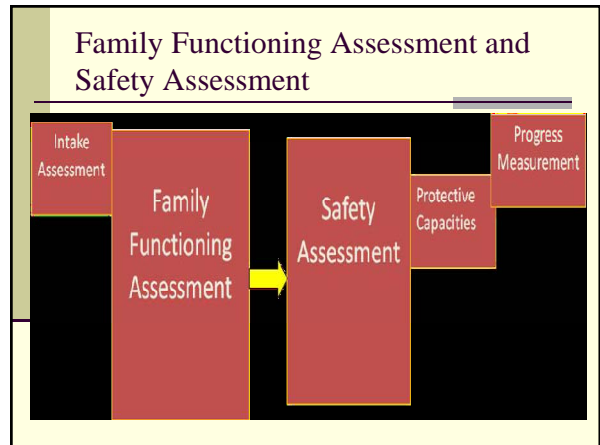


COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS

A CONTINUOUS EXPLORATION OF OUR FAMILIES

- ### Objectives
-
- Explain the Division's rationale for change in the way risk and safety assessments are conducted
 - Introduce the change. Comprehensive Assessment process
 - Review the Policies and Tools associated with the change



- ### Components of the Comprehensive Assessment Process
-
- The Comprehensive Assessment process consists of the:
- Intake Assessment
 - Family Functioning Assessment
 - Safety Assessment
 - Safety Plans
 - Family Plans
 - Family Functioning Re-assessments
 - Measurement of Progress

- ### The Family Functioning Assessment
-
- The purpose of the Family Functioning Assessment is used to determine who the agency will serve by assessing and reaching conclusions about the ability of families to protect their children from present or impending danger
 - The Family Functioning Assessment is not considered an investigation but rather a social services assessment that evaluates how the family functions

Extent of Maltreatment

- Specific description of the abuse/neglect— type of injury or threats that occurred and to whom
- Severity of the abuse/neglect – frequency, chronicity, and effects (e.g., physical, emotional, behavioral)

Nature of Circumstances

- Detailed description of the incident(s) and circumstances associated with the maltreatment or that rule out maltreatment
- Caregiver's explanation of what happened, including how the child's injuries occurred
- History and duration of the maltreatment– how long the current situation has existed and whether there have been any prior incidents
- Contributing or associated factors and conditions (e.g., substance use, mental disability, domestic violence)

Child Functioning

- Physical
- Emotional
- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Social

General Parenting Practices

- Parenting style and history
- Appropriateness of parent/primary caregiver expectations of child
- Sensitivity to child's needs and limitations

Disciplinary Practices

- Direction-giving
- Guidance
- Punishment and Reward
- Teaching Practices
- Parent/primary caregiver intentions
- Parent/primary caregiver self-control
- Methods, flexibility, and appropriateness, including responsiveness to child's needs

Adult Functioning

- Physical, behavioral, cognitive, and social
- Life management, communication, and problem solving
- Mental health and substance use
- Social Supports and relationships

Collaboration Across Units

The Comprehensive Assessment process supports collaboration among units.

The safety of children is assessed before entry into the system, during our involvement with the children and just before they exit the system. As a result, collaboration across units is critical. Your presence today is the front door to that collaboration relationship.

Let's reason together...

Why Comprehensive Assessment?

Why Now?

How does this benefit me?

Family-Centered Practice

- Family-Centered practice is a way of working with families to enhance their capacity to care for and protect their children
- It focuses on the needs and welfare of children within the context of their families and communities

Muriel needs your help....



Family Functioning Assessment Tools

The Family Functioning Assessment tool is a streamlined version of the risk and safety assessment tool. The tools reflect the content FFA policies

Tools have been developed for:

- CPS Assessment
- Family Preservation
- Foster Care

What is Engagement?

