FIELD GUIDE
FOR MDT FACILITATORS

MDTs have relied on facilitation at some level to both make progress toward their shared mission of healing and justice for children and families impacted by abuse, as well as to strengthen the relationships necessary to be successful in this work.

FIELD GUIDE FOR MDT FACILITATORS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Key Assumptions:

- The primary function of a Team Facilitator is to cultivate, strengthen and maintain relationships that support the mission and values of a coordinated multidisciplinary response to child abuse. A Team Facilitator fosters relationships as a direct line to improving outcomes for children and families in their community.

- While a Team Facilitator may coordinate and/or lead important gatherings of the MDT, such as Case Review, these are not their sole functions.

- To be successful, Team Facilitators require time and resources to invest in their professional development as well as clear communication and effective supervision to hone their skills.

- Teams are intentionally designed to produce results towards a shared mission and operate most effectively within a culture that cultivates positive climate and psychological safety among its members. Psychological safety is the belief that the team is safe enough for interpersonal risk-taking – the ability to challenge the status quo and to speak up without fear of negative consequences or retribution.[2]

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Team Facilitator Field Guide, a resource developed for full-time Team Facilitators at Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) to help define the purpose of the Team Facilitator role, providing essential skills, tools and mindsets needed as you onboard to your role. This guide also serves as a vehicle for supervisory or peer conversations about the importance of team facilitation. This Field Guide is not a substitute for foundational training and is intended to support you in addition to providing formal training about your role.

While the primary audience for this guide is full-time CAC Team Facilitators, we recognize that not all communities may have the capacity to hire and on-board someone at this level. This guide is relevant and useful for those in a CAC setting that are responsible for facilitating a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) in any capacity and/or interested in learning more about the utility and value of team facilitation.

For the purpose of this Field Guide, we define an effective Team Facilitator as:

- *Someone who tends to the relationships, communication and accountability of the MDT while fostering an inclusive environment to improve outcomes for children and families impacted by abuse.* [1]

The Field Guide covers a wide range of important information regarding roles and responsibilities within the MDT. It is intended to serve both as a primary training resource, particularly for those new to the role, and as an ongoing reference for Team Facilitators at all levels of tenure.

Our understanding of the role and impact of the Team Facilitator within the CAC/MDT setting has advanced significantly over the last decade. Utilizing this Guide to proactively develop and strengthen professional practice will further establish the professional credibility of Team Facilitators as an essential contributor for improving the health of teams and outcomes for children impacted by abuse in our communities.

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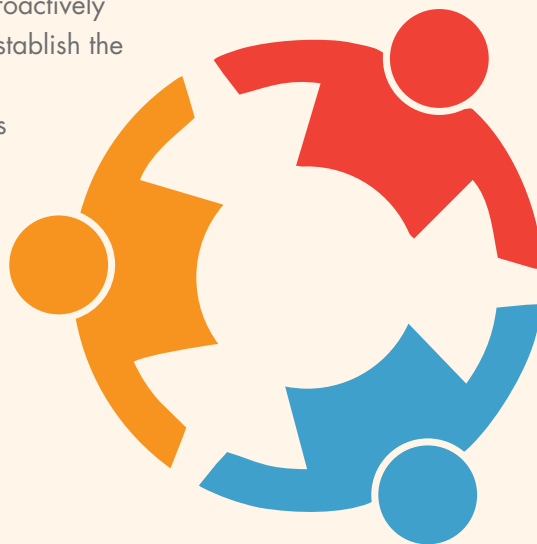
[1] Beyond Case Review: The value of the role of the team facilitator in the MDT/CAC setting (2021)

[2] https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/what-is-psychological-safety-at-work/

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We recommend reading through the guide in its entirety first to understand the full scope and context of your role. All parts of this guide are interconnected and built on one another. With the extensiveness of this guide in mind, we hope that you'll come back to each section thereafter when you're in need of guidance, common language, tools or perspective shifts as you are doing the work of facilitation day-to-day. This guide also includes common challenges and case studies for you to see the tools and concepts in action.

We encourage you to work through this guide in coordination with your supervisor. This will help prepare you both with common language to be used during supervision and feedback. You may consider these questions as you read through the guide together:

- How does this concept/idea apply to our CAC and MDT(s)?
- How does this concept/idea apply to me in my role as Team Facilitator?
- What is one small way I can put this concept/idea into practice?
- Where does our CAC/MDT have room to grow with regards to our understanding of effective facilitation?
- What tools and concepts feel most important for discussion on our MDT at this point in time?
- How can we support each other in implementing a more comprehensive approach to team facilitation?
- What additional training and development should we consider moving forward?
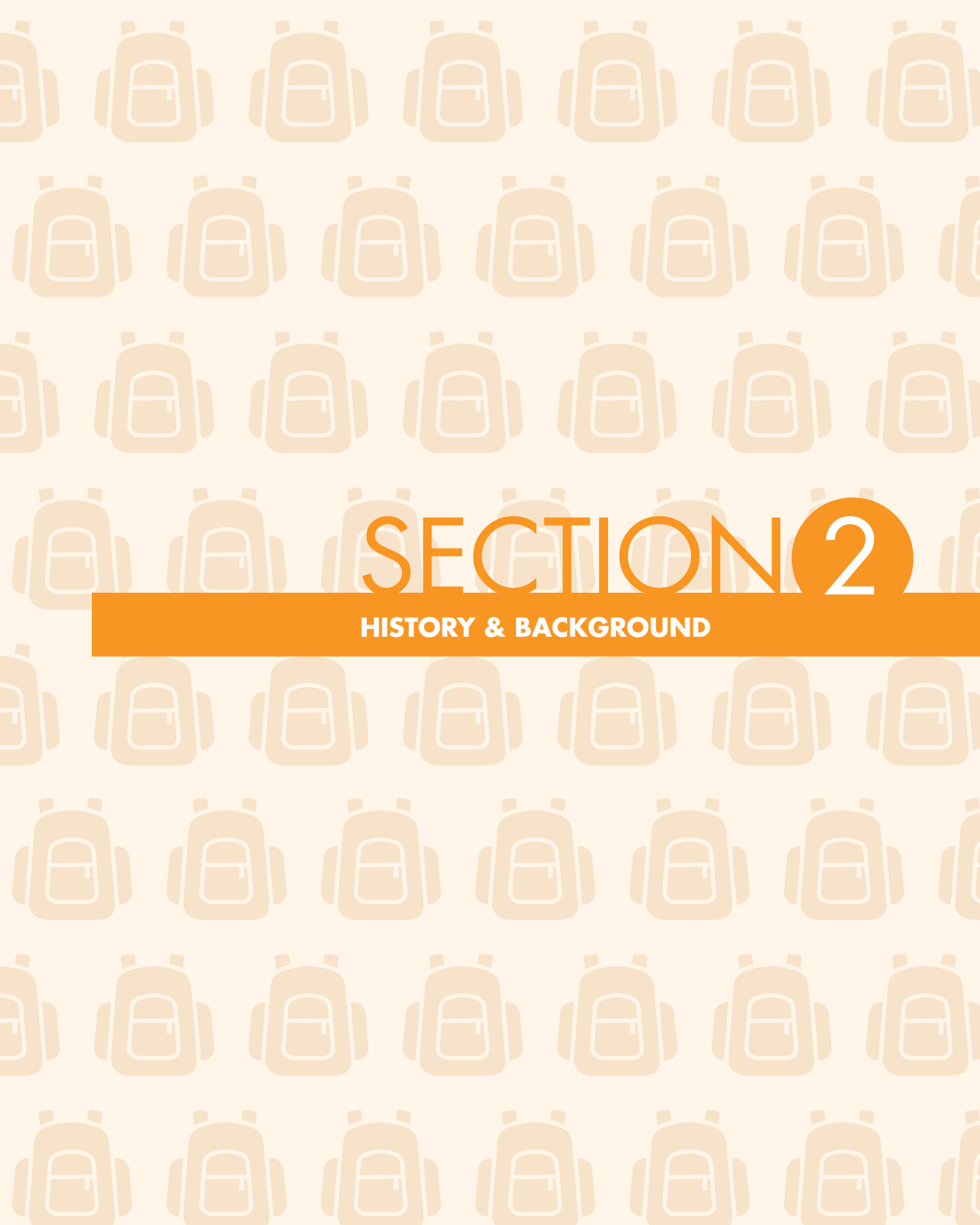
SECTION 2

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

The CAC model was born out of a need to increase collaboration among the many various disciplines responsible for the intervention, investigation, prosecution and healing of child abuse without causing additional harm and trauma to the child and family. At the heart of the CAC is the MDT, whose primary goal is to collaborate on the most effective and comprehensive response for each individual child by leveraging the diversity of strengths and knowledge of each discipline.

Over the last three decades, the CAC model has evolved significantly to define and advance the professional expectations for each member of the team including Forensic Interviewers, Victim Advocates, Mental Health Clinicians and Medical Providers. The role of the Team Facilitator is a part of this evolution and is critical for fostering engagement, buy-in and action from the MDT.

In an ideal world, the whole team would be engaged in taking care of itself, listening for and meeting its needs and sustaining the many complex mechanisms that keep it running smoothly. In reality, this task often falls to the role of the Team Facilitator. While many CACs identify the Team Facilitator as the individual who coordinates Case Review, it is clear that this role goes far beyond meeting facilitation. A Team Facilitator's primary role and responsibility is to promote the conditions that support collaboration and enhance team effectiveness.

OVERVIEW OF THE CAC/MDT MODEL

A CAC/MDT brings together the agency professionals that are activated in a community from the initial report through healing for a child and family. Facilitating an effective coordinated response among diverse individuals and agencies can be challenging as a result of:

- Varying personal and professional backgrounds,
- Varying abundance of resources with regards to time, funding, facilities etc,
- Different legal mandates, goals, timelines, policies, areas of authority, trainings and philosophies, and
- Various organizational structures, protocols, and cultures.

Due to these and other historical differences, the various systems that comprise a CAC's MDT may look different in every community.
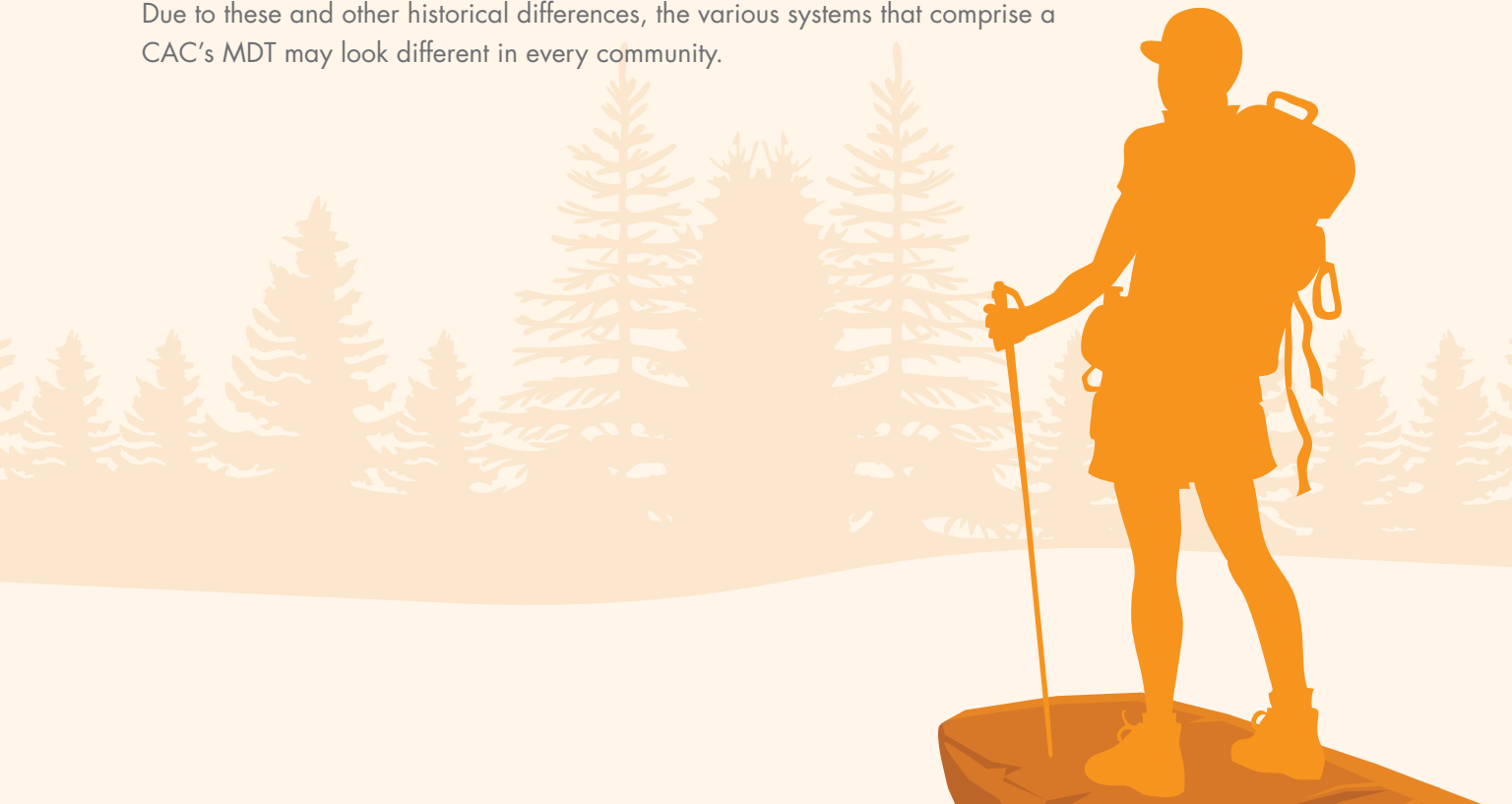
As the facilitator of the MDT, it is important for you to understand the various strengths and limitations for each discipline of the team and commit to doing your part to create a positive and psychologically safe environment for all team members to fully participate in the collaborative process.

While each community's response is different, to the right, you will find a graphic that depicts a typical process for a child and family from initial disclosure through healing and referrals. Your role as a Team Facilitator is to become familiar with each of the decision points, who is involved in each decision, each agency's unique contribution to the process and how a more collaborative response will ultimately result in better outcomes for the child and family.

HOW DOES THE CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY MODEL WORK?

LAW ENFORCEMENT

THE ROLE OF LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT IS GROUNDED IN PUBLIC SAFETY

IF NOT CRIMINAL IN NATURE, LAW ENFORCEMENT MAY NOT TAKE ACTION

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

THE ROLE OF CPS IS TO ENSURE THAT A CHILD'S HOME IS SAFE

IF THE FAMILY/CARETAKER IS NOT THE ALLEGED ABUSER, CPS MAY NOT TAKE ACTION

PRIORITY ASSIGNED (24-72 HOURS)

CHILD IS BROUGHT TO CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

JOINT INVESTIGATION BEGINS
FORENSIC INTERVIEW
EVIDENCE COLLECTED
PHOTOS TAKEN, WITNESS INTERVIEW,
MEDICAL TREATMENT AND EXAM

CAC COORDINATES CASE REVIEW
WITH ALL TEAM MEMBERS, INCLUDING LAW ENFORCEMENT, PROSECUTION, CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES, THE FORENSIC INTERVIEWER, A MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER, A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL, AND A FAMILY ADVOCATE.

CASE PRESENTED TO DISTRICT ATTORNEY

SUSPECT CHARGED OR CASE REFUSED

CHILD & FAMILY
RECEIVE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
FAMILY ADVOCATE WORKS WITH
FAMILY TO ASSESS CRITICAL
RESOURCES AND PROVIDE SUPPORT
AS THE CASE MOVES THROUGH
THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

CHILD REMOVED
FROM HOME, OR
CASE OPENED FOR
SERVICES, OR
CASE CLOSED

UNDERSTANDING MDT ROLES

As the Team Facilitator, you are charged with facilitating relationship-building, information-sharing and communication between MDT members. Understanding the mission, goals and roles of each of the agencies and disciplines represented on the MDT is, therefore, critically important. The more knowledgeable you are about each team member and their unique contributions and areas of expertise, the better equipped you will be to connect their work to the overall mission of the MDT at large and facilitate accountability structures that support improved outcomes for the children you serve.

The following are general descriptions of each role you may encounter on your MDT. We highly recommend meeting with representatives from each discipline on your team for a deeper exploration and understanding of their role in context to your community. Please note that the terms we use below are meant to broadly encompass the discipline and that in many states these disciplines may be referred to as alternative names.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Child Protective Services (CPS) is responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of children. When mandated reporters and others make reports of abuse and/or neglect of children by caregivers to CPS, investigations are conducted to determine the need for protective measures and supportive services. The philosophy and focus of CPS is "family preservation," keeping families together whenever possible by providing needed support and services. If CPS substantiates allegations of abuse and/or neglect by virtue of its investigation and assessment, CPS can open the case for counseling and other services for children and caregivers. In more extreme circumstances, CPS may seek judicial authorization to remove children from their home and place them in foster care or with other safe family members. The team may feel strongly that a child needs to be removed from the family, but CPS is following policy to allow the child to stay with a non-offending caregiver.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Local, state and/or county law enforcement departments conduct investigations to determine whether a crime has been committed. It is important to note that the role and philosophy of Law Enforcement goes beyond investigating and charging. They participate in the forensic interview at the CAC (either by observing or by conducting the interview themselves per your CAC's forensic interview protocol). They also conduct investigative interviews with caregivers, suspects and other witnesses, gather evidence, file criminal complaints and make arrests depending on the specific circumstances of a case. Charging decisions may be made ultimately in coordination with prosecutors.

PROSECUTOR

The prosecuting attorney has the final decision as to whether the case will be criminally prosecuted. In many jurisdictions, the prosecuting attorney works closely with law enforcement to make charging decisions based on the strength of the evidence in an individual case. These decisions are typically based on a variety of factors such as age and developmental level of the child and their ability and competency to testify, and the existence of other witnesses and/or corroborating evidence. It is important that you understand the rationale for prosecution decisions, including the obstacles prosecutors face in achieving a unanimous verdict if a case goes to trial. Sometimes cases that seem strong to you and others on the MDT may be viewed differently by prosecutors.

MEDICAL PROVIDER

The medical provider on the MDT has specialized training, experience, and expertise in conducting examinations of children and adolescents when there are concerns of sexual and/or physical abuse. It is important to understand that a medical provider's role is not solely to discover evidence to support the case, in fact their role is to assess the child's overall well-being in a trauma-sensitive, consent-focused and non-invasive nature. An exam will likely include an overall wellness checkup, testing for sexually transmitted infections, photo documentation of injuries and development of a treatment plan to be discussed with the family.

VICTIM ADVOCATE

The victim advocate, either an employee of the CAC and/or a member of another agency such as the prosecutor's office, is responsible for helping families navigate the impact of and their involvement in the many systems that respond to a report of abuse. Their primary focus is to help educate and guide children and family members in the aftermath of their crisis and trauma and to provide access to needed information, services and support in their pursuits of healing and justice. Victim advocates are a critical voice for the child and family within the MDT. As a Team Facilitator, it is your role to understand the various agencies that support families with advocacy and the different roles each advocate may play, including critical referrals to additional supports and services, through the child and family's journey.

FORENSIC INTERVIEW

The forensic interviewer conducts legally-sound, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-competent, neutral and fact-finding interviews of children in accordance with the CAC's forensic interview protocol. This could be someone employed by the CAC or an MDT member with the required training. Interviews are coordinated with the MDT to avoid duplicative interviewing and to minimize trauma to those being interviewed.

MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER

The mental health provider is a licensed, clinically trained specialist who provides evidence-based, trauma-informed services to children, adolescents and family members. Mental health treatment for protective caregivers may focus on education about sexual abuse, trauma and parenting, crisis and trauma reactions including self-blame, loss and grief, understanding of family dynamics, trauma, and abuse histories, and/or current experiences of abuse and domestic violence, supports and coping strategies, and referrals to other community services as needed.

As you can see, multidisciplinary teams are diverse by design and each member plays a unique and critical role in the overall functioning of the MDT. As the Team Facilitator you will assist the team in finding a shared meaning and common understanding. Establishing this shared meaning will help everyone monitor progress and celebrate collective success over time. Shared meaning is established by clarifying and committing to a shared vision and mission for the MDT.

