Unconquerable</td>
<td>1. __ Self-reliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. __ Good mixer</td>
<td>2. __ Popular</td>
<td>2. __ Playful</td>
<td>2. __ Fun-loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. __ Easy on others</td>
<td>3. __ Neighborly</td>
<td>3. __ Obedient</td>
<td>3. __ Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. __ Organized</td>
<td>4. __ Abides by rules</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. __ Fussy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. __ Bold</td>
<td>1. __ Outspoken</td>
<td>1. __ Brave</td>
<td>1. __ Nervy</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. __ Charming</td>
<td>2. __ Companionable</td>
<td>2. __ Inspiring</td>
<td>2. __ Jovial</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. __ Loyal</td>
<td>3. __ Restrained</td>
<td>3. __ Submissive</td>
<td>3. __ Even-tempered</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. __ Easily led</td>
<td>4. __ Accurate</td>
<td>4. __ Timid</td>
<td>4. __ Precise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. __ Stubborn</td>
<td>1. __ Decisive</td>
<td>1. __ Positive</td>
<td>1. __ Takes risks</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. __ Attractive</td>
<td>2. __ Talkative</td>
<td>2. __ Trusting</td>
<td>2. __ Warm</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. __ Sweet</td>
<td>3. __ Controlled</td>
<td>3. __ Contented</td>
<td>3. __ Willing to help</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. __ Avoids</td>
<td>4. __ Conventional</td>
<td>4. __ Peaceful</td>
<td>4. __ Not extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. __ Argumentative</td>
<td>1. __ Original</td>
<td>1. __ Determined</td>
<td>1. __ Persistent</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. __ Light-hearted</td>
<td>2. __ Persuasive</td>
<td>2. __ Convincing</td>
<td>2. __ Lively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. __ Adaptable</td>
<td>4. __ Humble</td>
<td>4. __ Cautious</td>
<td>4. __ Well-disciplined</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. __ Forceful</td>
<td>1. __ Assertive</td>
<td>1. __ Aggressive</td>
<td>1. __ Eager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. __ Admirable</td>
<td>2. __ Confident</td>
<td>2. __ Life of Party</td>
<td>2. __ High-spirited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. __ Kind</td>
<td>3. __ Sympathetic</td>
<td>3. __ Easily fooled</td>
<td>3. __ Willing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. __ Non-resisting</td>
<td>4. __ Tolerant</td>
<td>4. __ Uncertain</td>
<td>4. __ Agreeable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Carolyn Gellerman, The Boeing Company*
**SCORING GRAPH FOR THE WORK STYLE PROFILE**

- Count the number “ones” that you checked. Mark that number in the square to the right of cell marked #1. Do the same with rows #2, #3, and #4.

- Shade in row #1 up to your total number of “ones.” Do the same with #2, #3, and #4.

- The longest row is your predominant work style. Your backup work style is the next longest row.

|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| #1|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| #2|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| #3|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| #4|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
WORK STYLES

HIGH DOMINANCE

SUPPORTIVE STYLE
Low Dominance-High Sociability

A. Listens attentively
   • Often a unique advantage
B. Avoids the use of power
   • Relies on persuasion rather than power
   • Likes to display warmth in speech
C. Makes and expresses opinions in a thoughtful, deliberate manner
   • Appears low-key in a decision-making role

HIGH SOCIABILITY

EMOTIVE STYLE
High Dominance-High Sociability

A. Displays action-oriented behavior
   • Constantly on the go
   • Talks rapidly
   • Expresses views with vigorous hand gestures
B. Likes informality
   • First-name basis
   • Shares personal views openly
C. Possesses a natural persuasiveness
   • Easily expresses his/her view dramatically and forcefully

REFLECTIVE STYLE
Low Dominance-Low Sociability

A. Expresses opinions in a formal, deliberate manner
   • Does not seem to be in a hurry
   • Expresses measured opinions
   • Exhibits emotional control
B. Seems to be preoccupied
   • Rather quiet
   • May seem aloof
   • May be difficult to get to know
C. Prefers orderliness
   • Wants orderly work environment
   • Appreciates an agenda