- Engagement is about motivating and empowering families to recognize their own needs, strengths, and resources and to take an active role in changing things for the better
- Listening to the family
- Validating participatory roles
- Demonstrating Empathy
- Establishing purpose of involvement with family
- Understanding of family's past experiences and current concerns

The Mystery

Pip was found hanging by the neck from a single beam. The room was completely empty. The only door was locked and bolted with the key still in the lock on the inside of the door. The only windows was closed with the security bolts in place. There were no signs of a forced entry. Time of death was estimated to have been 8 hours ago. There was a damp patch on the floor which later proved to be water--- not blood

Discussion

How did Pip die?

What is Critical Thinking?

“Critical thinking involves careful examination of beliefs and actions. It requires paying close attention to the process of reasoning, not just on the product.”

(Gibbs and Gambrill, 2009)

Why is Critical Thinking important?

- The information collected during the process will drive case decisions
- Critical thinking is necessary to gather quality data so that quality decisions can be made regarding services for families that support the safety and well being of children

Discussion

You are reading a case record that states that “Mrs. Stewart abuses her child because she is schizophrenic. She has been diagnosed with schizophrenia by two psychiatrists so there is little that can be done to improve her parenting skills”.

What questions would you have for the worker on this case?

Discussion

- How can DFCS benefit from enhanced Critical Thinking skills?
- How can you benefit from enhanced Critical Thinking skills?
- How can families benefit from enhanced Critical Thinking skills?

Without Critical Thinking Skills We....

- Misclassify our families
- Continue intervention too long or withdraw too soon
- Focus on irrelevant factors
- Select weak or inappropriate intervention
- Increase client dependency
- Overlook client strengths

Critical Thinking Skills for Frontline Workers

Critical thinking should help frontline workers to:

- Ask questions that yield a high payoff
- Accurately describe problems and make assumptions about root cause of problems
- Select successful intervention methods

Benefits of Thinking Critically

- Critical thinking skills helps us to evaluate arguments
- Recognize fallacies and error that lead to faulty decisions
- Avoid cognitive biases
- Increase self awareness

Evaluating Arguments

When we engage with clients, we have to:

- Listen to their arguments
- Evaluate whether the claim, conclusion or position that they have put forward support the premises they have offered to support the claim
- Examine the reason the client feels what he/she has concluded is correct (Warranting)

Discussion

After an extensive session with the CCFA provider, Jennifer, age 14, disclosed that she was abused by her father when she was three years old.

- What is the premise or reason for the claim?
- What is the claim?
- Is the conclusion (warrant) correct?

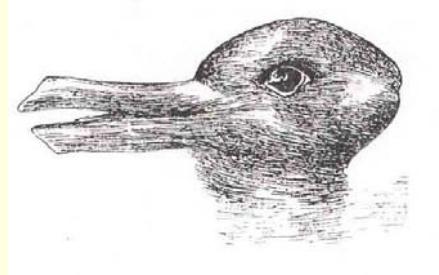
Errors in Decision Making

- Templating
- Justification
- Ratcheting

What are cognitive biases?

- Cognitive biases are mental perceptions of reality. There are hundreds of cognitive biases—hindsight bias, fundamental attribution error, framing effects, etc.
- We make decisions based on our truths. In our best attempts to ask high value questions and critically analyze arguments, we may not arrive at the best decision because of cognitive interference

What do you see?



Duck and Rabbit...It's Up to You.

- Depending on whether you view this figure facing right or left, it can either be a duck or a rabbit
- How does this relate to our practice?

What do you see?



Core Elements of the FFA

- The Six FFA Questions
- Caregiver Protective Capacities
- Family Protective Resources
- Protective Factors

Child Functioning

- *Child Functioning* is concerned with the day-to-day activities in the child's life
- It is important to separate the child's reaction to the agency and the child's normal functioning

Davis Case

Welcome to the Davis Family!!