Shared Vision: Your MDT's vision is what the team as a whole hopes to see changed, transformed and improved in their community at large as a result of their work. Vision statements should define the long-term goals of the team, they should be aspirational and feel like a BIG undertaking for the team.

EX. Together we are creating a community where every child experiences a safe, healthy and happy childhood.

Shared Mission: Your MDT's mission should clarify and guide the day-to-day work of the team. It should be short, concise and descriptive of how the MDT comes together to serve children and families in your community. Good mission statements define why your MDT exists, what you achieve together and who you are serving.

EX. We facilitate justice and healing for children and families impacted by abuse through collaboration and shared decision making that centers the child's voice and safety so that we can create a community where children can truly thrive.

It's possible you have inherited a shared vision and mission for your MDT that may need to be fine-tuned over time. It is good practice to review your MDT's vision and mission at least once a year and to incorporate it into your communications, relationship building and systems for supporting the team. Pro Tip: Many Team Facilitators print the MDT's mission on all meeting agendas or have a visual reminder of the shared mission in the observation room at the CAC.

NOTES:

Key Take-Aways:

- A Team Facilitator must understand the various strengths and limitations for each member of the team and commit to doing their part to create a positive and psychologically safe environment for all team members to fully participate in the collaborative process.
- Teams are diverse by design and look different in every community.
- Supporting the team in finding a shared meaning and common understanding that helps everyone monitor progress and celebrate collective success over time is a critical first step in establishing a high performing team.

Additional Resources for Your Continued Learning:
- Northeast Regional CAC/MDT Orientation Guide
- NCA Standards for Accreditation

SECTION 3

ROLE OF THE TEAM FACILITATOR

ROLE OF THE TEAM FACILITATOR

Since their inception, MDTs have relied on facilitation at some level to both make progress toward their shared mission of healing and justice for children and families impacted by abuse, as well as to strengthen the relationships necessary to be successful in this work. It is the quality of this informal or formal facilitation that can make a difference between a good team and great team.

As you onboard your team, you will gain a deeper understanding of where your MDT is in their own evolution. An MDT is a living, breathing organism that is in a constant state of change. No two teams are exactly alike and even your team will look different six months from now. While you don't hold the full responsibility for the functioning of your team, it is important for you to participate in shared ownership and move into action when it is appropriate.

The role of facilitation has historically been held or shared by members of the CAC or MDT at large. A recent inventory of 198 MDT Leaders across the country indicated that only 17.6% of respondents have full-time MDT Facilitators with the most common dual roles shared with Forensic Interviewers (41%) and Victim Advocates (28%). Maintaining dual roles while serving as a neutral facilitator and tending to the needs of the team is a challenging endeavor and often leads to lack of clarity for other members of the team.

Whether you are a full-time Team Facilitator or have a blended role, it is critical to your success to have clarity around the expectations and responsibilities of your role and to embrace how essential neutral facilitation is for the continued improvement and success of your team as a whole.

WHY THE TEAM FACILITATION IS ESSENTIAL

The root of the word facilitate is the Latin 'facilis', which means easy. In essence, facilitation is the art of making things easy, making it easier for people to work together and get things done. This is not to be confused with simple.

"There is a difference between 'simple' and 'easy'. Simple as in the 'relatively simple interactions' of emergence, easy as in 'facilitation is the art of making things easy.' I don't think they are the same, and I have a hunch the difference might be important and that maybe it should be explicit. Simple means that it boils down to relationships between individual people, objects, beings, truths. Ease has more to do with the amount of friction (or understanding) between the people, objects, beings, truths. And part of what can clear a path to making things easier is to name the simple interactions at play in a complex system."

- Rachel Plattus, from the book Emergent Strategy

Team facilitation is essential to MDTs because without it, or when done poorly, the amount of friction and misunderstanding between team members has the opportunity to become a significant barrier to healing and justice in our communities and in some cases causes more harm to children and families through our systems.

The many different mandates, timelines and agency cultures that come together on an MDT are ripe for generative conflict. As a Team Facilitator, you will need to embrace conflict as a generative process that can lead to innovation and solutions. Good facilitation can help teams recognize when they are engaging in a destructive process and pivot to a more creative and generative response.

At its core, good team facilitation involves:

- Embracing neutrality as a strength for fostering engagement and inviting all voices and perspectives into the process of collaboration
- Adhering to a strong code of ethics to maintain and foster strong, authentic and sustainable relationships within and across the team
- An ability to foster trust and psychological safety among all team members that ultimately leads to a sense of team identity and belonging
- Understanding what makes a team strong and investing time and energy into practices that build the team's collective capacity to navigate change
- Awareness of biases and how they impact decision making across all team functions
- Implementation and adherence to effective meeting structures that create opportunities for shared decision making, consensus building and celebrations
- Addressing the impact of this work through proactive resiliency building efforts

Underlying each of these is the ability to solve the right problems, not just the urgent ones. In your role as Team Facilitator, you will be engaged in problem solving at many different levels, relational and systemic, within your team. You will have a unique perspective, likely more able to see all of the moving parts at a 10,000 ft level that will help you see the interconnectedness of decisions. As you begin to hone your skills, acquire knowledge and master the core competencies provided in this guide, you will be prepared to ask the right questions to help unearth the root of a problem.

Let's take a team member's lack of participation in the decision-making process. If we were only to address this concern as an urgent issue, we may consider moving a meeting time or location to create greater ease, however this would likely just serve as a band-aid for the deep issue. Through the use of powerful questions (see Section XX) we may discover that this team member does not understand the mission or value of the collaborative process. This is not a logistical issue, this is a buy-in issue and your approach as a facilitator will look quite different for re-engaging this member. The lack of participation was just a symptom of a deeper problem to be solved.

The following sections of this field guide will walk you through each of these characteristics of team facilitation to provide foundational education and small action steps that you can begin implementing in your daily work.

TEAM FACILITATION & MEETING FACILITATION

You may notice this in the list on the previous page, and we wanted to call special attention to the notion that team facilitation is much more than facilitating your bi-weekly or monthly case review meeting. While case review is an important process that all MDTs should engage in on a regular basis, the majority of effective facilitation takes place outside of meeting structures with a primary focus on relationship building.

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

In an effort to provide as much clarity as possible, the table on the right is a summary of what are and are NOT the core responsibilities of a team facilitator.

Insider Tip:
Sometimes when your team is challenged or stuck in the process of making a decision, it can be just as helpful to identify what the team does NOT want as it is to identify what they do want, just like we've done in the following table on your right.

Team Facilitation Is NOT	Team Facilitation IS
TELLING TEAM MEMBERS HOW TO DO THEIR JOBS (CONTENT, OUTCOMES, ETC)	ASKING POWERFUL QUESTIONS TO ELICIT SOLUTIONS FROM THE ENTIRE TEAM AND TO STRENGTHEN THE PROCESS
LEADING, DIRECTING OR MANIPULATING	PARTNERING WITH TEAM MEMBERS TO HONOR THE PROCESS, VALUES AND BELIEFS OF ALL TEAM MEMBERS
FIXING OR SOLVING PROBLEMS ON BEHALF OF THE TEAM	IDENTIFYING, ASSESSING AND ASSISTING THE TEAM TO CO-CREATE SOLUTIONS
DIRECTED BY THE FACILITATOR'S PERSONAL OR AGENCY AGENDA	DIRECTED BY THE TEAM'S COLLECTIVE AGENDA
JUDGMENTAL OR THINKING THAT TEAM MEMBERS ARE RIGHT OR WRONG	MEETING TEAM MEMBERS WHERE THEY ARE AND FOSTERING CONSENSUS ABOUT REALITY PRIOR TO MOVING FORWARD
EXPERT DRIVEN OR PROVIDING CONSULTATION	TRUSTING THE EXPERTISE OF EACH OF THE TEAM MEMBERS TO DRIVE COLLABORATION AND SOLUTIONS

The remaining sections of this guide will provide additional detail on what tasks and practices might fall within each of these key assumptions.

During your first year in this role, a large portion of your on-boarding and professional development will include increasing your knowledge around core areas of best practice that will provide you with some common language and theory to begin integrating into your day-to-day facilitation. For additional information on competencies and assessment of knowledge and skills please contact your Chapter and/or Regional Children's Advocacy Center for additional assistance and guidance.

Good team facilitation involves embracing neutrality as a strength for fostering engagement and inviting all voices and perspectives into the process of collaboration.

NEUTRAL FACILITATION

Learning to hold a neutral stance in your facilitation is both a critical awareness and a skill that you will develop over time, but what does it actually mean?

Neutrality as a facilitator means that you work to give equal voice to all contributors and partners working on behalf of the best interest of the child and family. In many ways, you will be responsible for refocusing conversations and decision-making to center on the child and their unique needs and to remind the team of their commitment to a collaborative response and shared mission. This means balancing the investigative processes with healing and fostering a team culture that values all participants equally regardless of positional power and authority. More concretely, holding both the voice of the victim advocate and the prosecutor in equal regard to ensure that the process isn't heavily weighted toward one definition of success.

Maintaining a neutral stance as a facilitator means advocating for the collaborative process and not necessarily a particular outcome to the process. This is particularly challenging if you happen to wear multiple hats on your MDT. Perhaps you are the Forensic Interviewer or Victim Advocate at your CAC in addition to the Team Facilitator. Both of these roles may have specific information, insights and desired next steps for the child and family that could potentially conflict with other team members. If you hold multiple roles on your team, it will be important for you to communicate openly with the team when you are transitioning in and out of the facilitator role to fulfill one of your other roles. This will help to ensure that you are not pushing a certain agenda as the facilitator.

It is important for you to explore the various definitions of "success", "justice" and "healing" for your team as each member may define these concepts differently. More importantly, the MDT's definition of these concepts may differ from that of the children and families you are serving. It is your role to help uncover these differences for the MDT and to support the team in finding a shared meaning and common understanding that help everyone monitor progress and celebrate collective success over time.

It is also important to note that neutrality does not mean lack of accountability. Neutrality is believing in the inherent value of the individual and collective wisdom of the group and their ability to make their own choices. It is the belief that collaborative and cooperative interaction builds consensus and leads to improved outcomes for both the child and family but also for the team. The best facilitators are able to guide the team toward aligned actions and collaborative decisions that move the entire team forward and support follow through on agreements.

Congratulations! You've made it to your first Case Study. Throughout this field guide you will encounter a number of check-points to help you apply the information you just read to a real-life example. We encourage you to discuss these case studies with your supervisor and engage in a dialogue around how you might apply your learning to each unique situation. You've got this!

CASE STUDY:

The CAC in your community was established last year and brought you on-board three months ago to establish and coordinate the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). The senior leaders of each agency have been actively involved in the decision to launch the CAC, however information hasn't quite made it down to the front-line workers, detectives and providers who will be working directly with children and families. To date the senior leaders have written and signed on to an interagency agreement that includes the MDT protocol and defines the process for working cases in a coordinated and collaborative manner. The senior leadership team has identified that a Team Facilitator would be highly beneficial to coordinate the adoption and implementation of the protocol and have arranged a meet and greet for the larger team to get to know one another. They have asked for your input on what else to include during this first gathering.

- What would you want to know about each of the members attending this gathering?
- What is most important for you to share about your role during this initial meet and greet with the larger team?
- How can you work with the senior leaders to establish a shared mission and vision for the MDT?
- What other questions might you have for the senior leaders and/or team members before, during and after this initial gathering?

CONSIDERATIONS:

Coming in at the very beginning of an MDT's formation is a gift. As you reflect on this opportunity make sure to review some of the sections on relationship building, trust and psychological safety. It may also be helpful to check out the sample Openers and Closers for team gatherings and see if there is one or two you'd like to experiment with for this scenario. You may also want to consider what conversations you'll need to have prior to the meeting to make it a success. Especially in the early stages of team development a considerable amount of work happens outside of team meetings and gatherings to foster buy-in and understanding from team members.

NOTES:

Key Take-Aways:

- Team facilitation is much more than meeting facilitation.
- Team Facilitators serve as a neutral and impartial party on the MDT and center the best interest of the child and family while strengthening the team.
- Core competencies, including content knowledge and facilitation skills, exist for CAC Team Facilitators and a defined professional development path is supported and recommended for all Team Facilitators.

Additional Resources for Your Continued Learning:
- RCAC Website – Team Facilitator Page
- Book: Emergent Strategy by Adrienne Maree Brown
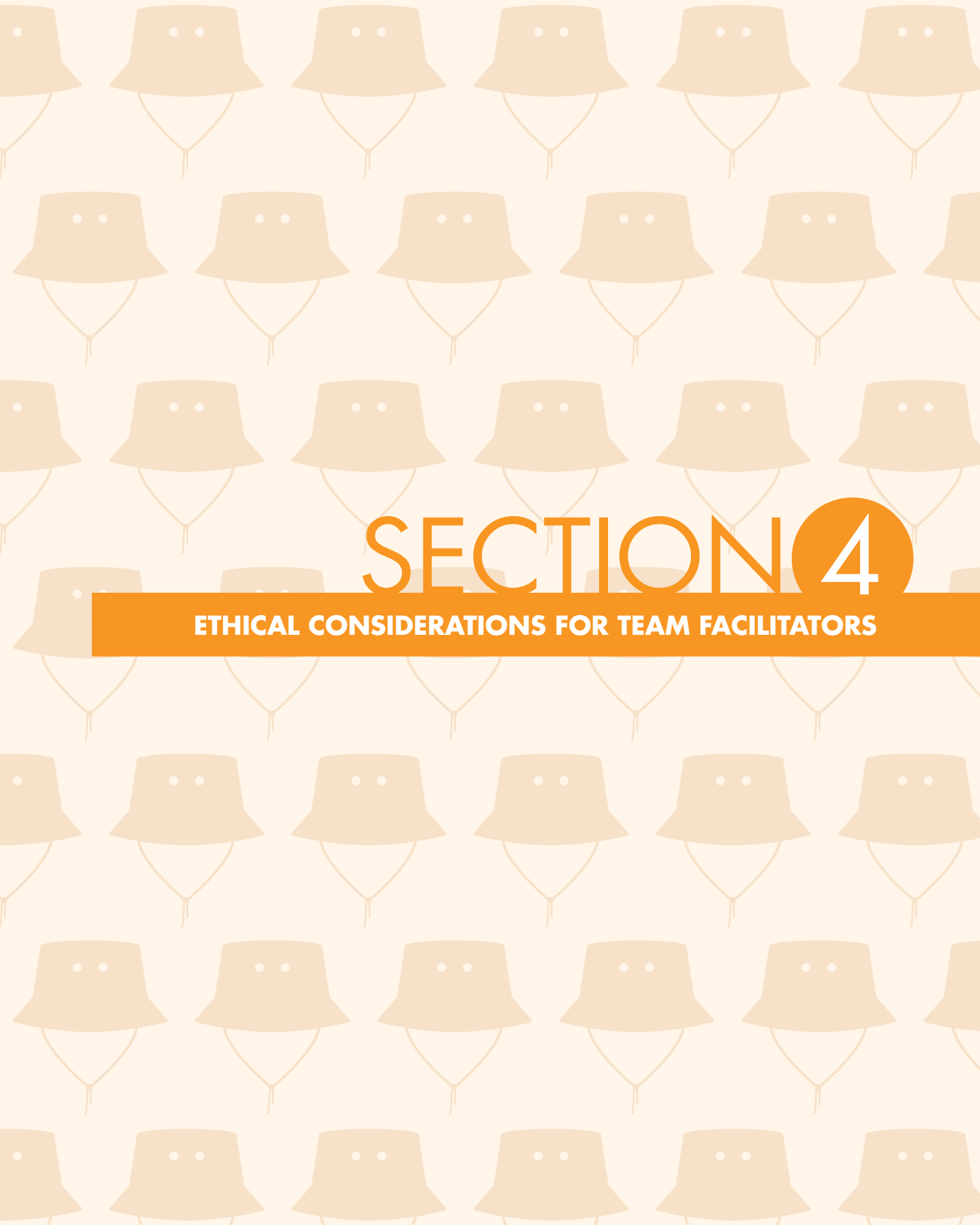
SECTION 4

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEAM FACILITATORS

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEAM FACILITATORS

As a Team Facilitator holding a neutral role on your team, it is important that you adhere to the following ethical considerations. Your effectiveness will rely on your own personal integrity and trust that is built between you and the team(s) that you work with. We have identified the following to guide ethical practice through values and ethical commitments that all Team Facilitators can use to assess whether or not they have engaged in ethical conduct and/or to be used in supervision and peer support circles. You may want to work with your team to identify additional team values that are shared across disciplines and supported by your role as the Team Facilitator.

> Adhering to ethical considerations in your facilitation practice is critical to maintain and foster strong, authentic and sustainable relationships within and across the team.

VALUE: TEAM DEVELOPMENT

A Team Facilitator's goal is to guide the team in collaborative decision making and quality improvement to best support the needs of the child and family. It is important to engage the support of senior leaders and allies when the team has identified systemic barriers to provide the best care for children and families. Team Facilitators elevate the team's development and commitment to collaboration above self-interest. Team Facilitators draw on their knowledge, values and skills to develop and strengthen the multidisciplinary team response to child abuse.

ETHICS IN ACTION:
- Team Facilitators should be able to hold multiple perspectives at once and surface assumptions that may be holding the team back from full collaboration.

VALUE: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Team Facilitators challenge systems inequities and support systems transformation at both the grassroots and systems levels to ensure justice and healing for all children and families impacted by abuse. Team Facilitators pursue systems change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed populations served by the CAC model. This includes promoting awareness, sensitivity and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity within the team and the families served.

ETHICS IN ACTION:
- Team Facilitators should not practice, condone, facilitate or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status or mental or physical ability.
- Team Facilitators should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, relation, immigration status, mental or physical ability.

VALUE: RELATIONSHIPS

Team Facilitators recognize the importance of relationships at the core of their work. They understand that relationships between and among people on the team are imperative to moving the work of the CAC and team forward and as a vehicle for change within their communities. Team Facilitators engage team members as partners in the collaborative process and seek to strengthen relationships with each contributor.

ETHICS IN ACTION:
- Team Facilitators should respect each team member's right to privacy and protect the confidentiality of all information obtained or shared while exercising their role as facilitator.
- Team Facilitators should be aware of and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgement. Team Facilitators will inform the team when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue.
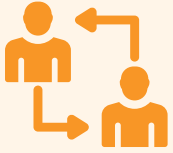
VALUE: INTEGRITY

Team Facilitators foster trust and psychological safety between and among individuals. Team Facilitators are continually aware of their profession's values and ethical principles and practice in a manner consistent with them. Team Facilitators act honestly and responsibly to promote ethical practices on the part of the CAC and the team with which they are affiliated.

ETHICS IN ACTION:

- Team Facilitators who believe that a team member has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such a discussion is likely to be productive and will promote a similar response when two or more team members express concern with another team member.

VALUE: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Team Facilitators are committed to continuous quality improvement within their team and in their own professional development. Team Facilitators strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills to enhance their facilitation fluency and to contribute to the unique nature of team facilitation in the CAC movement.

ETHICS IN ACTION:

- Team Facilitators will participate in regular professional development and continuing education experiences and activities.
- Team Facilitators embrace failures and mistakes as part of the process and promote individual and group learning.

CASE STUDY:

It is time for your monthly case review and you arrive early to set up the space and prepare for the arrival of the rest of your MDT members. As you're setting up, two individuals arrive from the team and appear to be in a deep conversation about something concerning one of the cases that is on today's list to review. The space is small and they are speaking loud enough for you to overhear that one of the investigators assigned to the case is also the coach for the child's baseball team. It's a small community after all. They are concerned about this investigator's ability to objectively assess and investigate the allegations given their relationship with the child's parents. As far as you know, this investigator has not shared this information with the team.

- What value(s) will you need to activate as a Team Facilitator in this situation?
- Why is this information concerning to the outcome of the case and the strength of the team?
- What questions might you have for these two individuals and the investigator in question?
- What will you do to address and/or resolve what you have overheard?

CONSIDERATIONS:

If you haven't yet experienced this, you may soon find that this is a very common situation that you may encounter on your MDT. What you are witnessing here is directly tied to the "how" of the work. In other words, it would be important to revisit what commitments the MDT has made to each other regarding how you will all do your work together. This is often reflected in values, which provides a common language for providing feedback. As you reflect on this scenario you may want to check out the section of this guide on Feedback and the Appendix on Powerful Questions.