DIRECTIVE STYLE
High Dominance-Low Sociability

A. Projects a serious attitude
   • No nonsense attitude
   • Often gives the impressions he/she can't have fun
B. Expresses strong opinions
   • Firm gestures
   • Determined tone of voice
   • Projects the image of someone who wants to take control of the situation
C. May project indifference
   • Communicates in a businesslike manner
STYLE FLEXING

Style Flexing: A deliberate attempt to change or alter your style to meet the needs of another person.

To the Emotive Style:
- Take time to build a social as well as a business relationship.
- Leave time for relating and socializing.
- Display interest in other person’s ideas, interests, and experiences.
- Do not place too much emphasis on details.

To the Directive Style:
- Be specific, brief, and to the point.
- Use time efficiently.
- Present the facts logically and be prepared to provide answers to specific questions.
- If you disagree, take issue with the facts, not the person.

To the Reflective Style:
- Appeal to the person's orderly, systematic approach to life.
- Be well organized.
- Approach in a straightforward, direct manner.
- Get down to business quickly.
- Be as accurate and realistic as possible.

To the Supportive Style:
- Show a sincere interest in the person.
- Take time to identify areas of common interest.
- Patiently draw out personal goals and views.
- Listen and be responsive to the person's needs.
- Present your views in a quiet, non-threatening manner.
- Do not be pushy.
THE DANCE OF COLLABORATION

PHASE ONE: FORMING
Focus is on Shared Vision

Issues:

- Do we match?
- What’s in it for us?
- What are their motives?
- Why should we?
- What could we gain?
- Are we being used?
- Are they worthy of us and are we worthy of them?
- Are they trustworthy?
- What are the consequences of collaborating and of not collaborating?

Assessment Activities:

- Exploratory meetings
- Learning about each other’s organizations
- Brainstorming
- Thinking about financial implications
- Checking out the potential for a good fit and for success

Interagency Collaboration:

- Can we trust each other? Will this affiliation be a good experience for me, my agency and my client?
- Who is this other agency?
- Who is this other worker? Spend some time getting acquainted.
- What are the other’s values and beliefs?
- How well does this worker know this child or family? Ask questions; staff the potential match. Get answers for questions.
- Within the two agencies, how are decisions made?
- Does the worker have autonomy?
- Are decisions made by supervisors?
- Is a team model employed?
- If we proceed with this potential placement, how much will the workers from the collaborating agencies be permitted to team?
- What are each agency’s usual practices when a placement is made?
- Do adjustments need to be made?
- How do we define success?
PHASE TWO: NORMING

Focus is on the Mission, the Unique Contributions of Each Agency

Issues:

- How do we select from alternative models?
- What are the pros and cons?
- What are the risks and potential benefits?
- How do we build in evaluation (what will success look like)?
- Can we trust one another?

Planning Activities:

- Contracting
- Laying out roles and responsibilities
- Deciding parameters
- Communicating these within the collaborating organizations
- Easing the normal fears about change both internally and externally
- Estimating costs
- Beginning the work

Interagency Collaboration:

- How will the child presentation be handled?
- Who will be responsible for full disclosure, and how will the worker serving the adoptive family get to know the child and the child’s history?
- How does the contractual worker represent the family in subsidy negotiations, and how will conflicts and differences of opinion be handled?
- Will the collaborating workers go together to meet the family and child?
- How will visitation be handled, and how will we communicate throughout the visitation process?
- How will roles be explained to the family and child?
- In the event of disruption, how will the situation be handled?
- What if the family needs respite? Who arranges? Who pays?
- At each stage of the process, who is going to be responsible for what?
**PHASE THREE: STORMING**

*Focus is on Barriers to Collaboration, Overcoming Barriers through Examination of Successful Ingredients*

**Issues:**
- It’s too hard to change.
- The __________ are resisting.
- Who’s in charge?
- Whose decision is this?
- Is this working?
- She doesn’t like her.
- We’re too different (or too alike).
- Let’s re-look at the whole idea!
- Oops, I thought they were doing that!

