

# Family Advocacy: Being Family Voice Curious

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# Family Voice Curious

Intentionally work side-by-side with families

Acknowledge that lived experiences give families and children valuable perspective

Understand that families are the experts on their experiences and needs

Know that families belong at decision-making tables

# Advocacy Definitions

**Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain the services they need.**

**Advocates and advocacy schemes work in partnership with the people they support and take their side.**

**Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice.**

*Advocacy Charter, Action for Advocacy*





- SELF ADVOCACY
- INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY
- SYSTEM ADVOCACY
- ... and many other types!

# Evolution





# MOTHERS' PENSIONS



OVER 20 STATES  
ARE HELPING TO PRESERVE THE HOME



BY KEEPING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL  
UNTIL QUALIFIED TO WORK

**1909 White House Conference  
on Care for Dependent Children**

**By 1920, 40 states had  
enacted mothers' pension  
laws and 4 more followed in the  
1920s**

**Mothers pensions were  
designed to aid primarily  
widows who met society's  
imposed moral test.**

“a state plan...may not impose an eligibility condition that would deny assistance with respect to a needy child on the basis that the home conditions in which the child lives are unsuitable, while the child continues to reside in the home.

*Assistance will therefore be continued during the time efforts are being made either to improve home conditions or to make arrangements for the child elsewhere.”*

HEW Secretary Flemming, 1961





**Separation From Family  
Vilification of Parent  
or Child**



**Services for Families  
Family Preservation  
Prevention**

# Becoming Family Voice Curious



# Family Engagement

## Family Centered Care:

Family Centered Care assures the health and well-being of children and their families through a respectful family-professional partnership. It honors the strengths, cultures, traditions and expertise that everyone brings to this relationship. Family- Centered Care is the standard of practice which results in high quality services.

## Family Voice and Choice:

Family and youth/child perspectives are intentionally elicited and prioritized during all phases of the process of care support and treatment. Planning is grounded in family members' perspectives, and the team strives to provide options and choices such that the plan reflects family values and preferences.

## Family Driven:

Family-Driven means families have a primary decision-making role in the care of their own children as well as the policies and procedures governing care for all children in their community, state, and tribe

# Language Matters

What We Hear: Deficit Based Language	What We Want to Hear: Strengths Based Language
The family needs an assessment	It may help to explore the family history, traditions and cultural perspectives
The family refuses to engage in services	It appears that the services do not match the needs of the family
The family is resistant	The family is multi-stressed
The child is acting out	The child appears to have unmet, misunderstood needs
The family will not comply with the plan	The family needs access, voice and ownership of their plan
The home is a disaster	The family needs support managing the home and establishing routine



# Language Matters

The child is a sex offender/fire starter	The child has...behaviors
The family is not meeting their goals	The goals of the family appear to be challenging
The parents are adversarial	The parents are resilient and strong advocates
The parents need services	The parents have unmet needs
Client/case	Family/child
The family is chaotic	The family needs support in developing structure and routine
The child is explosive	The child is challenged with emotional regulation and distress tolerance skills
The child is unmanageable	The child needs support with distress tolerance

# Family Outcomes

A focus on outcomes demonstrates an organizational commitment to making a measureable and sustained difference in the lives of children and families

# Family Roles

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- Board member
- Committee Member/ Lead
- Paid trainer
- Staff Interviews
- Parent/ Peer Support
- Performance Management Officer

# Organizational Assessment

- CULTURAL COMPETENCE
- CLINICAL EXCELLENCE & QUALITY STANDARDS
- ACCESSIBILITY & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- FAMILY DRIVEN & YOUTH GUIDED CARE
- TRANSITION PLANNING & SERVICES  
(between settings and from youth to adulthood)

<https://buildingbridges4youth.org>



Being Family  
Voice Curious is  
being Trauma  
Informed



# Thank you.

Please contact us at any time.

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