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SECTION 5

SELF-ASSESSMENT & ACTION PLAN

SELF-ASSESSMENT & ACTION PLAN

Use this page to assess your baseline as a new Team Facilitator and to plan your professional development goals for the coming year. We encourage you to share this reflection with your supervisor and to check-in on it regularly to measure progress.

PROFESSIONAL GOALS/MOTIVATIONS

What are my professional growth and career aspirations as a Team Facilitator? (Short and Long Term)
How do I think these aspirations can best serve my Child Advocacy Center?

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TALENTS OR STRENGTHS TO USE MORE (3-4)

When you consider the role of the Team Facilitator as outlined in the prior pages, what are the talents and strengths you bring to this role?

_____

_____

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES (1-3)

When you consider the role of the Team Facilitator as outlined in the prior pages, what knowledge and/or skills do you need to enhance and/or improve?

_____

_____

GOAL SETTING

What development goals do I have for the next 6-12 months as it relates to my role?

THINK SMART – SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ATTAINABLE, REALISTIC AND TIMELY

	WHAT STEPS WILL I TAKE TO ACHIEVE MY GOALS?	WHAT RESOURCES OR SUPPORT WILL I NEED?	WHAT WILL MY SUCCESS CRITERIA BE?	TARGET COMPLETION DATE?
1				
2				
3				
4				

SECTION 6

WHAT IS A TEAM?

WHAT IS A TEAM?

A TEAM IS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE A COMMON GOAL. SIMPLE, RIGHT?

Surprisingly, there is quite a bit of overuse of the word team in many professional settings, so this section is a quick primer into the differences between a team and a work group. With 'team' as part of your title and role, we want you to be crystal clear about what a team is before we discuss the many different strategies for strengthening and maintaining your MDT.

LET'S START WITH DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN A TRADITIONAL WORKGROUP AND A TEAM.

WORKGROUP	TEAM
INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY	INDIVIDUAL AND MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY
COME TOGETHER TO SHARE INFORMATION AND PERSPECTIVES	FREQUENTLY COME TOGETHER FOR DISCUSSION, DECISION MAKING, PROBLEM SOLVING AND PLANNING
FOCUS ON INDIVIDUAL GOALS	FOCUS ON TEAM GOALS
PRODUCE INDIVIDUAL WORK PRODUCTS	PRODUCE COLLECTIVE WORK PRODUCTS
DEFINE INDIVIDUAL ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS	DEFINE INDIVIDUAL ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS TO HELP TEAM DO ITS WORK, OFTEN SHARE AND ROTATE THEM
CONCERNED WITH ONE'S OWN OUTCOME AND CHALLENGES	CONCERNED WITH OUTCOMES OF EVERYONE AND TEAM CHALLENGES
PURPOSE, GOALS AND APPROACH TO THE WORK IS SHAPED AND DIRECTED BY AN AUTHORITY FIGURE (ie., MANAGER/DIRECTOR)	PURPOSE, GOALS AND APPROACH TO THE WORK IS SHAPED BY THE TEAM MEMBERS WITH THE HELP OF A TEAM FACILITATOR

Good team facilitation involves understanding what makes a team strong and investing time and energy into practices that build the team's collective capacity to navigate change.

Most importantly, teams are interdependent, meaning that every member relies on each other to get the work done. Think of the famous Aristotle quote, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". Unlike a more traditional workgroup where each team member has their own body of work that they are focused on, a team is co-creating work together. While each member of your team is unique and must tend to their own individual goals and mandates, when they are engaging in the MDT they are co-creating possibilities and making shared decisions to support the mission of the MDT.

Your role as the Team Facilitator will involve reminding individuals of that shared mission and enhancing opportunities for true co-creation instead of just sharing information and updates on cases that come through the MDT.

REFLECTION:
- In what ways is your MDT functioning like a workgroup?
- In what ways is your MDT embracing the full definition of teamwork?
- Where are one or two opportunities to clarify and improve the understanding of 'team' on your MDT?

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CASE STUDY:

At a recent meeting with your MDT partners, it was decided to move the location of the monthly Case Review meetings to the Sheriff's office. This decision was made after much discussion around the central location of the Sheriff's office, as compared to the CAC where the meetings are currently held, as well as the accessibility for all other partners who agreed they would be more likely to attend due to the Sheriff's office proximity to their workplaces. When you shared this update with your Executive Director of the CAC, they appeared to be upset and disappointed because when the CAC moved they ensured that the new building had a dedicated room large enough to host case review. The Executive Director shared with you that this decision would result in wasted space at the CAC and would like for you to reconsider and speak with the partners about continuing to meet at the CAC as a result.

- What decision is in the best interest of the MDT as a whole?
- How might you provide context to your Executive Director about the location move as it relates to the overall collaborative process?
- What might you put in place to assess whether or not this process change indeed serves the MDT as a whole?

CONSIDERATIONS:

Finding yourself between the wishes and desires of the MDT and those of your direct supervisor and leadership can be a challenging place. In this scenario it is important to remember your core role on the MDT, which is to facilitate the collaborative process in the best interest of the team and not any one interest of one of the team members. Revisiting the section on Feedback and Shared Mission and Vision will help you as you reflect on this case study.

NOTES:
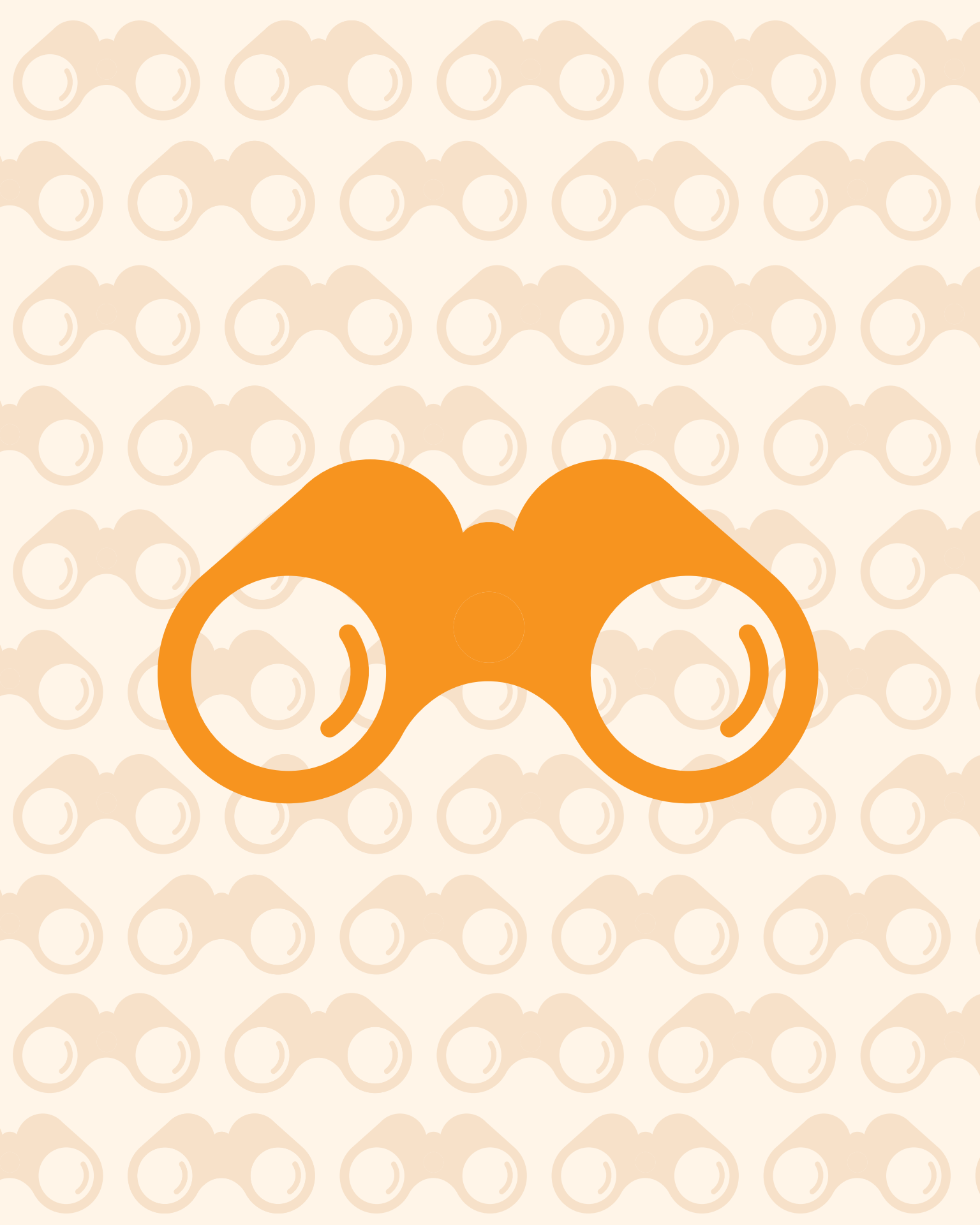
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SECTION 7

WHAT MAKES A TEAM STRONG?

WHAT MAKES A TEAM STRONG?

BECOMING A SKILLED TEAM FACILITATOR

The very first step to becoming a skilled Team Facilitator is building a solid foundation in team development and understanding what qualities and characteristics make up a strong team. Lucky for you, team design, function and development has been the topic of research and evaluation for decades and in almost every field of work from surgical teams in medicine to agile computer programming teams in the Silicon Valley.

This research has informed over a dozen different team models with their own unique interpretation of what makes a team stand out in performance, effectiveness and resilience. There are many similarities that are the thread between all of these models including a balance of productivity and positivity, a clear and compelling mission, role clarity and expectations, accountability structures and establishing psychological safety so that generative conflict can lead to innovative solutions. In this section, we've distilled what research has found that uniquely applies to the child abuse field and your work as a Team Facilitator.

The very first step to becoming a skilled Team Facilitator is building a solid foundation in team development and understanding what qualities and characteristics make up a strong team.

LET'S START WITH THE 3 C'S:

Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration. Your team likely falls somewhere on this spectrum with the ultimate goal of collaboration. You will find that it is quite normal for a team to operate at various levels during their evolution – don't worry we'll get into a team's nature of constant change soon.

COOPERATION: individuals exchange relevant information and resources in support of each other's goals rather than a shared goal. When cooperation occurs, something new may be achieved, but it typically comes from the individual, not a collective team effort. On your MDT, cooperation may look like simply sharing information when asked by another discipline. Team members may understand each other's roles and leave it to that discipline/individual to make progress on their own goals rather than working together to achieve goals together.

COORDINATION: resources and information are shared so each partner can accomplish their part in support of a mutual objective. However, in coordination, nothing new is created. Coordination requires members to sacrifice some personal needs and goals for the team's needs and goals. At this stage, teams have the potential to overcome the limits of individual members and produce work that expresses shared effort and insight. On your MDT, this may look like adhering to joint investigations and coordinating services for the child and family, however each discipline is only held responsible for decisions within their own discipline. Collaborative decision making is limited.

COLLABORATION: working together to create something new in support of a shared vision. The most important process is to get people to work on the same goals. Collaboration is not an individual effort. Something new is created and the glue is the "shared vision." Collaborative teams synergistically combine the skills, knowledge, and insights of all its members to achieve its goals. Often, the projects of collaborative teams are beyond the capacity of any individual team member, and as such are truly innovative. True collaboration takes significant effort from everyone on the team. On your MDT, this may look like full engagement in the shared decision-making process from all members of the MDT. Team members understand and actively work toward the team's goals as a priority and are willing to compromise on their own individual needs/goals in the best interest of the child and family as determined by the team as a whole.

As a Team Facilitator, your role will be to help the team define their shared mission and vision and to co-create solutions for the children and families you serve – AKA collaborate. This will involve helping your team move beyond merely coordinating services and investing in a co-created reality. Collaborative teams lead to improved outcomes for children and families because they are able to leverage the depth of input from all of the diverse voices, backgrounds and experiences of the team.

• **Harmony of Proximal Relations**
• **Necessary for Collective Activities**

Coordination enables but is insufficient for cooperation

COORDINATION
LET'S GET IT DONE

COOPERATION
LET'S IMPROVE THIS

• **Procedural Compliance in a Shared Pursuit**
• **Necessary for Activities of Collective Convergent Production**

Cooperation enables but is insufficient for collaboration

• **Co-Create Emergent Shared Representation**
• **Necessary for Activities of Collective Divergent Production**

COLLABORATION
LET'S CREATE SOMETHING NEW

[3] http://libjournal.uncg.edu/jls/article/view/714/550

TEAM DYNAMICS

Most research on team development confirms the following key assumptions; 1) teams are intentionally designed to produce results towards a shared mission, 2) the best teams have systems and cultures that support sustainability of the work AND the people, and 3) teams are dynamic and constantly evolving.

The extensive research on effective teams conducted by Google offers insight into the work being done by CACs and MDTs. Believing that employees can do more working together than alone, Google identified five dynamics of effective teams,[4] which can easily be applied to the MDT/CAC model to promote high-functioning teamwork. The five dynamics include:

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY: Psychological safety refers to an individual's perception of the consequences of taking an interpersonal risk, such as being seen as ignorant, incompetent, negative, or disruptive. In a team with high psychological safety, teammates feel safe to take risks around their team members and confident that no one on the team will embarrass or punish anyone else for admitting a mistake, asking a question, or offering a new idea.

STRUCTURE AND CLARITY: A team achieves structure and clarity when individual members understand job expectations, the process for fulfilling these expectations, and that the consequences of their performance are important for team effectiveness.

MEANING: Finding a sense of purpose in either the work itself or the output is important for team effectiveness. The meaning of work is personal and can vary: passion for the mission of the CAC, financial security, supporting family, helping the team succeed, or self-expression for each individual, for example.

IMPACT: The results of one's work, the subjective judgement that your work is making a difference, and seeing that one's work is contributing to the organization's goals can help reveal impact. Goals can be set at the individual and/or group level, and must be specific, challenging, and attainable.

DEPENDABILITY: On dependable teams, members reliably complete quality work on time and don't shirk responsibilities.

4 Merrington, Natasha. (2018, September). The 5 dynamics of an effective team. Retrieved from
   https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/intl/en-gb/consumer-insights/consumer-trends/five-dynamics-effective-team/.

When applied to the CAC model, the Google model for effective teams provides an ideal framework for the skills and knowledge needed to be an effective Team Facilitator.[5]

IN ORDER TO CREATE...	A TEAM FACILITATOR SHOULD BE ABLE TO...
PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY Establish an environment where all members feel confident about admitting mistakes, asking questions, or offering new ideas.	• Give and receive feedback • Navigate conflict • Resolve conflict • Ask powerful questions • Foster a trusting environment • Encourage participatory decision-making • Develop and maintain relationships with members
STRUCTURE AND CLARITY Provide clear roles, goals and plans to guide team processes and systems.	• Define roles and responsibilities • Define mission, vision, and values • Create effective meeting agendas • Exhibit organizational skills • Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills • Exhibit time management skills • Demonstrate flexibility and manage multiple priorities • Demonstrate ability to manage change • Encourage team development • Ensure adherence to MDT agreements and protocols
MEANING Create shared meaning that incorporates individual differences, roles, and mandates to establish a shared purpose.	• Define mission, vision, shared purpose, and values • Demonstrate emotional intelligence • Effectively communicate the goal of the team • Understand the roles of MDT members • Explore why the work of the MDT is important to each team member and create opportunities for team members to share their individual meaning with each other
IMPACT Ensure fluency in the CAC model and how the MDT approach impacts families and children.	• Define mission, vision, and values • Implement trauma-informed practices • Exhibit knowledge of MDT investigative processes • Understand the roles of MDT members • Understand the systemic barriers and inequities for families • Understand how issues of diversity and inclusion influence MDT culture, discussion, and decision-making • Create opportunities for the team to see that their work matters
DEPENDABILITY Communicate expectations and implement shared accountability processes.	• Give and receive feedback • Exhibit time management skills • Navigate conflict • Encourage participatory decision-making • Foster resiliency of team members • Promote trust and confidence between team members

[5] Beyond Case Review White Paper

PRODUCTIVITY AND POSITIVITY ON YOUR TEAM

Research from Team Coaching International provides some additional texture and language that bolsters the Google research and may help you to consider the balance of productivity and positivity on a team to ensure its resilience and sustainability. They found that an investment in the positivity indicators of a team will always lead to an improvement in productivity, whereas an investment in productivity doesn't always result in increased positivity.[6]

We have included a powerful question or two with each indicator to help you start exploring how these dynamics show up on your team. You might ask these questions to yourself, your supervisor or your team at large. (*What is a powerful question? We'll get to that soon too but for now just go with it.*)

> "The fundamental task of leaders is to prime good feeling in those they lead. That occurs when a leader creates resonance – a reservoir of positivity that frees the best in people. At its root, then, the primal job of leadership is emotional."
>
> – Daniel Goleman

PRODUCTIVITY ON YOUR TEAM

Let's start with indicators of productivity on your team. The following definitions for each indicator capture the ideal conditions for a team to produce results, accomplish tasks, and stay on course with goals.

ALIGNMENT: A sense of common mission and purpose. The team values cooperation, cohesion and interdependence and collectively owns its results.

> What do you believe to be the mission and purpose for your MDT to be?
> How might this differ across roles and disciplines?
> What would it look like to have one common purpose?

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[6] Team Coaching International – Team Diagnostic Assessment

GOALS & STRATEGIES: The team has clear, challenging objectives; there is alignment on strategies and priorities. The team is highly resilient and not easily defeated in its goals.

? What does success look like for this team?
How does this team navigate challenges and barriers to achieving its goals?
How do we celebrate success as a team?

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ACCOUNTABILITY: There is clarity of roles and responsibilities with high follow through. When problems arise, the team responds. Team members actively hold each other accountable for team agreements.

? What does accountability look like for this team?
Where do individual roles start and stop on our team?

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PROACTIVE: Change is embraced and seen as vital to this team. The team is nimble and flexible in addressing opportunities for change, responding positively and creatively.

? How does our team navigate change?
When has the team produced its most innovative and creative solutions?

_____

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DECISION-MAKING: The team has clear and efficient decision-making processes, which have proven effective over time.

?   What does shared decision making look like on your team?
How do you know when a decision is being made and when to contribute?

_____

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RESOURCES: The team clearly requests, obtains and manages adequate resources and training to meet its objectives. There is sufficient expertise and energy to accomplish the team's objectives.

?   What are the team's resources?
How does the team allocate resources to support its goals?

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TEAM LEADERSHIP: The team leader's role is clear and supportive of the team as a whole. There is a strong sense of team leadership; team members take initiative to provide leadership as the need for initiative arises.

How does the team share leadership responsibilities?
What does it look like to be a leader on this team?

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POSITIVITY ON YOUR TEAM

The following definitions describe the ideal conditions for an engaged and collaborative team. Positivity does not mean that everyone is happy on your team, rather it is simply the idea that the following indicators must be in place to support team interactions that lead to high performance.

TRUST: It is safe on this team to speak your mind openly. Team members can count on each other; as a team we are reliable. The team does not operate in a fear-based environment.

> What does safety look like on this team?
> How will we know when we've achieved safety and trust?

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RESPECT: There is an atmosphere of mutual respect and genuine positive regard. Contempt and hostility are not tolerated. We empower other members of the team to contribute.

> How do members of this team like to be shown respect?
> What do we do when hostility rears its head on our team?

_____

_____

CAMARADERIE: There is a strong sense of belonging to the team. The team celebrates and acknowledges accomplishments. Empathy, playfulness and humor are present.

> How do we celebrate our collective and individual accomplishments as a team?
> What helps each individual feel like they belong and are connected to the larger team?
> How do we have fun together?

_____

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COMMUNICATION: Clear and efficient communication is valued over less direct approaches such as politicizing, gossiping or consistently avoiding necessary conversations.

? What is the team's preferred communication method?
As a team, how do we disrupt behavior such as gossiping?

_____

_____

CONSTRUCTIVE INTERACTION: Conflict is seen as an opportunity for discovery, growth and creativity. The team avoids criticizing, defensiveness and finger pointing. We give and receive feedback well.

? When do we give feedback to each other on this team?
What are our group agreements for resolving conflict on this team?

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VALUES DIVERSITY: The team is open-minded and values differences in ideas, backgrounds, perspectives, personalities, approaches and lifestyles. Diversity is considered vital.

? How do we honor diversity on our team?
How do we empower everyone to express their views and offer opportunities to provide their input?
Do team members understand and value one another's unique contributions and expertise?