**Implementation Activities:**
- Communication
- Service delivery
- Reporting (transmitting information)
- Developing mechanisms to handle conflicts
- Developing a process for joint decision-making and shared ownership of decisions
- Ongoing adjustments of original contract and communication of roles internally and across organizations
- Learning about one another

**Interagency Collaboration:**
- This child or this family is not who I was led to believe they were! (Dealing with the real rather than the ideal.)
- Working through conflicts without personalizing them
- The collaborating agencies’ need for papers and reports (medical history of child, post-placement reports, signed placement agreement, FACSIS numbers, items for legalization, and so on)
- What constitutes a successful placement?
- Working with former foster parents and/or birth family members—who, what, and how?
- Allegations about the adoptive family, who will investigate, and can workers trust one another?
PHASE FOUR: PERFORMING

Refocus is on Shared Vision, Celebration of Success

Issues:

❖ How to appreciate and value differences at all levels of both organizations
❖ How to build in clear communication
❖ Are your needs being met? Are ours?
❖ Can we share power?
❖ Can we recognize success when we see it?
❖ Can we build strength with what we each bring to the partnership (synergy)?
❖ Are our consumers being better served?
❖ Is this partnership a good value for the cost?

Evaluation Activities:

❖ Readjustment of contracts
❖ Developing new services
❖ Broadening the collaboration to new partners
❖ Adjusting to the new environment
❖ Celebrating successes
❖ Learning from challenges
❖ Recommitment to work through the problems
❖ Learning from each other and learning side by side
❖ Joint ventures
❖ Communicate, communicate

Interagency Collaboration:

❖ Legalization and the ending of the collaborative relationship
❖ Evaluation to determine if it was a good partnership for all involved
❖ Would each party do it again?
❖ What was gained, lost, or learned?
❖ Looking at roles in the post-legalization phase of adoption service

Developed by: Kathy Franz 10/13/97
CASE STUDY

Tiffany, a youth in the permanent custody of Kidwell County Children Services, is 14 years old and has waited for a family to adopt her since she became free for adoption two years ago. Until now, no other families have been available to adopt this African-American teen. She has been in foster care with Kidwell County for just over four years.

Kidwell County contracted with AAA, a private Adoption Agency, to recruit a family for Tiffany. Seven months later, the AAA agency has recruited, assessed, and trained Mrs. Stevens, a single parent. Mrs. Stevens is a middle-aged, African-American woman who has raised three children to young adulthood. She is not ready to stop parenting and has responded to recruitment campaigns for older children. Through the Ohio Adoption Photo Listing, Mrs. Stevens has identified Tiffany as the child for her. Mrs. Stevens is currently employed, but was out of work for six months until she began her new job two months ago. She is barely able to meet her monthly financial obligations and will need the support of Adoption Assistance to parent another child.

There are internal tensions and strained communication at Kidwell County between staff in the placement and permanency departments over permanency planning for Tiffany. Just weeks before the matching conference, Tiffany’s foster parents changed their minds and are now expressing an interest in adopting her, over the objections of the adoption worker who favors Mrs. Stevens as a more appropriate match. Also, Tiffany secretly informed her GAL she does not want to be adopted by her foster parents. In recent weeks, she has become uncooperative, defiant, and withdrawn. She is having recurring nightmares. Her grades have declined and her truant behavior at school has increased. She engages in frequent fights with her classmates and foster siblings. She recently was charged with petty theft for shoplifting a pair of earrings at a local department store. A hearing in Juvenile Court is pending.
GROUP A: MATCHING

The workers and supervisors from Kidwell County Children Services and AAA Adoption Agency have scheduled a meeting to discuss the match of Tiffany with the most appropriate family. The meeting is not going well because:

- The caregiver’s caseworker adores the family and is very protective of them. He strongly supports their sudden interest in adopting Tiffany. He wants to move ahead quickly on a foster-to-adopt plan for her.