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OPTIMISM: The team has an inspiring and shared vision. They are enthusiastic, forward-looking and appreciative of each other. There are low levels of cynicism, pessimism, helplessness or hopelessness.

? How do we inspire each other on this team?
What do we do when we begin to see increased levels of cynicism and hopelessness on our team?

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There is absolutely no expectation that you have asked and answered all of these questions, but we do hope that it has helped to start painting a picture of just how dynamic your team is. You may consider asking these questions to team members during their on-boarding process and/or during a team meeting or retreat. They are also a great place to start when you feel stuck or challenged in an area to help bring clarity to what the root issue might be and to surface solutions and strategies for improvement.

IMPORTANT: Do not be disheartened if you find that your team is struggling to meet most of these indicators and characteristics. You are not alone. While you are responsible for facilitation and using these indicators as a guide for progress, you are not responsible for solving all of your team's problems. Achieving effectiveness is a whole team responsibility.

There is no such thing as a perfect team or perfect facilitation.

Case Study:

You've been working with your MDT closely for the last six months and have observed some common themes and patterns. Initially established by the prosecutor's office about 10 years ago, your MDT tends to focus heavily on prosecution and investigation outcomes. In fact, lately you've seen some disengagement from other core team members including victim advocates and mental health providers. During the most recent Case Review that you facilitated you noticed that only a few individuals actually speak and that often when the Family Advocate is sharing about the family's response to the crisis and trauma it is often brushed aside as unimportant or inconsequential to the conversation by other members. You decided to reach out to the Family Advocate and a few of the mental health providers who are on the MDT to ask why they've missed the last couple of meetings and have disengaged from the process. They share with you that they don't feel the information they have to provide is valued by the team and that the meetings are a waste of time.

- Based on your observations, what characteristics of the Google Team Model may need some more attention on your team?
- What strategies might you employ to address the Google Team characteristic you identified in #1?
- Identify at least one productivity indicator that may currently be under strain on your team. What question(s) might you ask to gain more clarity about that indicator on your team?
- Identify at least one positivity indicator that may currently be under strain on your team. What question(s) might you ask to gain more clarity about that indicator on your team?
- How will you respond to the concerns that were expressed by your Family Advocate and mental health providers?
- What else might you consider addressing with the team?

CONSIDERATIONS:

This case study highlights the power dynamics that are often at play on MDTs. In this situation it is the Prosecutor who is dominating and running the agenda for the MDT. As you consider the different indicators that are discussed in the Strengthening Team section, remember that you can always call-in allies as a Team Facilitator. If there are long standing habits, practices and/or relationships that are in need of a refresh it can be to yours and the entire team's benefit to bring in individuals who have significant influence on the team that align with the team's best interest. Remember not to get triangulated into relationship dynamics and keep clear boundaries around your role and the purpose of the team's structure. Revisiting the shared mission and vision of the team may be a helpful starting place for creating common ground.

NOTES:

Team Coaching International found that an investment in the positivity indicators of a team will always lead to an improvement in productivity, whereas an investment in productivity doesn't always result in increased positivity.

EVOLUTION OF TEAMS

Now that you have a good sense of what makes for a strong, productive and thriving team let's look at it through the lens of team evolution. Teams are always morphing and changing and it can be helpful as a Team Facilitator to put your evolution in context and validate some of the growing pains you may be observing and experiencing. The following is a brief overview of the Tuckman Team Development framework, one of the most commonly used frameworks since its development in the mid-1960s by Bruce Tuckman. Tuckman suggests that there are five stages of development that are necessary and cyclical on any given team.

FORMING

STORMING

NORMING

PERFORMING

ADJOURNING

FORMING: During this stage of development team members are often excited and eager to be a part of the work and have high expectations for what the team can accomplish together. There may also be some feelings of uncertainty wondering how it will all work and what their role in the team may be. Teams in this stage tend to focus on asking lots of questions that help to set clear goals, structures and roles for members of the team. The majority of the team's energy is spent defining the team and results are yet to be seen. A good orientation process is incredibly useful at this stage.

STORMING: During this stage of development team members begin to build confidence in moving towards goals while also discovering that the team may not be able to live up to all of the expectations that were originally set out in the forming stage. This can lead to conflict and frustration around the team's progress and process. Teams in this stage often experience a dip in energy and commitment to the goals that were initially set and may become critical of some of the team members. It is important during this stage to refocus and recenter on the original intent and mission of the team and to clarify roles and expectations.

NORMING: During this stage of development team members begin to resolve the conflict and frustrations that were present during the storming stage. Trust and psychological safety play an important role in this stage for setting more flexible, clear and inclusive norms for its members that allow all members to express their needs and ideas freely. Teams in this stage begin to see the value of diverse voices, opinions and backgrounds to support innovation and collaboration. Feedback and constructive conversations are welcome and common for improving the quality of the team's function.

PERFORMING: During this stage of development team members feel satisfied and committed to the team's progress and processes. Team members can more easily see and leverage the strengths of each of the members and also have good awareness of the team's collective strengths and opportunities for growth. Teams in this stage can approach the work from a proactive stance rather than a reactive one. Celebrations and progress are a common occurrence and the team is committed to continuously improving their work through learning.

ADJOURNING: Tuckman added this fifth stage to the model after its initial inception to recognize that there is often an end or dissolution in the life cycle of teams. On your MDT this may be something you experience with regards to special task forces or teams that were gathered to respond to a specific need.

While the model indicates a more linear path through these developmental stages that is not always the case with MDTs. It is common for a team to return to the Storming or Norming stage when new members are added, key decision makers are replaced or even when a challenging case disrupts the cohesion of the team. It is also common for teams to get uncomfortable and feel challenged in the Storming phase which sometimes results in reverting back to Forming to avoid the discomfort and stagnates the growth of the team.

NOTE:

If you are curious where your team may be in their own evolution, we've provided a Tuckman Team Development Assessment Tool in the Additional Resources section for your use and reflection.

TEAM PERFORMANCE & EVOLUTION REFLECTION:

- Take a moment to reflect on your current team.
- When you think about the stages of forming, storming, norming and performing, where do you believe your team is in its evolution?
- What characteristics and/or behaviors are present on your team that provide evidence of where you believe the team is in its evolution?
- What are the opportunities for growth on your team when you consider the balance of productivity and positivity on your team?

NOTES:

NAVIGATING CHANGE & TRANSITION

You know that old Greek proverb, "the only thing constant in life is change." Well, that applies to teams too. MDTs are not immune to the impact of change and in many ways, they are more susceptible to change and turnover given the nature and impact of child abuse work. Many teams experience a revolving door of new investigators, most notably in child protection and law enforcement. Every time a new team member is added to an existing team the dynamic changes and the culture adjusts.

As a Team Facilitator you will be one of the more stable and consistent members of the team. This allows you the unique ability to pull the thread of consistency as the culture shifts. Because change is so constant on MDTs, creating clear roles, structures and expectations are necessary for maintaining sustainability and for ensuring that new team members know how to smoothly transition into the team.

Here are ways you can be proactive about change as a Team Facilitator:

- Reach out to new members early and often and on-board them to your team including a discussion about team agreements, decision making, communication pathways, expectations, team culture, and processes (remember those Google Characteristics?)
- Co-create an orientation process for new team members that reinforces team mission, values, agreements, roles, structures and goals.
- Co-create a clear and compelling mission for the MDT and include it on all written materials and agendas. This will help signal to new members how they can contribute to this team and hold current members accountable to the mission.
- Recruit allies on your team that can help usher in new team members and help them feel welcomed.

ASSESSING YOUR TEAM'S STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

Assessing and attending to your team's strengths and growth areas will be a routine part of your role and will lead to continuous quality improvement both for your team and for the communities you serve. There are many different ways to assess the needs of your team. We have highlighted a few options for you here and have included some additional resources in the Appendix for your reference.

TOOLS FOR ASSESSING TEAM NEEDS:

OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT SYSTEM (OMS)

Outcomes Measurement System (OMS) helps CACs define their successes in serving children and families while helping them benchmark their progress against the work of a nationwide movement. If your CAC engages in OMS, you'll have access to a general MDT survey as well as a case-specific MDT survey that can be distributed to your MDT as frequently as you'd like. The results will help you assess buy-in, engagement and satisfaction with the team process.

BI-ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE TEAM

Bi-Annual Survey of the Team if you do not have access to OMS, a simple electronic survey sent out to your team twice a year will help you to collect data on their engagement and satisfaction with the process.

REGULAR FEEDBACK SESSIONS

Regular feedback Sessions with team members over the phone or coffee can help provide information that goes beyond what can be shared in writing. This will give you the opportunity to ask follow up questions and will help you to get to know the unique needs of each of your team members.

RECORD OBSERVATIONS AND THEMES

Record Observations and Themes that arise during your facilitation. This might look like a challenge with a current policy or protocol around referrals and case criteria, or a conversation that is revisited often without resolution, or it may look like a pattern of engagement from an individual or agency. This is great information to record over time and address if the behavior or policy becomes a barrier to the team.

NOTES:

Key Take-Aways:

- Teams are intentionally designed to produce results towards a shared mission and while there are a variety of models to support good team work, the pillars include; balance of productivity and positivity, a clear and compelling mission, role clarity and expectations, accountability structures and establishing psychological safety so that generative conflict can lead to innovative solutions.
- The best teams have systems and cultures that support sustainability of the work AND the people. As a Team Facilitator it's your role to guide the team in finding a balance between productivity and positivity.
- Teams are dynamic, constantly evolving and require healthy generative conflict to function effectively.

Additional Resources for Your Continued Learning:

- Google Team Model – rework
- Google Team Self-Assessment (See Appendix)
- Tuckman Team Development Model
- Tuckman Team Development Assessment Tool
- Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions of a Team
- Integral Facilitation Primer and Self-Assessment
- Ambrose Model of Change
- Book: Teams Unleashed by Phillip Sandahl
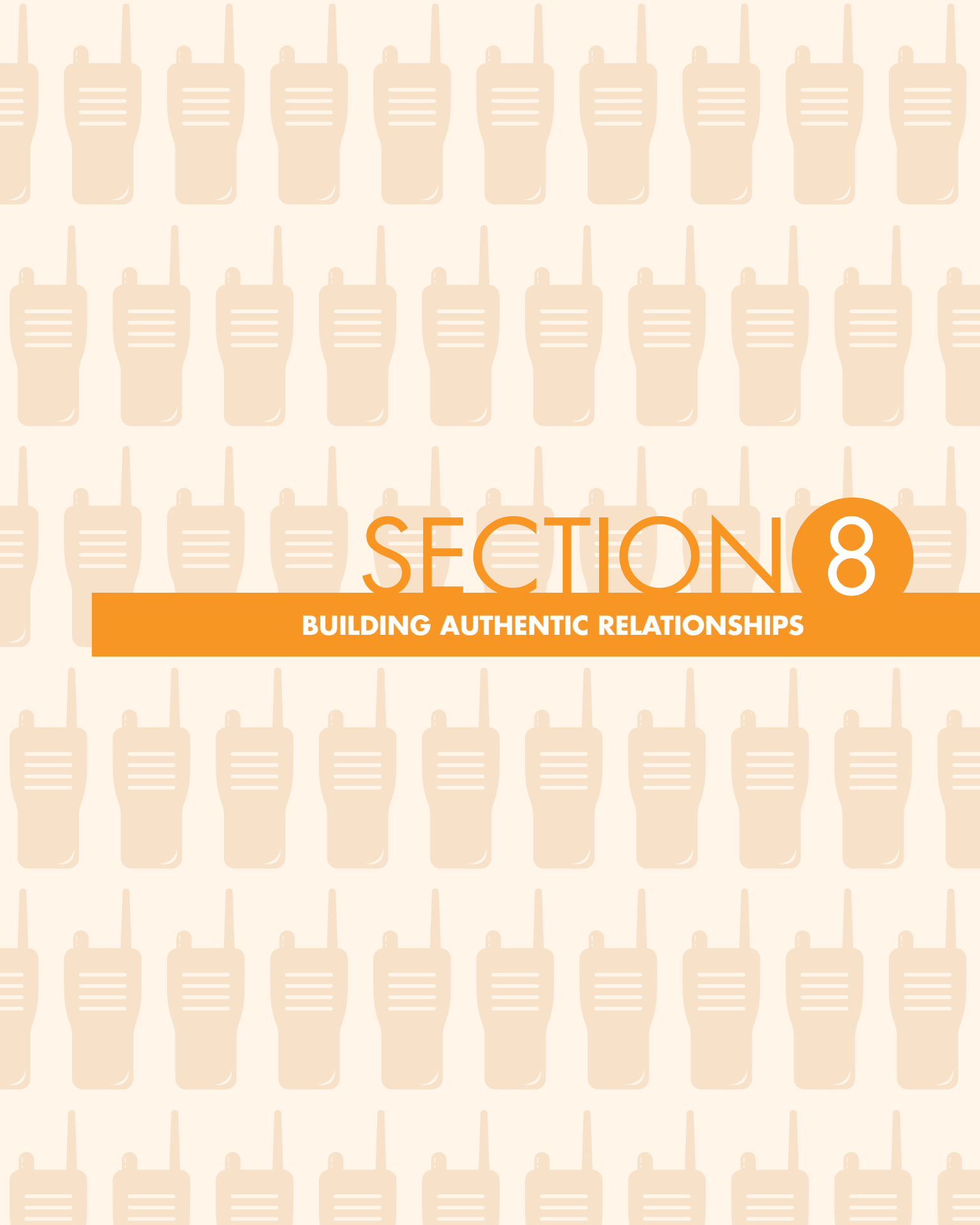
SECTION 8

BUILDING AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are at the core of all that you do as a Team Facilitator. If you only focused on one thing during your first year in this role, it should be building authentic relationships with all members of your team. MDTs rely on healthy, functioning and trusting relationships between individuals. Without trust, teams begin to see a breakdown in communication, accountability, engagement and effectiveness.

> Good team facilitation involves an ability to foster trust and psychological safety among all team members that ultimately leads to a sense of team identity and belonging.

In essence, trust is a building block for psychological safety; however, they are two separate concepts. Psychological safety is a function of a group whereas trust is between two individuals. In this section we will be focusing on building trust between you and one other individual. Psychological Safety will be addressed in the next section as it relates to the team's collective environment.

BUILDING TRUST

Just as the sub-header suggests, trust is something that must be built over time between two individuals. Similar to all of the other moving parts on your team, trust will evolve and change just as you will evolve and change in this role. Trust is something that is felt at an intuitive level and allows us and those who we are in relationship with feel seen, accepted and able to experiment more freely. The first step to building trust is creating greater awareness of what trust means, looks like and feels like for you in relationship with others.

COGNITIVE/COMPETENCE BASED TRUST: The belief that another individual is competent, reliable, professional, well prepared and dedicated to their work.

> **EXAMPLE:** *"I trust them, they can do the job."*

AFFECTIVE/CHARACTER BASED TRUST: The belief that another individual has genuine care and concern for your interest and well-being.

> **EXAMPLE:** *"I trust them, they have my back."*

Below is a graphic[7] that depicts the evolution of trust over time between two individuals. We often begin with some familiarity with a team member through a formal or informal introduction or just by sharing space with a team member. Each step in this model requires additional commitment and responsibility on behalf of both people until assured trust is achieved.

UNCONSCIOUS AWARENESS

NO RELATIONSHIP YET, BUT FAMILIARITY WITH ONE ANOTHER

COURTESY & CONSIDERATION

RESPONSIVE TO EACH OTHER AND CENTERED AROUND CREATING/PROVIDING COMFORT

SHARED STORIES

- SEEKING CONNECTIONS
- SHARED EXPERIENCES

CREATIVE EXPRESSION & AUTHENTICITY

- LESS EDITING AND MORE SHARING WITH ONE ANOTHER
- FEEL FREE TO BE WHO YOU ARE WITH ONE ANOTHER

COMMITMENT & ASSURED TRUST

- WILLING TO TAKE LARGE RISKS WITH EACH OTHER
- WILLING TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND ADDRESS FAILURES OPENLY

Trust Reflection: Who is someone at a higher level on the trust model? What standards must those individuals meet to be at those higher levels of trust with you? Who is someone at one of the lower levels? What would it take to get them to a higher level of trust? How do you know when others trust you?
What could you do to further create an environment of trust?

[7] Adapted from Learning Journeys International School of Coaching Creating Trust Model

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR ESTABLISHING TRUST

Now that you have a sense of how trust evolves over time, you can use the following building blocks to help deepen trust at each of those levels in the relationships you manage.

TRANSPARENCY – Sharing openly and candidly about thoughts, feelings, considerations and changes occurring on the MDT. The appropriate information is shared in a timely manner and communicated openly.

>**EXAMPLE:** When members join and depart the team, sharing in a timely manner and addressing concerns about the transitions as needed.

COMPETENCY – A belief that you and those you are in relationship with are capable of doing their job and fulfilling their role.

>**EXAMPLE:** Understanding each other's roles and acknowledging when you do or do not know something.
>(Hint: it is ok to say "I don't know" and defer to someone else with the appropriate expertise)

INTEGRITY – Alignment between your beliefs, words and actions. Fulfilling commitments and following through on your agreements.

>**EXAMPLE:** When asking for input on a decision, truly consider and evaluate all input not just the information that confirms what you already know or had decided on and reflect this back to the team.

PREDICTABILITY – Consistent behaviors in different contexts over time.

>**EXAMPLE:** If you allow some members of the team to arrive late to a team retreat, extend the same exception to all members.

INCLUSION – Performance is based on the quality of social connections, openness to learning, agility and depth of decision-making. It is focused on synergistic interpersonal processes that make it possible for diverse groups to yield performance benefits for their organization.[8]

>**EXAMPLE:** Actively seek out all voices instead of relying on the few that are more comfortable speaking up and providing input.

ACCESSIBILITY– Easily approachable for others to share openly about their thoughts and feelings without repercussion.

>**EXAMPLE:** Establish open office hours for team members to visit, call with questions or just get to know each other over coffee.

[8] Cornell Inclusion Training

VULNERABILITY – Acknowledging and owning mistakes and failures and sharing openly.

> **EXAMPLE:** Apologize when you've made an error or mistake and extend forgiveness when others do the same.

COMPATIBILITY – Unearthing and naming shared values, history, interests and beliefs.

> **EXAMPLE:** Reflect back to someone when they share a similar interest. This begins with being genuinely curious about someone else's interests.

GOODWILL – There is a shared feeling of trust and care for one another beyond work. An ability to see someone for their whole selves.

> **EXAMPLE:** Remember when a team member's birthday is and celebrate with a short note or collective celebration.

GIVING & RECEIVING FEEDBACK

As a Team Facilitator you will become fluent in giving and receiving feedback as an amplifier for building trust and ensuring that the whole team continues to function effectively. This skill is directly tied to the value of quality improvement in your code of ethics.

Effective feedback is an immediate, short interaction that draws attention to a behavior, habit or style that may get in the way of relationships or the team's productivity. It is also a discussion that highlights behaviors that are exemplary and need to be reinforced. Feedback involves both positive and constructive elements and has the intention to find a shared solution.

WHEN DONE WELL, FEEDBACK...

- **ADVANCES RELATIONSHIPS**
- **FOSTERS TRUST**
- **IMPROVES OUR ABILITY TO GET THINGS DONE**
- **IS SPECIFIC, DIRECT AND CLEAR**

WHEN DONE POORLY, FEEDBACK...

- **DAMAGES INTERACTIONS**
- **CAUSES DEFENSIVENESS**
- **CAN IMPACT PRODUCTIVITY NEGATIVELY**
- **CAN BE WANDERING, MUSHY AND UNCLEAR**

As a Team Facilitator, you will be working to build a culture that supports and encourages feedback. This may begin by modeling feedback with individuals one-on-one and in the group setting. Many teams also have agreements around feedback and make space for collective feedback on a regular basis.

The following model can be used to deliver both constructive and positive feedback.[9]

| PREPARE | DESCRIBE | ASK | REINFORCE | AGREE |

As you **PREPARE** to give feedback, you'll want to consider what specific behavior you'd like to reinforce or what you hope the individual will do differently in the future. During this stage, you'll also want to assess for how the behavior impacted yourself and others and discern the purpose for giving feedback. Consider a location that is appropriate for the individual you'll be giving feedback to; this may be public or private depending on the context. When giving constructive feedback, during this stage take a moment to separate yourself from this situation so that you can arrive at the conversation calmly and ready to articulate your perspective.