- The adoption worker at Kidwell worked hard to help recruit a permanent family for Tiffany and highly favors Mrs. Stevens as the “ideal” family for this youth.

- Tiffany’s worker highly suspects that Tiffany is unhappy in the caregiver home and her unhappiness may be linked to her acting out behavior. She is torn about the most appropriate placement option for Tiffany.

- The AAA Adoption Agency has been left in limbo and believes the Kidwell agency staff is playing games with them and with Tiffany’s permanency planning.

- Finally, Kidwell County Children Services and AAA Adoption Agency have never worked together before, and the workers are having trouble understanding and trusting one another.
GROUP B: VISITATION

Following two difficult matching conferences and multiple telephone calls, Kidwell County Children Services and AAA Adoption Agency have agreed to proceed with the adoptive placement of Tiffany with Mrs. Stevens. There have been some difficulties with the development of a visitation plan because:

- Tiffany’s foster parents are upset over the permanency decision for Tiffany. Their foster home in Kidwell County is 80 miles from Mrs. Stevens’ home. Mrs. Stevens’ car is not reliable, and the foster parents have refused to assist with transportation.

- The AAA Adoption Agency worker believes that the Kidwell County staff has not adequately prepared Tiffany for the move and should be very involved in working with the youth during the visitation period.

- Mrs. Stevens works Monday-Friday, 8:00 to 5:00, and cannot take time off from her new job for visits. As a result, the entire visitations need to occur on weekends.

- The Kidwell County permanency worker believes that “dragging out” the placement creates confusion and tension for the child. She believes Tiffany should be placed after three weekend visits. The AAA worker feels strongly that the visitation should continue over a much longer period.
GROUP C: SUBSIDY

Note: Kidwell County Children Services and AAA Adoption Agency have agreed to proceed with the adoptive placement of Tiffany with Mrs. Stevens.

The workers from AAA Adoption Agency and Kidwell County Children Services have very different attitudes and beliefs about the appropriateness of adoption assistance. The areas of disagreement/concern are:

- The AAA agency worker believes that adoptive families should not have to struggle financially to provide a permanent home for a waiting child.

- The Kidwell County subsidy staff believes strongly that adoptive parents should be responsible for meeting the needs, financial and otherwise, of the children they adopt. The Kidwell staff is suspicious about the motives of a parent who indicates that they need supplemental help.

- Kidwell County has limited resources; administrators feel that they cannot supplement the federal subsidy. The AAA Agency staff feels that this attitude indicates a lack of commitment to permanence by Kidwell County staff.

- During the pre-placement phase, Tiffany has experienced recurring adjustment problems. The AAA Agency worker has recommended counseling with a private therapist who is skilled in working with adopted children. Mrs. Stevens will need a subsidy to pay for counseling by this therapist. The Kidwell County worker feels that post adoption support services should be provided by the AAA worker and that the medical card should be used for needed mental health counseling at Mrs. Stevens’ ADAMH Board agency.
GROUP D: SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Note: Kidwell County Children Services and AAA Adoption Agency have agreed to proceed with the adoptive placement of Tiffany with Mrs. Stevens.

Tiffany’s worker maintains individual contact with each outside agency involved in her case, but has not been successful in integrating service planning in a coordinated way to meet the needs of this youth. Likewise, these systems of care involved in Tiffany’s case have each established independent plans to address her needs, and none have made any attempts to collaborate with one another.

- Tiffany’s therapist strongly recommends she continue to receive Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy after her adoptive placement. However, there is a waiting list and limited mental health resources in Mrs. Steven’s county.

- The juvenile court and educational systems each have low tolerance for delinquent behavior. Further, they view community service vs. mental health therapy as a more appropriate response to Tiffany’s “acting-out” behavior.

- The current and prospective school districts are at odds over Tiffany’s IEP as well as their funding responsibilities to her.