As you **DESCRIBE** the behavior being addressed, be specific and factual. Be prepared to share examples that reinforce your observations including the impact the individual's behavior had on other team members or the team as a whole. Use descriptive, non-judgmental language including "I" messages such as "I need you to speak up more during our meetings because your voice is important to the team's decision-making process." Instead of "You need to speak up more during our meetings." In this stage it is important to focus on behaviors, habits and facts and not on personality or personal traits.

Next, you will **ASK** the receiver for their perspective which may include an invitation to react to what was said and for any additional information that you may have missed. Asking allows the conversation to be collaborative rather than accusatory and also gives you a chance to check assumptions and gather more information. Activate your deep listening skills and allow the receiver to respond without interruption. You may have additional clarifying questions to ask during this stage as well. When giving constructive feedback, you'll want to be direct and to the point. It shouldn't take more than 60 seconds to get to "ask", especially if you've taken the time to prepare.

After surfacing additional clarity, **REINFORCE** why the issue matters, and again, its impact on others and the team. Take some time to thank the receiver for their input and perspective and reinforce the importance of the behavior change or recognition. When giving positive feedback let the recognition stand on its own without adding additional "to-do" requests. The best feedback is sincere and honest. Your team members will know when you are saying something just to be nice or trying not to hurt their feelings.

For constructive feedback, you will wrap up the conversation with **AGREEMENT** on alternatives and next steps for addressing the behavior. Spend time painting a clear picture together for what changed behavior will look or sound like and identify next steps. In this stage it is important to remember that you are agreeing on next steps not necessarily on all of the facts or circumstances that surfaced during the conversation. Wrap up by reaffirming your support for the individual receiving the feedback.

[9] Leading Engaged Teams

Receiving feedback is just as important as giving feedback on your team. In fact, soliciting feedback may be a great place for you to start modeling and setting the tone for feedback on your team. When you solicit feedback, remember to ask for what went well AND what could be done differently the next time.

When you're receiving feedback, here are a few tips to keep in mind:
- Focus on the content of the message, not the person delivering the message
- Focus on the future, not the past
- Ask for what you could have done better or changed rather than what you did wrong
- Listen calmly and attentively, take notes
- Clarify the feedback when needed
- Avoid defending or over-explaining
- Welcome suggestions
- Show appreciation for their effort and intent – receive the conversation as a gift for growth

NORMALIZING GENERATIVE CONFLICT

Engaging in regular feedback practices will greatly assist you with normalizing and working through conflict on the team. As we mentioned previously, facilitating an effective coordinated response among diverse individuals and agencies can be challenging as a result of:

- Varying personal and professional backgrounds
- Different mandates, timelines, areas of authority, trainings and philosophies
- Various organizational structures, protocols, and cultures

These challenges can also result in conflict. While conflict is often seen through a negative lens as something to be avoided at all costs, it is absolutely inevitable and necessary for a high performing team. Your role as a Team Facilitator will be to help the team embrace and normalize healthy and generative conflict.

When teams have established a level of trust and psychological safety with one another where they can speak honestly and candidly, there is greater opportunity to produce new and innovative approaches to persistent and common problems. Safety does not mean that conflict becomes more comfortable, rather safety allows a team to step into uncomfortable conversations more readily with the knowledge that something great may come out of it and that in order to move forward it is necessary. We'll get into more depth on navigating conflict in the next section on Building Authentic Relationships.

Normalizing generative conflict looks like:
- Co-creating ground rules and/or group agreements with the team about how conflict will be handled as a team
- Encouraging feedback between members and asking for feedback often
- Celebrating the success and solutions that resulted from conflict

CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

Crucial Conversations[10] are defined by Joseph Grenny as conversations where opposing opinions, strong emotions and high stakes often come to a head. These conversations are face-to-face accountability conversations with an intention to discover a shared plan, similar to the giving feedback framework above. As a facilitator of an MDT whose primary role is to respond to child abuse in the community, you can imagine that many conversations will meet all three of these criteria.

- Opposing Opinions – Members of the MDT often have different opinions for how a case should proceed through the system and conflicting mandates.
- Strong Emotions – It is not uncommon for team members to feel connected and emotional about the children and families they are serving and guiding through the system.
- High Stakes – In our line of work, the safety of children is always at stake in our process and decision making.

10 Crucial Conversations

When you notice this trifecta on your team or perhaps between two or more members of your team, it is important to address the issue as soon as possible because, "If you don't talk it out, you'll act it out." As a Team Facilitator you'll want to tune in to the following behaviors as symptoms that a deeper crucial conversation needs to be had (think fight or flight).

- Purposely withholding information
- Selectively showing true opinions using sarcasm, sugar coating or coaching
- Avoidance and steering away from important/sensitive subjects
- Withdrawing from the conversation mentally or physically
- Name-calling
- Making threats
- Dominating conversations to control the outcome
- Speaking in absolutes and forcing one's views on others
- Labeling someone in order to dismiss their idea
- Verbal attacks

All of these behaviors contribute to a decrease in safety for the team and the only way to repair the safety is to reestablish shared meaning and commitment by addressing the conflict. When you notice these behaviors the first step is to start with yourself and master your own story so that you can show up as the neutral facilitator we spoke about earlier.

The first step in addressing a crucial conversation will be to discern what is bothering you most, or helping the team collectively decide where the starting point is. In the Crucial Conversations framework, Grenny suggests breaking down the complex problem at hand into various parts (CPR):

CONTENT: a single instance of a problem.
    EXAMPLE: A team member forgot to use the correct pronouns when addressing a child.

PATTERN: a recurring problem or pattern of behavior over time.
    EXAMPLE: A team member repeatedly misses deadlines for sharing information and/or attendance.

RELATIONSHIP: a problem that has now transformed into a relationship barrier.
    EXAMPLE: Trust is suffering or the team is questioning an individual member's or agency's competency.
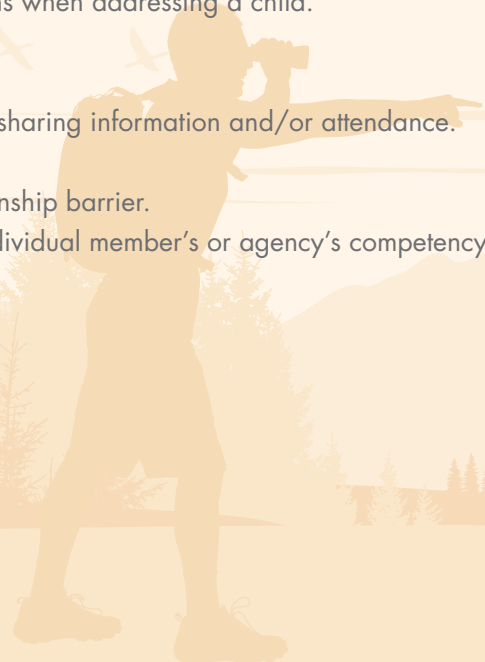
Addressing content problems are the easiest to address, while relationship problems tend to require higher amounts of safety and planning to be successful. If your team has been in existence for some time, you may have inherited a variety of these problems to weed through as you onboard the team. We encourage you to start addressing content problems swiftly to prevent them from developing into pattern and relationship issues in the future.

Once you've discerned the root of the problem, and because you may have a few on the docket, it is important to always remember that you get to decide whether or not you will initiate a conversation. You may consider weighing out the risks of having the conversations versus not having the conversation and assessing what you really want for that individual, the team and for your CAC.

If you find yourself caught up in your own story or the stories that others have shared with you, ask these three questions to surface more perspective and to move forward on next steps.

? What am I pretending not to notice about my role in the problem?
Why would a reasonable, rational, decent person do this?
What should I do right now to move toward what I really want?

_____

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Utilizing the giving feedback skills and framework above to share the facts you have observed and invite in their perspective before committing to a mutual and agreed upon next step or strategy.

Case Study:

It has come to your attention that there is a growing tension between a handful of Law Enforcement officers and Child Protection workers on your team. It started after a recent case where Law Enforcement was recommending the child be removed from the home, but it didn't rise to the level needed for Child Protective Services to make a removal. Ever since this decision, one Child Protection worker in particular has been showing up very differently to collaborative processes. When asked to share information on a case, she is short and offers up minimal to no information. She often interrupts when the Law Enforcement officers are speaking, or starts up side conversations with her colleagues instead of listening to the cases currently being discussed. In some cases, she even gets up and walks out of the room. This relationship dynamic is a barrier to the collaborative process and ultimately impacts the children and families that are being served by the MDT.

- Does this challenge meet the three qualities of a crucial conversation?
- What behaviors have you observed that are impacting the safety of the team (be specific and remember to only state the facts)?
- Is this a content, pattern or relationship issue? Why?
- What is the risk of addressing this behavior? What is the risk of not addressing this behavior?
- How will you decide to describe the gap between her behavior and what the team needs?
- What can you do to make this conversation safe?

CONSIDERATIONS:

In every crucial conversation, a key part of the preparation is discerning facts from opinions. Our minds naturally want to make meaning of certain behaviors that we have observed and that meaning making often comes with labels. For example, in this case study the interrupting may be labeled as "rude" or "aggressive". Effective crucial conversations are able to separate the label from the behavior and start by simply providing the facts of what was observed (i.e. I noticed that you interrupted the Law Enforcement officer five times in the last meeting. I'm wondering if your experience checks out with what I observed?)

NOTES:

Key Take-Aways:

- Psychological safety is a function of a group whereas trust is between two individuals and both take time and commitment.
- Giving and receiving regular feedback will amplify trust.
- If you don't talk it out, you'll act it out. It is best to address conflict immediately before it develops into relationship problem.

Additional Resources for Your Continued Learning:

- Daring Greatly Engaged Feedback Checklist
- Book: Crucial Conversations by Joseph Grenny
- VitalSmarts Website
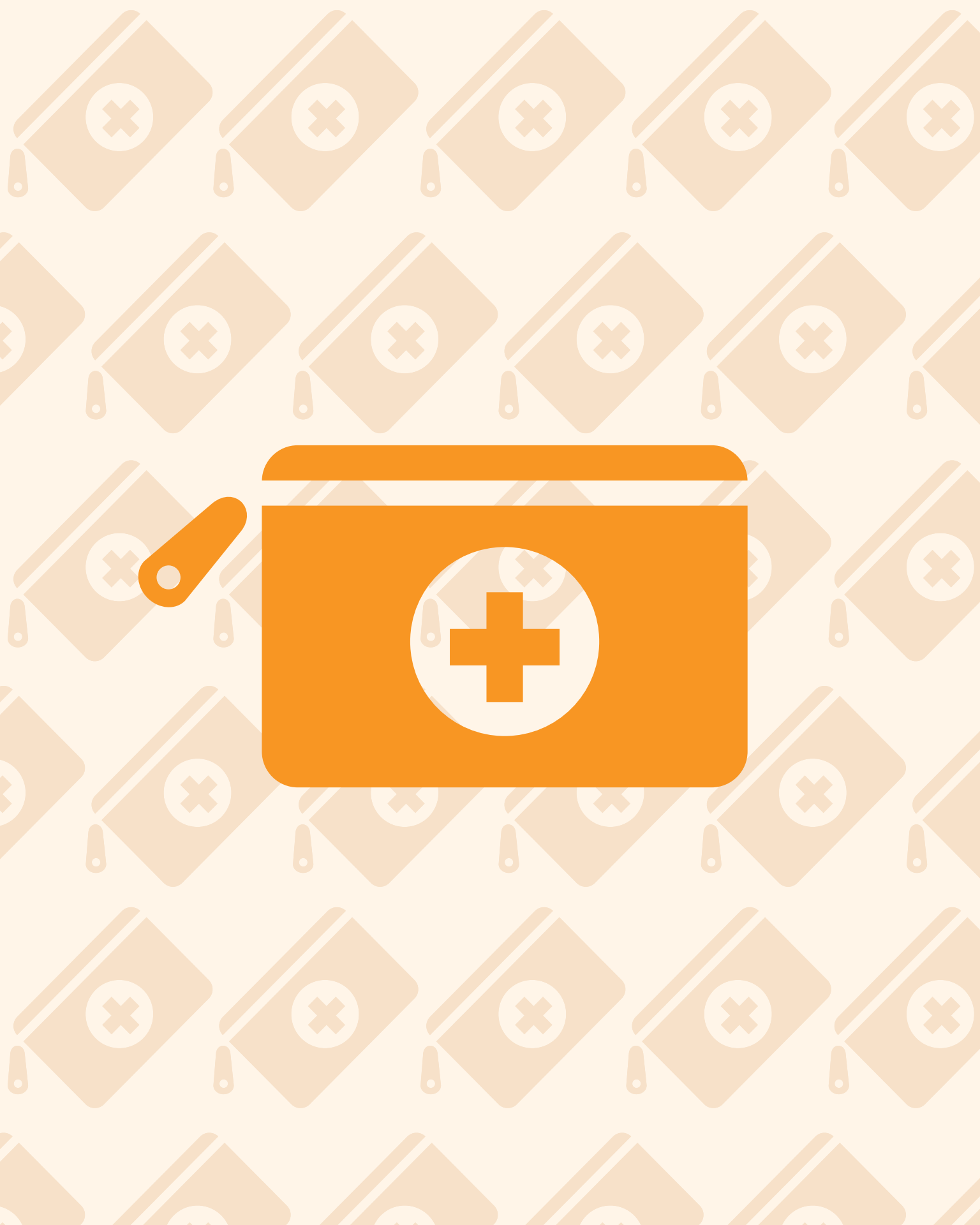
SECTION 9

CULTIVATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR HEALING & JUSTICE

CULTIVATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR HEALING & JUSTICE

Good team facilitation involves a heightened awareness of biases and how they impact decision making across all team functions.

On par with building authentic relationships, your role in creating a positive climate and safe environment for the MDT is critical for advancing outcomes and strengthening team functioning.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

The tools and techniques you learned in the previous chapter to build trust and foster authentic relationships will be extremely important contributors to psychological safety on your team as a whole. Psychological safety is the belief that the team is safe enough for interpersonal risk-taking – the ability to challenge the status quo and to speak up without fear of negative consequences or retribution. In essence it means that you know that the things you say and do won't be used against you and that your team members will assume positive intent until proven otherwise.

As we explore the concept of Psychological Safety it is important for you as a facilitator to consider the following:

SAFETY IS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH COMFORT.
In fact, teams that have high levels of psychological safety tend to move in and out of discomfort with greater ease because they embrace discomfort as part of the learning process. When there is safety, there is more opportunity to challenge the status quo and to address conversations and ideas that would have otherwise been avoided.

WHO ARE YOU BUILDING SAFETY FOR?
Our identity, power and privilege play a critical role in our perception of safety. It is often true that if we are feeling safe or comfortable that someone else in the room may not be feeling safe or comfortable. This is true of our MDTs as individual contributors with diverse backgrounds and experiences but also as agencies.

When in place, psychological safety allows team members to:

- Make mistakes without it being held against them personally. Team members are able to separate the mistake from the person.
- Challenge the status quo and speak up when something is wrong without it being held against them.
- Accept all ideas, questions and challenges as part of the team's learning process.
- Ask for help when needed without being made to feel less than, weak or incapable.
- Change their mind when new information and ideas are presented.
- Honor the decisions that will be best for the whole team and not just for them personally or for their discipline specifically.
- Assume best intentions from all members of the team.

Just like trust, psychological safety takes time to establish within dynamic and ever-changing teams. There are a few key strategies that you can implement as a Team Facilitator and it all revolves around seeing your team members as unique, very human, individuals beyond their role. Here are a handful of strategies that have been proven to support this work in our field.

- Promote self-awareness and clarity on your team. This involves consistently giving and soliciting feedback, reflecting back challenges and celebrations and naming unspoken norms on the team that may be hindering or supporting progress.
- Humanize your people by getting to know them beyond their role. Celebrate birthdays together, remember the small details about someone's family or hobbies and make it a part of the team building process to get to know each other.
- Use powerful questions to foster open dialogue and invite all voices to the table for discussion and collaboration. (We'll get to this in the Shared Decision-Making chapter.)
- Provide multiple ways for team members to provide input that honors their individual learning styles. Invite contributions both written and verbally and within various time frames. Not all individuals will be interested in sharing openly in front of large groups if they haven't had the time to prepare and process what is being asked of them.
- Promote positive dialogue among the team and use humor appropriately. This work is hard and sometimes it can be hard to find the positive change and impact that we all provide in our community. Actively seek it out and lift it up for the team to see and celebrate.

IMPACT OF BIAS

We cannot talk about team safety without addressing implicit bias, power and privilege on our team.

Bias is an inclination of temperament or outlook, especially a personal and sometimes unreasoned judgement or prejudice.

In its most simple form, our views can be considered a bias. A bias is simply an outlook and isn't inherently good or bad, it's just the way we perceive something or the way we associate something, based on our understanding and experiences.

So, what shapes our perspectives or our biases? What are the identifiers we use to describe others or ourselves on first contact? Typically, we use our most common social identities or what we call master statuses. These statuses are both identifiers and lenses through which we view and interpret the world.

RACE

CLASS

LANGUAGE

CULTURE

SEXUALITY

ABILITY

AGE

GENDER

THE MOST COMMON SOCIAL IDENTITIES ARE: Race/Ethnicity, Sex/Gender, Sexual Orientation, Ability/Disability, Social Class, Religion and Age. Another status not considered a master status but very important is thinking style. When thinking about our work, our biases are shaped in general by attitudes, which can then lead to behaviors based on stereotypes.

For example, if someone doesn't like beef stew (attitude), then they probably would not cook beef stew (behaviors), while coming up with a bunch of stereotypes about beef stew (fatty, gross, gristly, etc.) as reasoning for their actions. Although the world isn't negatively impacted as a result of someone's disdain for beef stew, what if they didn't realize that their bias was meaningfully affecting their life or that of others?

The example of the beef stew bias is explicit – we know that there is a bias and we could consciously act on that bias once it's recognized. We can also be pretty sure it doesn't meaningfully impact others. But what about things that drive our attitudes and behaviors that we are NOT aware of? This would be called implicit bias.

Implicit bias is simply a perception of something, typically without our awareness or conscious control, that shapes our likes and dislikes about a person's character, abilities and potential. The associations we automatically make are based on the mental connections we make in our brain. We've learned over the years to make these associations. You can think of these kinds of associations as biases. When one thing naturally belongs with another, based on what we have been taught over time, we make judgements and behaviors based on those ideas. On our teams this may also include bias towards a particular discipline and their way of doing work.

The following include different types of biases that interfere with our decision-making process as a team and can prohibit us from building true psychological safety and honoring the unique and important differences on our team and for the children and families we serve.

ANCHORING BIAS occurs when a person uses an initial piece of information, or the anchor, to make subsequent judgements or decisions based on that information. For example, relying too heavily on the very first piece of information they learn about someone can have a serious impact on the decisions they end up making about a person.

SELECTION BIAS occurs when a person decides which type of people or the number of people who can participate in something. As a result, the selected group of people does not accurately reflect the target population. We see this selection occurs when studies or experiments are done focusing on marginalized or underrepresented populations.

CONFIRMATION BIAS is an unconscious act of referring to only those perspectives that fuel our pre-existing world views, while at the same time ignoring or dismissing opinions, no matter how valid, that threaten our world view. For example, people who support or oppose a particular issue will not only seek information to support it, they will also interpret news stories in a way that upholds their existing ideas.

AFFINITY BIAS is the unconscious tendency to get along with others who are like us. Think about the last time you attended an event with new people. It is common to search the room for a familiar face, whether it is someone of the same race, gender, etc. in order to find someone you would feel more comfortable with.

GROUP THINK/BANDWAGON BIAS occurs where people tend to confirm with group decisions to avoid feeling outcast, leading to errors in decision making. We see this on our teams when positions of power speak first and the rest of the team follows suit without questioning.

As a Team Facilitator begin to bring your awareness to your own biases and observe when these biases seem to be at play on your team. You may work with the individuals or the team as a whole to create greater self-awareness around when these biases are leading and ask questions to surface the underlying assumptions.

At the end of the day, the work of the Team Facilitator is to foster a sense of belonging for each team member. This includes building safety for them to show up as their whole selves and to see others in the same light.

Case Study:

You are facilitating a conversation with your team about a recent case that involved a fourteen-year-old boy who was sexually abused by his female teacher. After opening the case and providing the initial details for discussion, the lead prosecutor on the team jokes, "Isn't that every teenage boy's dream?" The rest of the room falls silent. You're unsure if people agree with the prosecutor or if they are just afraid to speak up.

- What type of bias is showing up in this example?
- What is the real and/or potential impact of this comment on the safety of the team?
- What question(s) might you ask to explore this comment on the team?
- What will you do?

CONSIDERATIONS:

While you may not encounter this exact situation on your MDT, you will definitely have plenty of opportunities to create awareness around your own biases and those around you. It is important for you to do your own work around bias to feel competent and confident as you facilitate this case study. In these situations, it is always important to ask the question – what is the risk of interrupting this comment AND what is the risk of not interrupting this comment? There are many different ways to go about addressing this particular situation whether it was in the moment, or outside of the room in a private 1:1 meeting with the prosecutor. It is also possible to pull in allies to support you in checking out this bias as a team. For example, you may say "Hmmm, that's an interesting comment. I'd like to hear from everyone on the team what your reactions were to that last statement." This allows you to give everyone a voice who may not have felt as comfortable speaking up and out due to the prosecutor's power and authority on the team.

NOTES:

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Key Take-Aways:

- Psychological safety is the belief that the team is safe enough for interpersonal risk-taking – the ability to challenge the status quo and to speak up without fear of negative consequences or retribution.
- Biases when left unchecked can interfere with our decision-making process as a team and can prohibit us from building true psychological safety and honoring the unique and important differences on our team and for the children and families we serve.
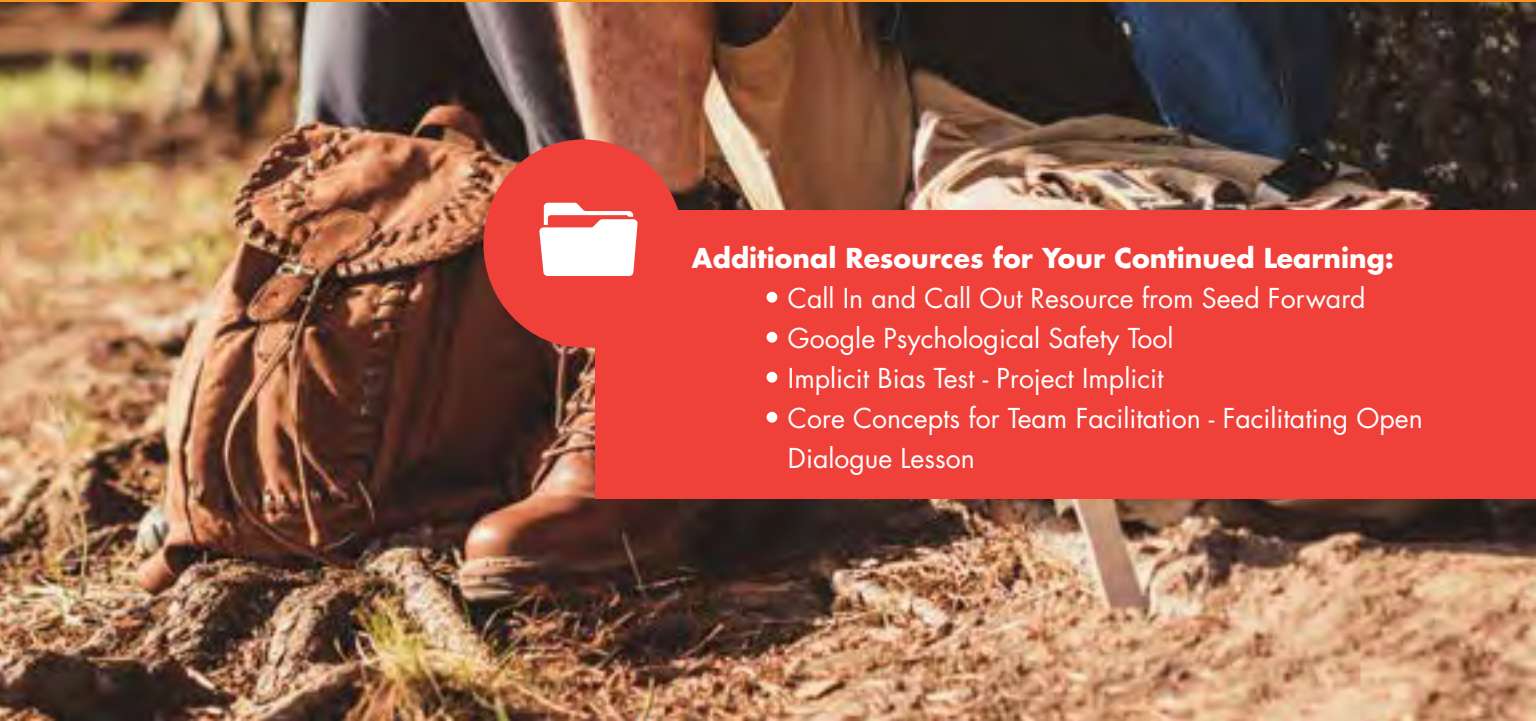
Additional Resources for Your Continued Learning:

- Call In and Call Out Resource from Seed Forward
- Google Psychological Safety Tool
- Implicit Bias Test - Project Implicit
- Core Concepts for Team Facilitation - Facilitating Open Dialogue Lesson

SECTION 10

TEAM GATHERINGS & STRUCTURES

Good team facilitation involves implementing and adhering to effective meeting structures that create opportunities for shared decision-making, consensus-building and celebrations

Finding and creating team gatherings and structures that support collaboration is a critical part of your role as the Team Facilitator. In this chapter we will explore the many different ways your team may gather to meet different needs from case review to policy review. Remember that each community is unique and to continuously check-in with your team about what is working and what may need to be updated, upgraded or revamped to better serve your collective purpose.

TEAM MEETING STRUCTURES

CASE REVIEW

This is one of the most common meeting structures across the field and is a requirement of the NCA Standards for Accreditation. Case Review is a formal process in which multidisciplinary discussion and information sharing regarding the investigation, case status, and services needed by the child and family occurs on a routine basis. Case review is a key connection point, but it is not – nor should it be – the only venue for communication among team members.

CASE-SPECIFIC CASE REVIEW

In addition to the larger case review meeting where you may talk about numerous cases, teams sometimes find value in meeting about one particular case if it is especially complex and/or if it points out areas in the team protocol that require problem-solving.

EQUITY CASE REVIEW

This is similar to a case-specific case review with the specific purpose of addressing and resolving bias in the decision-making process for the child and family.

LEADERSHIP TEAMS

These are sometimes referred to as MDT Advisory Councils and/or Steering Committees and are typically composed of senior leadership across all disciplines of the MDT. These teams meet to assess and discuss data trends, policies and systemic barriers and changes needed to support team functioning.

PROTOCOL REVIEW

As a regular practice, team members should assemble to review their protocols and make necessary updates. This could also include conflict resolution and policy review to address systemic issues on the team. This type of gathering is sometimes called an Advisory Committee or Steering Committee and consists of leadership across each discipline.
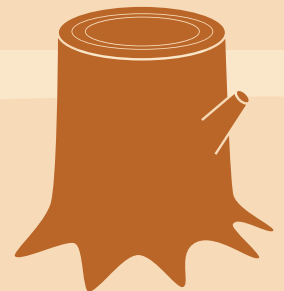
TEAM CELEBRATIONS

In the midst of all of the challenges of working together on very difficult cases, taking time to celebrate can be a way to show mutual regard and build resilience by seeing the impact your team makes. Celebrations should include things beyond investigative outcomes for the child and family. Consider celebrating when a child graduates from therapy or when a team member crosses a career milestone.

ADDITIONAL CONNECTION POINTS

Team members can connect outside of meetings to build relationships with new team members, provide orientation to policies and procedures, and reach out/follow up to ensure the case is moving forward and/or to solicit information and advice from other team members.
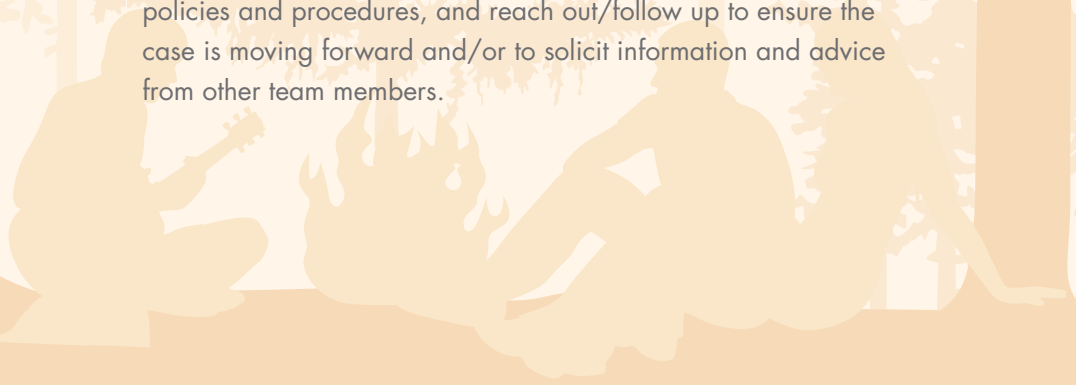
While each one of these gatherings may have a different process or structure in and of themselves, each one supports the two main goals of team meetings; 1) improve outcomes for children and families and 2) strengthen the team. Let's take a look at how team gatherings are in service to these two primary goals.

Improving Case Outcomes:
- Share basic investigation and interview outcomes.
- Assess the social service and victim advocacy needs of the child and family, including medical and mental health needs.
- Develop effective case strategies.
- These efforts ensure that cases continue to move forward, and they keep the focus on protection, healing, and justice for the child and family.

Strengthening the Team
- Establish norms and an environment that are not carried by a single person but are built into the culture of the team.
- Cross-train one another for greater understanding and effectiveness.
- Address protocol, procedural and process issues.

REFLECTION:

Take time to reflect on and apply the Assessing Team Meeting Structure worksheet to your team. What do you notice? What is working well on your team? What needs to be changed/improved?

For each team gathering, it will be critical for you to provide clarity around the purpose of the meeting and how each team member can engage in the work. You may consider answering the following questions for each of your team meetings and discussing with your team.

- What is most important for team members to know about this gathering? (purpose, expectations of engagement, defining legislation, shared protocols etc)
- Who is needed to make this team gathering a success? (consider providing key contact information and the role of each member)
- When do we meet? (clear agendas, calendar invites, logistics)

NOTES:

Key Take-Aways:

- The purpose of team meetings is to improve case outcomes and strengthen the team.
- Case review is a key connection point, but it is not – nor should it be – the only venue for communication among team members.

Additional Resources for Your Continued Learning:

- Assessing Your Team Meeting Structure (See Appendix)
- Building a Better Case Review Together Resources (NRCAC)
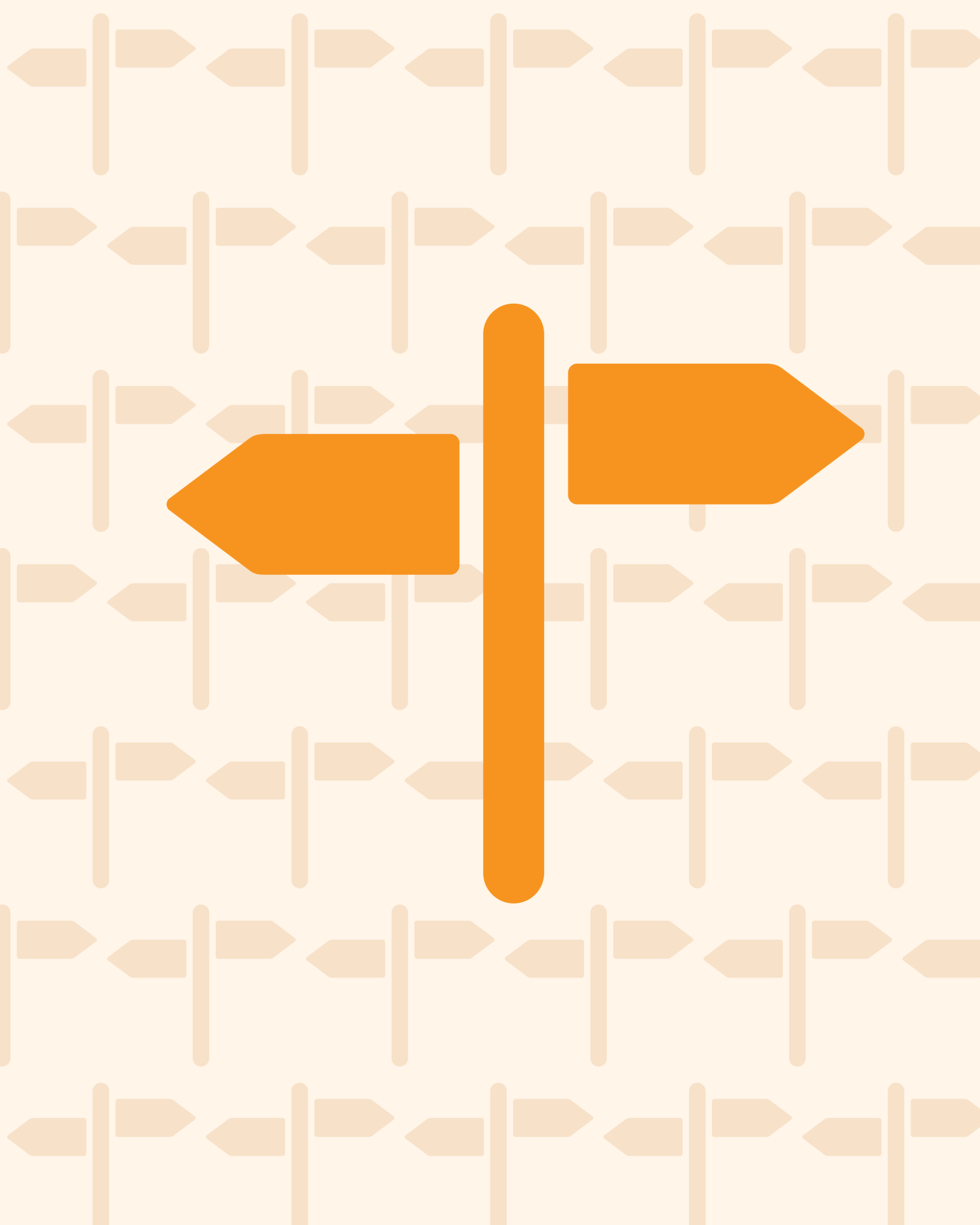
SECTION 11

FOSTERING SHARED DECISION-MAKING

FOSTERING SHARED DECISION-MAKING

As a Team Facilitator you will guide the team to be as participatory and collaborative in nature to achieve the best results. This includes helping the team embrace shared decision-making which may be something entirely new to them and not present on other teams or groups that they are a member of.

Review the table of the key differences between participatory and conventional groups. As you read through the examples, take note of what behaviors most resemble your team's current practice.

PARTICIPATORY VS CONVENTIONAL GROUPS[11]

PARTICIPATORY GROUPS	CONVENTIONAL GROUPS
Everyone participates, not just the vocal few.	The fastest thinkers and most articulate speakers get more airtime.
People give each other room to think and get their thoughts all the way out.	People interrupt each other on a regular basis.
Opposing viewpoints are allowed to co-exist in the room.	Differences of opinion are treated as conflicts that must either be stifled or "solved".
People draw each other out with supportive questions. "Is this what you mean?"	Questions are often perceived as challenges as if the person being questioned has done something wrong.
Each member makes the effort to pay attention to the person speaking.	Unless the speaker captivates their attention, people space out, doodle or check the clock.
People are able to listen to each other's ideas because they know their own ideas will also be heard.	People have difficulty listening to each other's ideas because they're busy rehearsing what they want to say.
Each member speaks up on matters of controversy. Everyone knows where everyone stands.	Some members remain quiet on controversial matters. No one really knows where everyone stands.
Members can accurately represent each other's points of view - even when they don't agree with them.	People rarely give accurate representations of the opinions and reasoning of those whose opinions are at odds with their own.
People refrain from talking behind each other's backs.	Because they don't feel permission to be direct during the meeting, people talk behind each other's backs outside the meeting.
Even in the face of opposition from the person-in-charge, people are encouraged to stand up for their beliefs.	People with discordant, minority perspectives are commonly discouraged from speaking out.
A problem is not considered solved until everyone who will be affected by the solution understands the reasoning.	A problem is considered solved as soon as the fastest thinkers have reached an answer. Everyone else is then expected to "get on board" regardless of whether they understand the logic of the decision.
When people make an agreement, it is assumed that the decision still reflects a wide range of perspectives.	When people make an agreement, it is assumed that they are all thinking the exact same thing.

[11] Kaner, Sam. Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision Making

DECISION-MAKING CORE VALUES

In essence, shared decision making revolves around these four core values; **1) full participation, 2) mutual understanding, 3) inclusive solutions and 4) shared responsibility.**

FULL PARTICIPATION

On your MDT, this means that all disciplines and members have equal air-time during group gatherings and decision-making processes. Over time this expectation and norm will allow members to challenge the status quo and speak up even when their idea or recommendation may not be fully formed. This allows for the team to acknowledge and lift up the strengths of diverse opinions and backgrounds.

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Understanding one another's views and opinions does not necessarily mean agreement. As a facilitator, you can help your team recognize each other's thoughts, unique needs and points of view. This basic recognition can serve as a catalyst for innovative ideas and feelings of legitimacy and belonging for all members of the team.

INCLUSIVE SOLUTIONS

The best solutions arise from the wisdom that emerges from the integration of all team members' perspectives and needs. They typically require holding multiple truths at the same time. They incorporate not only the thoughts and opinions of the most influential and powerful on the team but also those who are traditionally marginalized.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

A team that is fully committed to the outcome of their decisions takes time to give and receive input before moving forward. They assume responsibility for designing and managing the process by which decisions are made so that all members understand their part in the implementation of endorsed ideas and paths forward.

The best way to start moving toward a more participatory group is to take a look at the kinds of questions that are used to facilitate conversation and decision-making. As a Team Facilitator, a skill you will need to master in this first year is the application of powerful questions.

Powerful questions lead to reflection and self-discovery. They help facilitate conversations that are rooted in exploration and possibility.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POWERFUL QUESTIONS

SIMPLE AND CLEAR - They are direct and to the point. Only one question is asked at a time.

THOUGHT PROVOKING - They often require additional time for someone to respond. You know you've asked a good powerful question when someone responds, "Hmm, that's a great question!"

GENERATE ENERGY - They will feel generative in the room and conversation that you're facilitating, often inviting more than one person to get in on the discussion.

FOCUS INQUIRY - They help move the group towards what is most important.

SURFACE ASSUMPTIONS - They often help reveal assumptions that may be hindering or getting in the way of seeing all the possibilities for moving forward.

OPEN NEW POSSIBILITIES - They create many options and feel expansive.

If you have experience as a Forensic Interviewer, powerful questions will feel very familiar as they are intended to solicit open-ended responses and use a similar formation starting with what, when and how to be most effective.

IMPORTANT NOTE: As a Team Facilitator you'll want to avoid asking WHY questions because they often lead to defensiveness. Why questions seek justification and ask participants to focus on and/or explain the past when what we want to be focused on is helping participants move forward.

POWERFUL QUESTIONS START WITH:

What...
What questions are future oriented and provide an opportunity for participants to access their own wisdom.

When...
When questions are future oriented and help orient team members towards accountability.

How...
How questions are action oriented and provide greater depth when used in a follow up to What and When questions.

We highly recommend writing down powerful questions prior to team gatherings that you may want to use and to keep a record of powerful questions that seem to work well with your team. To assist you in identifying how to transform typical questions into powerful questions, we've provided a table below to demonstrate how simple it can be to transform our language to have a greater impact and to create a more inclusive environment for robust dialogue.

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	POWERFUL QUESTIONS
Do you think we should move forward with a referral for medical and mental health?	What are the most important referrals for this child? What else haven't we considered yet for this child? How could the child benefit from a medical and/or mental health referral? What other support might this family need?
Why don't you find value in our meetings?	How can we co-create the best environment for engagement? What does a successful meeting look like for you? What is most important for you to walk away from our meetings? What needs to be in place for you to feel like our meetings were an excellent use of your time?
Can you give us a status update on this case?	What are the most relevant changes to this case that we all need to be aware of? Where would the team like to start as we discuss this case? What else would we like to know about this case before moving forward? Who else may need to be involved in supporting this child and family?

Using powerful questions will take time and practice. It is natural for these questions to feel a bit challenging at first both for you and for your team members. As you continue to practice the use of these questions in your facilitation, here are a few extra tips to keep in mind:

- Get comfortable with silence. Allow for about 10 seconds after you ask your question for someone to respond or to rephrase or ask another question. Remember to ask one question at a time and minimize stacking questions.
- When you're feeling stuck and not sure what to ask next you can always paraphrase what the team member just shared while you think of your next question. It might sound something like, "What I'm taking away from that is…" or "I heard you say…"
- To engage others in the room and to ensure those who are quieter have space to speak up, you might use a question like, "Great, thank you. Let's hear from others in the room. What are your thoughts?" or "Great, thank you. Let's hear from someone we haven't heard from yet today. What are your thoughts?"
- When facing complexity or lack of clarity in something a team member just shared you may want to use the following questions:
    - What is the challenge within that for you?
    - What is most important about that for you?

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Key Take-Aways:

- Participatory groups may be a new idea for you and your team members and will take time to build. Set clear expectations and model participatory group behaviors as the facilitator.
- Powerful questions are your facilitator superpower. Focus on starting your questions with what, when and how and watch how the energy of the group transforms.
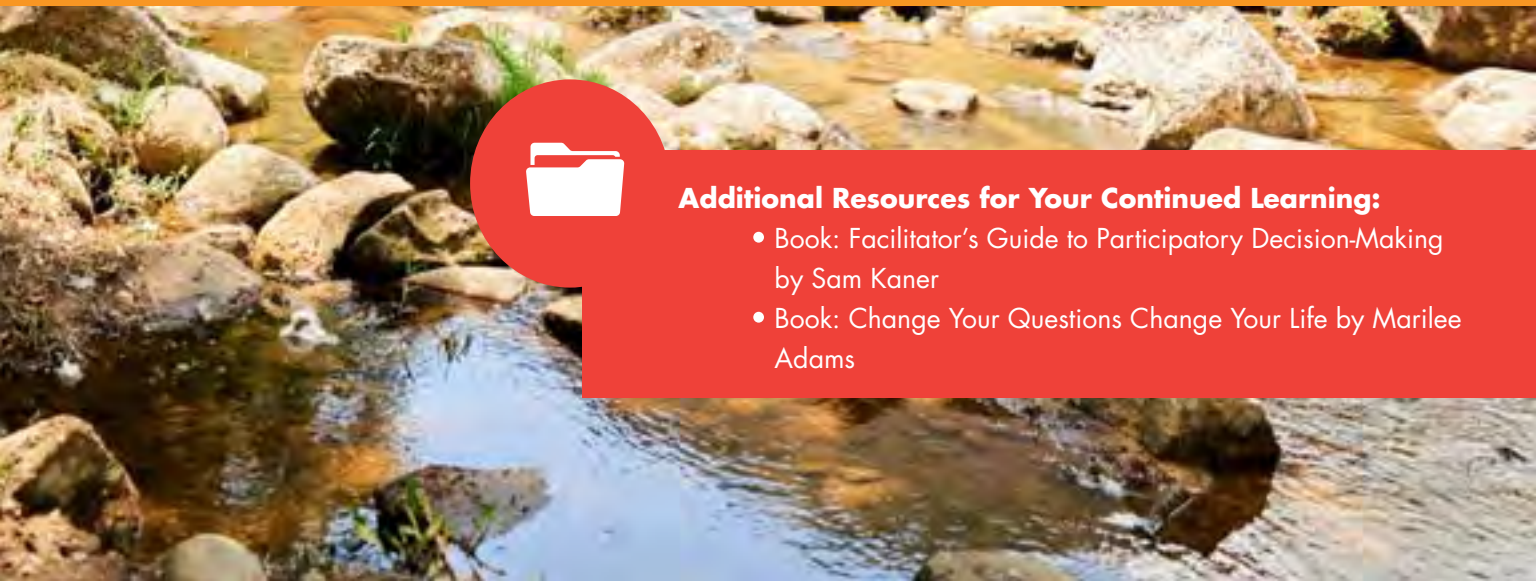
Additional Resources for Your Continued Learning:

- Book: Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making by Sam Kaner
- Book: Change Your Questions Change Your Life by Marilee Adams

RESILIENT TEAMS ADDRESSING THE IMPACT OF THE WORK

RESILIENT TEAMS ADDRESSING THE IMPACT OF THE WORK

Working in the child abuse field can be challenging for many reasons, one of which is our consistent exposure to children and families' abuse, violence and trauma. The impact of this exposure is inevitable, including a range of reaching that can have negative, neutral and/or positive consequences. We are affected in ways that we don't expect and may not recognize.

"Often, people begin recognizing the effect of trauma exposure when they realize they are behaving in ways they never would have when they first started working in this field." - Laura van Dernoot Lipsky, Trauma Stewardship

In your role as the Team Facilitator, you will also be exposed to system level challenges and dysfunctions that may result in moral distress and fatigue. Other terms you may have heard to describe the impact of this work include burnout, vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatization, secondary victimization, or secondary traumatic stress.

> Good Team Facilitation involves addressing the impact of this work through proactive resiliency building efforts.

BURNOUT can occur in any profession. It is the result of general occupational stress and not a result of trauma exposure. It generally occurs as a result of administrative and system stressors like pressure from supervisors or deadlines. It is common in our work because of high caseloads and a sense that you have to take on more or risk that the work will go undone. Burnout can look like being absent from work, coming in late/leaving early, putting off phone calls or just going through the motions.

COMPASSION FATIGUE brings us closer to our profession. It occurs in helping professions as a result of frequent contact with suffering. It is essentially caring for so long that you just can't anymore. You don't feel things the same way you used to and indifference starts to creep in. You run out of compassion for the families and children you work with or you run out of compassion for those in your personal life or both.

VICARIOUS TRAUMA brings us even closer to our field and is caused by indirect exposure to trauma. It is defined as "a change in frame of reference related to trust, control, safety, intimacy, or esteem." Essentially it means that the way you feel about the world or the things you believe about people has changed as a result of your work. Take a moment to consider if you have ever thought "My child will never sit on Santa's lap" or "My child will never spend the night at a friend's house." These are examples of a change in reference related to safety, trust, and control. We have, in our work, seen so many things happen to kids that we adopt ideas that make us feel like we can ensure that horrible things will never happen to those we love.

SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS takes us a step further than vicarious trauma. While vicarious trauma is a change in reference related to trust, safety, and control, secondary traumatic stress is more about experiencing actual symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD. It is, according to the DSM -5 "experiencing first-hand the repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of a traumatic event, when the event itself is not one that is experienced first-hand."

MORAL DISTRESS is a term that defines a situation in which an individual knows the right course of action to take but has difficulty doing so because of constraints. These are ethical dilemmas that occur when someone is acting against their core values in the face of institutional obstacles and conflicts. Moral distress can cause feelings of anger, frustration, and anxiety.

Understanding the signs and symptoms that you and other team members may be experiencing and providing regular space for conversation and education on these topics will help to build a proactive foundation for unforeseen crises on the team.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENT TEAMS

Resilience is…
- The power to cope with adversity and positively adapt to challenges or change.
- The flexibility to bend but not break.
- The ability to emerge from stressful situations feeling normal or perhaps stronger than before.
- A dynamic process, not a trait.

As a Team Facilitator you will contribute to a culture that promotes resilience on your team. In addition to helping your team understand when they are experiencing symptoms, it is important to build in regular opportunities for building protective factors and resilience on your team.

There are five core elements of resilience as identified by the Office of Victims of Crime.

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE & MEANING

Personal perspective and meaning can be one of the most important sources of Resilience. It can be considered in 3 parts.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR VALUES means knowing what you believe in and what is important to you and acting in accordance with those beliefs. This is why moral distress is so troubling.

CONNECTION TO SOMETHING BIGGER THAN YOURSELF can mean a lot of things for a lot of different people. For some, this might take the form of spirituality or religion. Your belief in a higher power or connection to something outside of yourself can offer solace when work is difficult. Others may find peace in connection to the CAC movement – knowing that you are a part of a community of over 900 CACs.

KNOWING YOUR "WHY" refers to how you find meaning in your life and in your work. Remember in Lesson 1, we talked about the Google Team Model and what makes for a good team. Creating Shared Meaning is one of the attributes and it is encouraging that what makes strong teams also makes us more resilient.

SENSE OF HOPE

A sense of hope is an inherent trust that despite obstacles you encounter in your personal or professional life, the future is bright and things will work out.

HUMOR is one component and - expressed in a healthy way - a sense of humor in our work can help to reframe a problem as a challenge to be met rather than a crisis or catastrophe. It is important to note that not all team members will share the same sense of humor and so we want to build a culture of respect around how we joke about our work.

THE ABILITY TO HAVE FUN in the workplace is critical to a sense of hope. Having fun, playing games, and socializing can lift the worries about work and give you an opportunity to breathe and connect with others.

OPTIMISM is expecting good things will happen, rather than bad, while being realistic. It is accentuating the positive in an otherwise bleak situation. Your personal optimism can influence your working environment. Making time to celebrate your victories can add to your sense of hope.

HEALTHY COPING

The third core element is healthy coping. It is acknowledging that there is always stress in our lives and there are ways to take care of yourself to combat the stresses of your work and personal life.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE IMPACT means accepting & believing that this work can affect us at a very basic level. We are not immune from burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, moral distress or secondary traumatic stress and neither is the rest of our team.

SENSING THE IMPACT means knowing the symptoms and recognizing when they show up in ourselves, our coworkers, and our fellow MDT members. Sensing the impact poses another challenge, in that, once we reach this point, we must become active in our next step of doing something about it.

INTENTIONAL PRACTICE is "doing something about it." Intentional practice means collaborating, participating, taking risks, and being creative in building resilience. Intentional practice refers to what you actually DO to combat and prevent stress and trauma.

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

Strong relationships can be described as your ability to connect with others and build mutual care and support.

GIVING SUPPORT means a willingness to provide others with what they need to accomplish a task or work through an issue. It also means recognizing when someone may need help, even if they haven't asked for it.

SEEKING SUPPORT means recognizing when you need help and asking for it from those who can provide the type of assistance you need. All of us need help sometimes, although we hesitate to ask. Seeking input on a problem, or sharing a struggle we're having with a case, can sometimes feel like we are imposing or showing weakness or a lack of professionalism. But asking for help will very often strengthen a relationship.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN & ACROSS DISCIPLINES is a key piece of having strong relationships on an MDT. The whole idea of an MDT is that we're all from different backgrounds, so it follows that sometimes we don't communicate all that well. It's important that we recognize that while we may not always see eye to eye, we are all on the same team.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE & INSIGHT

Our jobs can be hectic, we go from case to case, interview to interview, family to family, crisis to crisis. We can get so caught up in what's going on externally that we forget to slow down and pay attention to what's going on internally. Why are we having the thoughts and feelings we're having? Why has behavior changed?

SELF-AWARENESS somewhat overlaps with healthy coping & sensing the impact. In the context of your work, it means knowing what cases are hard for you, knowing what elements get to you, and knowing how to deal with that.

HAVING A HEALTHY LOCUS OF CONTROL means striking a balance between knowing what you can control and what you can't. This helps us to take responsibility for our success and own up to our mistakes while recognizing that it is not always our fault when something happens or doesn't happen with a family or case.

You have the insight to recognize and **SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES** with CAC staff and MDT. No one else has seen or done exactly what you have. No one shares your same combination of strengths. This is something to be celebrated!

Stress will always be inherent in the work of a CAC and on an MDT. While there is stress, there are also steps we can take to be proactive in building resilience. Facilitators can engage team members in the ongoing effort to promote resilience by using the core elements as a framework. We can work with our teams and CAC staff to identify strategies that will build strengths in each of those elements. Those strategies can be implemented in three ways, through:

- The policies and practices adopted by the CAC/MDT.
- The communication techniques amongst team members and between team members and others.
- The competency-based training offered to staff, team members, and volunteers.

NOTES:

Key Take-Aways:

- This work impacts people in a variety of ways and everyone's response will look different.
- As a Team Facilitator you can use the five core elements of resilience to support your MDT.
- Building in regular opportunities to amplify protective factors and resilience on your team will support the overall well-being of your MDT.

Additional Resources for Your Continued Learning:

- Book: Trauma Stewardship by Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky
- Book: Burnout by Emily and Amelia Nagoski
- Self-Care Worksheet (See Appendix)
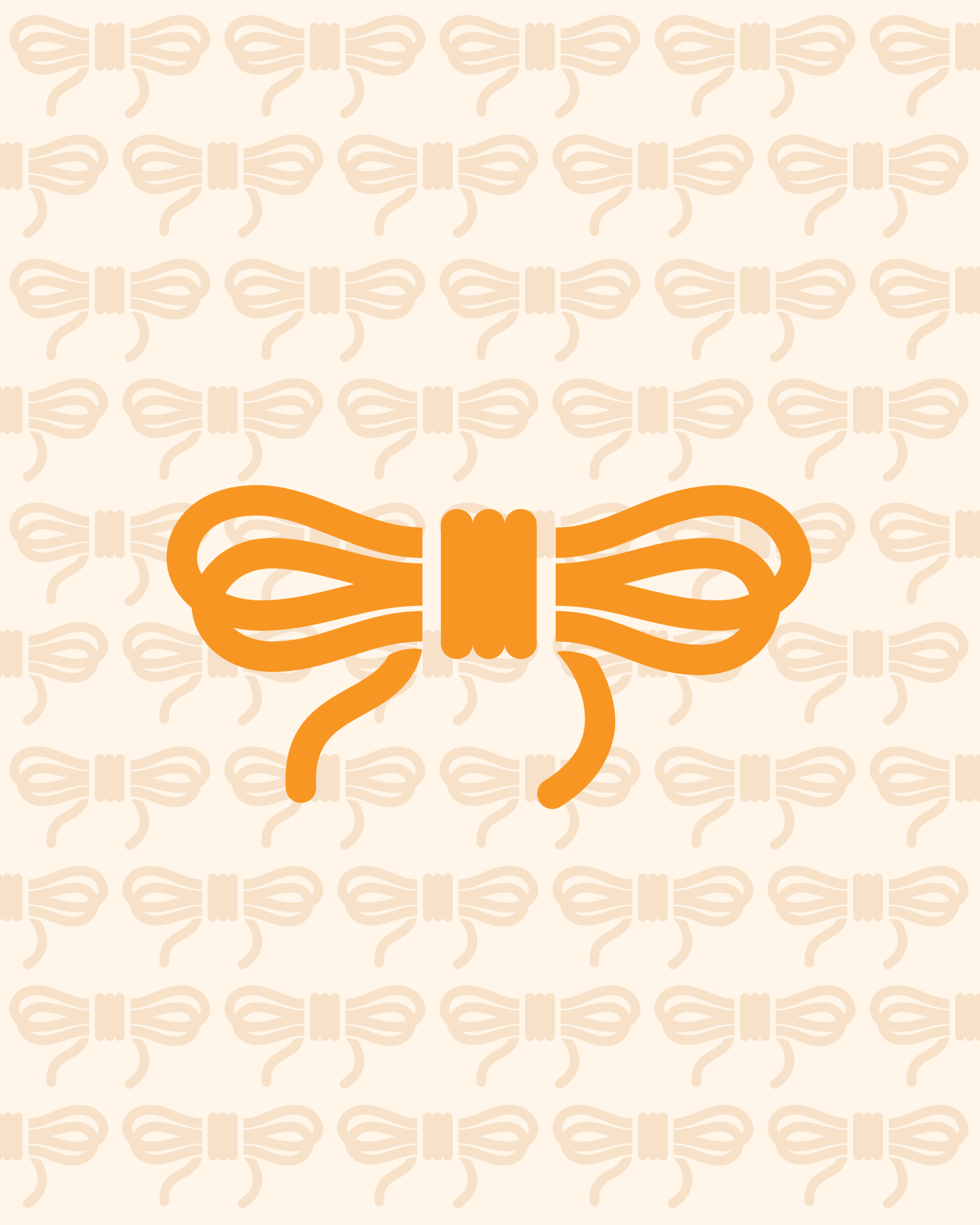
SECTION 13

SUMMARY & CLOSE

SUMMARY & CLOSE

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have made it to the end of this comprehensive field guide. We know that this is just the beginning of your journey to becoming the best Team Facilitator you can be and we highly encourage you to revisit these pages often, discuss them with your supervisor and most importantly: start small.

Remember, at its core, good team facilitation involves:
- Embracing neutrality as a strength for fostering engagement and inviting all voices and perspectives into the process of collaboration
- Adhering to ethical considerations in your facilitation practice is critical to maintain and foster strong, authentic and sustainable relationships within and across the team
- An ability to foster trust and psychological safety among all team members that ultimately leads to a sense of team identity and belonging
- Understanding what makes a team strong and investing time and energy into practices that build the team's collective capacity to navigate change
- Awareness of biases and how they impact decision making across all team functions
- Implementation of and adherence to effective meeting structures that create opportunities for shared decision making, consensus-building and celebrations
- Addressing the impact of this work through proactive resiliency building efforts

As you begin to compare and contrast the information in this Field Guide with what is currently happening on your MDT, you may pick up on some pretty significant gaps between theory and practice. It is also possible that some of the core beliefs around your role as a Team Facilitator will need to be updated and more clearly defined for you to begin doing this important work. Our advice to you is to start small, choose one thing that you think will have the greatest impact on your team (hint: this isn't always the hardest and most challenging thing) and start with intention.

Most importantly, you are not alone in this work. There is an incredible network of Team Facilitators who have been immersed in this work and new Team Facilitators who are in the exact same place as you, as you read this guide. Reach out to your State Chapter and Regional Children's Advocacy Center for support.

You've got this!
Go forth!

SECTION 14

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

TEAM ASSESSMENTS*

ASSESSING YOUR TEAM WITH THE GOOGLE MODEL

Instructions: Circle all statements that are true for your team. Tally the number of circles for each question. (0-2 = Requires some attention/improvement, 3-4 = Doing pretty good but room for improvement, 5-6 = Mastered this characteristic of your team. You could teach about this.)

A meaningful common purpose that the team has helped shape. (MEANING)
- Team members collaborate in developing team purpose/vision.
- The team has clearly established goals.
- Team goals are clearly communicated.
- I know how the team's success is measured.
- I know how my job connects to the overall purpose of the team.
- Team members know what they are supposed to do.

Specific performance goals flow from the common purpose. (IMPACT)
- My performance goals are aligned to the overall team purpose/vision.
- Team members express confidence in the group's ability to meet goals.
- Team members actively participate in decision making that impacts the team.
- The team makes timely decisions.
- Team goals are monitored and progress is reported on a regular basis.

A mix of complementary skills. (STRUCTURE & CLARITY)
- The work of the team is evenly distributed across all team members.
- The collective skills of the team make the team successful.
- The team seeks out opportunities to work more effectively.
- The team takes time to develop new skills in its team members.

A strong commitment to how the work gets done. (DEPENDABILITY)
- Team members provide regular feedback to one another.
- Team members look for solutions rather than blaming others.
- Team members readily volunteer for additional responsibilities.
- The team has fun.
- The team uses established processes to get the work done.

Mutual accountability. (PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY)

- Conflict is recognized and managed in a healthy manner.
- Team members show respect for one another.
- Team members hold each other accountable for getting the work done.
- Team members take personal accountability and admit their mistakes.
- Team members do what they say they are going to do.
- Team members challenge the status quo even when it's unpopular to do so.

*Adapted from the Midwest Regional Children's Advocacy Center's Core Concepts for Team Facilitation and Leading Engaged Teams Training.

ASSESSING YOUR TEAM WITH THE MEETING STRUCTURE

ASSESSING TEAM CASE REVIEW MEETING STRUCTURE
Improving Case Outcomes

OBJECTIVES	IS IT AN INTENDED GOAL OF THE CURRENT MEETING STRUCTURE?	IS IT BEING EFFECTIVELY ACCOMPLISHED WITH THE CURRENT MEETING STRUCTURE?	ARE THERE OTHER APPROPRIATE, REALISTIC WAYS TO MEET THIS GOAL?
BASIC CASE INFORMATION GATHERING AND SHARING			
CHILD INTERVIEW OUTCOME			
PROGRESS/STATUS OF INVESTIGATION			
MEDICAL ASSESSMENT NEEDS/ OUTCOMES			
UNDERSTANDING FAMILY EXPERIENCE			
PROTECTION ISSUES, CONCERNS			
TREATMENT ISSUES, REFERRALS FOR THERAPEUTIC SERVICES			
ADVOCACY PROGRESS			
PROSECUTION ISSUES, CONCERNS, OPTIONS			
CASE TRACKING, SHARING FINAL DISPOSITION INFORMATION			
TRACKING STATUS OF CASE THROUGHOUT PROCESS			
DISCUSSING FINAL DISPOSITION(S)			

COMMENTS

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# ASSESSING TEAM CASE REVIEW MEETING STRUCTURE

Strengthening Teams

OBJECTIVES	IS IT AN INTENDED GOAL OF THE CURRENT MEETING STRUCTURE?	IS IT BEING EFFECTIVELY ACCOMPLISHED WITH THE CURRENT MEETING STRUCTURE?	ARE THERE OTHER APPROPRIATE, REALISTIC WAYS TO MEET THIS GOAL?
TEAM BUILDING, ENHANCING TEAM PROCESS			
ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS			
ESTABLISHING TRUST AMONG TEAM MEMBERS			
PROVIDING CROSS-TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES			
PROVIDING ORIENTATION			
ESTABLISHING, STRENGTHENING PROCESS			

COMMENTS

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ASSESSING TEAM CASE REVIEW MEETING STRUCTURE | REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

- Assess your current meeting structure – What is working well? What could use improvement?
- What other goals have significance for your team but are not currently being accomplished?
- What other meetings or connection points need to occur to attend to priorities?
- What steps need to be taken to enhance and evolve the team meeting structure?
- What conversations need to occur to implement those steps? With whom?
- What challenges or barriers do you think you might face in launching those conversations? Where will you find support for the effort? What facilitation techniques might you employ in meeting those challenges?

**Adapted from the Midwest Regional Children's Advocacy Center's Core Concepts for Team Facilitation Training
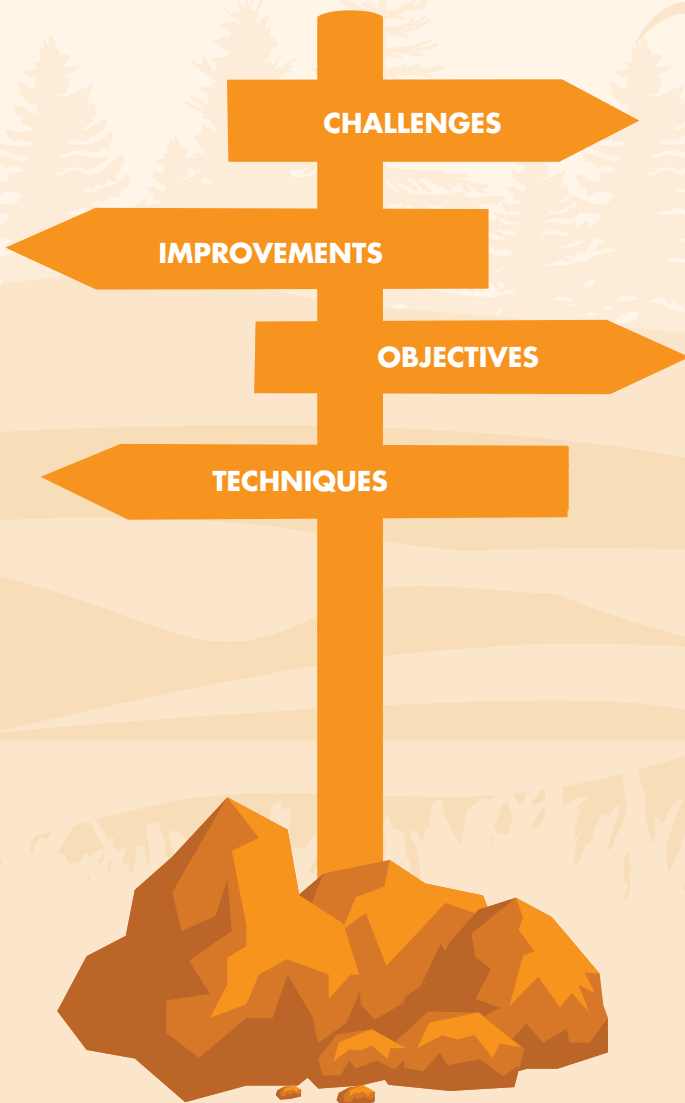
SELF-CARE WORKSHEET
STOP. EVALUATE. LEARN. FIND YOUR PATH | S.E.L.F CARE

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days, weeks, months or longer, depending on the severity of the event, and can accumulate over time. The understanding and support of loved ones usually cause the stress reactions to pass more quickly. Occasionally, the traumatic event is so painful that professional assistance may be necessary. This does not imply mental instability or weakness, but simply indicates that the event was too powerful for the person to manage on their own. Individuals should then seek professional assistance.

COMMON SIGNS AND SIGNALS OF A STRESS REACTION:

PHYSICAL*	COGNITIVE	EMOTIONAL	BEHAVIORAL
CHILLS	CONFUSION	FEAR	WITHDRAWL
THIRST	NIGHTMARES	GUILT	ANTISOCIAL ACTS
FATIGUE	UNCERTAINTY	GRIEF	INABILITY TO REST
NAUSEA	HYPERVIGILANCE	PANIC	INTENSIFIED PACING
FAINTING	SUSPICIOUSNESS	DENIAL	ERRATIC MOVEMENTS
TWITCHES	INTRUSIVE IMAGES	ANXIETY	CHANGE IN SOCIAL ACTIVITY
VOMITING	BLAMING SOMEONE	AGITATION	CHANGE IN SPEECH PATTERNS
DIZZINESS	POOR PROBLEM SOLVING	IRRITABILITY	CHANGE IN APPETITE
WEAKNESS	POOR ABSTRACT THINKING	DEPRESSION	HYPER-ALERT TO ENVIRONMENT
CHEST PAIN	POOR ATTENTION/ DECISIONS	INTENSE ANGER	INCREASED ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION
HEADACHES	POOR CONCENTRATION/ MEMORY	APPREHENSION	CHANGE IN USUAL COMMUNICATIONS
ELEVATED BLOOD PRESSURE	DISORIENTATION OF TIME/ PERSON/PLACE	EMOTIONAL OUTBURSTS	
RAPID HEART RATE	DIFFICULTY IDENTIFYING OBJECTS OR PEOPLE	LOSS OF EMOTIONAL CONTROL	
MUSCLE TREMORS	HEIGHTENED OR LOWERED ALERTNESS	INAPPROPRIATE EMOTIONAL RESPONSE	
SHOCK SYMPTOMS	INCREASE/ DECREASE AWARENESS OF SURROUNDINGS	EMOTIONAL SHOCK	
GRINDING OF TEETH		FEELING OVERWHELMED	

MY S.E.L.F. CARE PLAN

A proactive strategy to attend to yourself when experiencing stress reactions

PART #1. Identify your common stress reactions and list below:

PART #2. Use these questions to help you identify your protective factors and list below:

What makes you feel supported or feel like a part of a team? (Strong Relationships)

What makes you feel like you can handle what the day throws at you? (Healthy Coping)

What makes you feel hopeful? (Sense of Hope)

What makes you feel like your work has meaning? (Personal Perspective & Meaning)

What makes you feel like your head is in the right place? When do you feel centered? (Self-Knowledge & Insight)

MY S.E.L.F. CARE PLAN

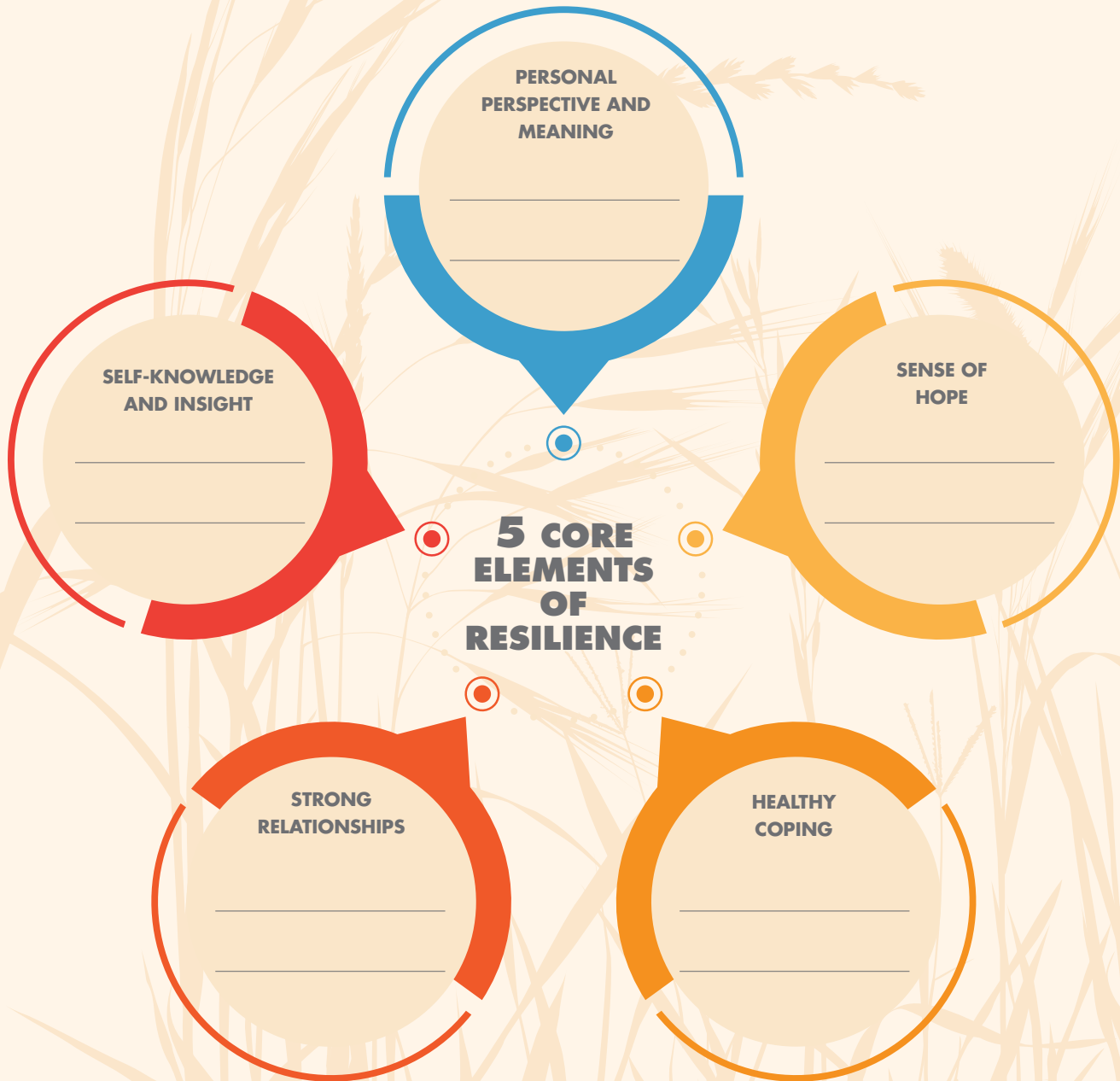A proactive strategy to attend to yourself when experiencing stress reactions

Create a menu of options to be utilized when experiencing stress reactions at work and at home:

WORK	HOME

MY TEAM CARE PLAN***

A set of proactive strategies to build resilience on my CAC or MDT

In each core element idea bubble write a policy, communication expectation, or training that is in place or could be added to build resilience on your CAC or MDT.

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE AND MEANING

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT

SENSE OF HOPE

5 CORE ELEMENTS OF RESILIENCE

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

HEALTHY COPING

***Adapted from Midwest Regional Children's Advocacy Center's Core Concepts for Team Facilitation Training

READING + RESOURCE LIST

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TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT

There are many local, statewide, regional and national resources to support you as you continue to pursue professional development in your role as a Team Facilitator. We highly recommend seeking out foundational and continuing education to stay up to date on current and new practices in the field of facilitation.

In addition to training, the following resources can provide individualized technical assistance and consultation as you navigate, implement and respond to changes on your MDT.

CHAPTER RESOURCES

State Chapter organizations are an excellent support for Children's Advocacy Centers across the country and provide a wide variety of training and technical assistance to support all members of the MDT.

REGIONAL RESOURCES

Regional Children's Advocacy Centers (RCACs) are responsible for providing training and technical assistance to child abuse professionals across the country. While there is one RCAC that covers your region specifically, the four RCACs have come together to provide a variety of resources, training and support for Team Facilitators.

You can find information about these unique resources by visiting their website(s).

RCAC Website - www.regionalcacs.org
Midwest Regional CAC – www.mrcac.org
Northeast Regional CAC – www.nrcac.org
Western Regional CAC – www.westernregionalcac.org
Southern Regional CAC – www.srcac.org

SAMPLE POWERFUL QUESTIONS

1. What's on your mind? _____

_____

_____

2. What's important about _____? _____

_____

_____

3. What else? _____

_____

_____

4. What's the real challenge here for you/us? _____

_____

_____

5. What do you want? _____

_____

_____

6. How can I help? _____

_____

_____

7. If you're saying "yes" to this, what are you saying "no" to? _____

_____

_____

8. What was most useful for you? _____

_____

_____

9. What are you taking away? _____

_____

_____

10. What are you passionate about? _____

_____

_____

11. How do you want to contribute? _____

_____

_____

12. What do you want to learn? _____

_____

_____

13. How much does the team need you? _____

_____

_____

14. What was your original vision when you started your career? How has it changed? _____

_____

_____

15. What aspects of your current position/role relate to your vision? _____

_____

_____

16. What would you like the team to be doing five years from now? _____

_____

_____

17. What part of that could you play? _____

_____

_____

18. What would you say are your best strengths? The team's strengths? _____

_____

_____

19. How are you able to use your strengths in your current role? _____

_____

_____

20. What would it look like to take a different approach? _____

_____

_____

21. What assumptions am I/are we making? _____

_____

_____

22. How can we move from where we are to where we want to be? _____

_____

_____

23. If there were one action you could take, where would you be willing to start? _____

_____

_____

24. What's taking shape? What are you hearing underneath the variety of opinions being expressed? What's in the center of the table? _____

_____

_____

25. What's emerging here for you? What new connections are you making? _____

_____

_____

26. What had real meaning for you from what you've heard? What surprised you? What challenged you? _____

_____

_____

27. What's missing from this picture so far? _____

_____

_____

28. What is it we're not seeing? _____

_____

_____

29. What do we need more clarity about? _____

_____

_____

30. What's been your major learning, insight, or discovery so far? _____

_____

_____

31. What's the next level of thinking we need to do? _____

_____

_____

32. If there was one thing that hasn't yet been said to reach a deeper level of understanding/clarity, what would it be? _____

_____

_____

33. Where would we be if all obstacles in our way ceased to exist? _____

_____

_____

34. Where would we be if we had unlimited resources? _____

_____

_____

35. Where do you fear ending up if nothing changes? _____

_____

_____

36. Are there any steps you could take right away that would significantly improve your situation?

_____

_____

37. Which of your goals require assistance from other people, and which ones depend entirely on you?

_____

_____

38. What obstacles have you faced in the past, and how did you overcome them? _____

_____

_____

39. What mistakes have you made in the past, and what did you learn from them? _____

_____

_____

40. What is the biggest issue on your mind today/this week? _____

_____

_____

41. What are the biggest issues you face daily? _____

_____

_____

42. How will you make the decision? _____

_____

_____

43. What factors will make the most difference to you? _____

_____

_____

44. What do you need to know to make a great decision? _____

_____

_____

45. What would a great decision look like? _____

_____

_____

46. How do you usually make decisions? _____

_____

_____

47. What other decision strategies could you use? Which methods do you want to try? _____

_____

_____

48. What else haven't we considered yet? _____

_____

_____

49. What feels most aligned for the team right now?

_____

_____

50. What does safety look like on our team?

_____

_____

SAMPLE ICE BREAKERS/MEETING OPEN & CLOSE

Creating a container for your team meetings that allows everyone to get into the space with you will be critical for building relationships and for fostering shared decision-making where everyone feels included in the collaborative process. The following are a few examples we've seen Team Facilitators use to open and close meetings.

Openers

- Ask participants to share what they need to walk away with at the end of the gathering (take note of these items and circle back to them at the end).
- Invite participants to come fully present into the space by closing down windows on their computer (if virtual), or putting away their phones, or anything else that is needed to transition into this team space.
- If meeting virtual, you can have participants share something in the chat like – what was the last series you binged on Netflix, what is in their coffee cup, how they're embracing Summer/Fall/Winter/Spring (something light and easy to get some energy moving in the space).
- Share the mission and values of the MDT and ask participants to share how they've seen the mission and or values show up on the MDT in the last week or month.
- Ask participants to share a Glow and Grow. Glow is something they are really proud of, something that is life giving for them right now. Grow is something that they're working on or seeking support with.
- If team members are meeting for the first time, have them introduce themselves and share one thing you'd know about them if you were a close friend.
- Find a funny meme, joke or comic that relates to what the MDT has been going through lately and share that at the beginning of the meeting to pull people in.
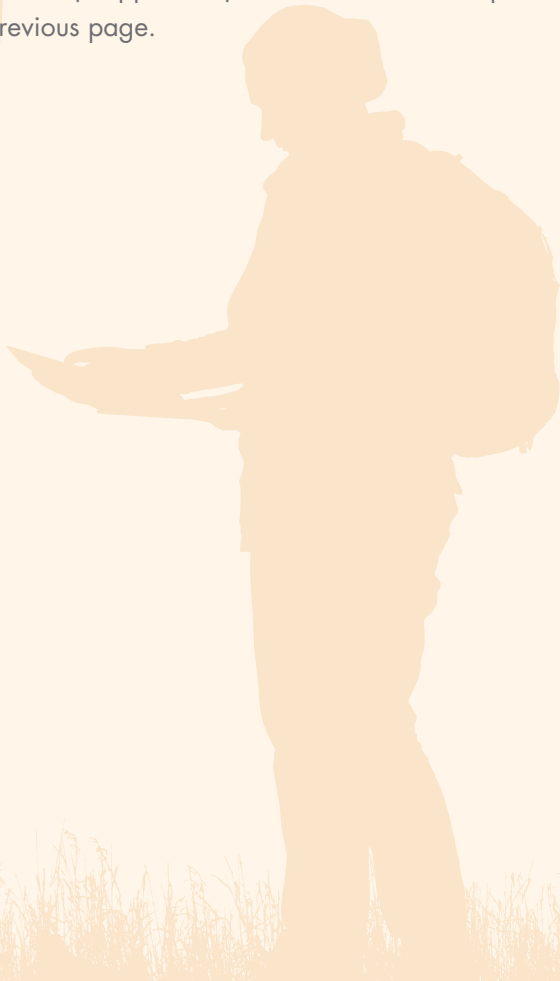
Closers

- Ask participants to share what their one take-away is from the gathering.
- Ask participants to share one word that represents their hopes going forward or what they're leaving with at the end of the gathering.
- Ask participants to share their one commitment leaving the meeting.
- Encourage participants to share one gratitude that they have for the MDT or a member of the MDT.
- Ask participants to share one thing they will be doing today or this week to take care of themselves (especially after a challenging case or discussion).
- Ask participants to share an emoji that represents what they're taking with them at the end of the meeting (you can provide a list of emojis or just have them look at their phone). Participants can share these verbally, or draw them on a sheet of paper and share in a round robin.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to framing the space with a beginning and an end, it is important to pay attention to the environmental set up for your meeting spaces.

When meeting in person it is ideal to have the tables and chairs set up in a U-shape or circle where everyone can see each other. This signals that everyone at the table is of equal importance. Be careful not to have seats lining the outside of the room where people tend to fall into the background of the conversation.

When meeting virtually, we highly encourage the use of cameras to make it feel most like meeting in-person. This also will allow you as the facilitator to pick up on non-verbals or other expressions that might not be being spoken out loud. It's helpful to orient the participants to the virtual space by encouraging them to share their thoughts in the chat window (if applicable) and to use breakout spaces to support some of the openers and closers we have noted on previous page.

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