Activity

Child Functioning—Davis Family

Adult Functioning

Barriers to Normal Adult Functioning

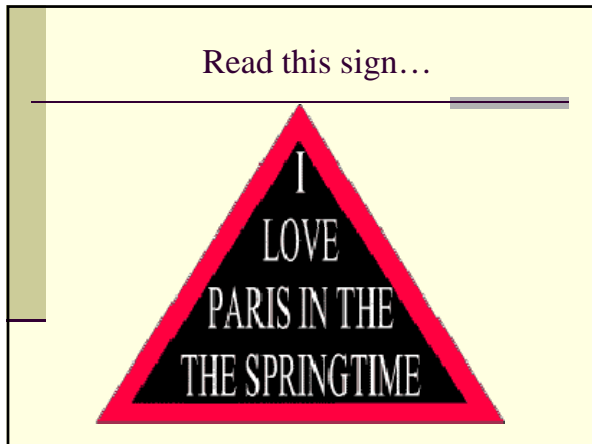
- Substance abuse
- Mental health and psychological issues
- Poverty
- Emotional Problems
- Job loss
- Other?

Discussion

- Has anyone tried to gather information from an adult who is under the influence?
- Has anyone tried to gather information from an adult with mental health issues?
- Has anyone tried to gather information from an adult with emotional and social issues?
- How would you gather adult functioning information from an alleged maltreater?
- What information would you elicit from a collateral contact?

Activity

Adult Functioning—Davis Family



Collecting quality data will lead lead to quality_____

Extent of Maltreatment

Sections 1 and 2 should lead you to a decision to substantiate or unsubstantiate maltreatment

Safety

- Present Dangers
- Impending Dangers

Family Protective Resources

- Personal, tangible and intangible assets
- **Available and accessible for use to manage threats toward child's safety**
- Can serve as a substitute for caregivers, who are not able or willing to assure the protection of their children

Personal Resource Assets

- Providing full-time care of a child in the persons' home
- Providing occasional or part-time care of a child in a persons' home
- Providing residence for a caregiver and children
- Caring for a child in the child's home part-time or full-time
- Supervising, monitoring and/or observing caregiver behavior
- Coaching or teaching a caregiver essential basic parenting and protective skills
- Assisting and teaching basic home management and life skills

Tangible Resource Assets

- Providing money
- Providing food, clothing or other essential needs
- Providing for transportation
- Providing housing options
- Providing telephone or other forms of communication

Intangible Resource Assets

- Providing emotional support
- Providing encouragement
- Motivating
- Setting limits
- Demonstrating caring and affection

Caregiver Protective Capacities

- A concept that frames our understanding of necessary intervention
- Assessment and treatment purposes
- Caregiver Protective Capacities are “personal and caregiving behavioral, cognitive and emotional characteristics that specifically and directly can be associated with being protective to a child

The Concept of Protective Capacities

- Diminished caregiver protective capacity is the reason that the agency becomes involved with the family;
- Enhanced caregiver protective capacity is why the agency no longer needs to be involved with the family

When to Assess Caregiver Capacities....

- At Intake,
- Initial case contacts,
- During initial assessments,
- At conclusion of initial assessments,
- In preparation of case plans,
- Within the case plan,
- During service provision,
- When progress is measured and
- When the case is closed

Behavioral Protective Capacities

- The caregiver has a history of protecting.
- The caregiver takes action.
- The caregiver demonstrates impulse control.
- The caregiver is physically able.
- The caregiver has/demonstrates adequate skill to fulfill caregiving responsibilities.
- The caregiver possesses adequate energy.
- The caregiver sets aside her/his needs in favor of a child.
- The caregiver is adaptive as a caregiver.
- The caregiver is assertive as a caregiver.
- The caregiver uses resources necessary to meet the child's basic needs.
- The caregiver supports the child.

Cognitive Protective Capacities

- The caregiver plans and articulates a plan to protect the child.
- The caregiver is aligned with the child.
- The caregiver has adequate knowledge to fulfill caregiving responsibilities and tasks.
- The caregiver is reality oriented; perceives reality accurately.
- The caregiver has accurate perceptions of the child.
- The caregiver understands his/her protective role.
- The caregiver is self-aware as a caregiver.

Emotional Protective Capacities

- The caregiver is able to meet own emotional needs.
- The caregiver is emotionally able to intervene to protect the child.
- The caregiver is resilient as a caregiver.
- The caregiver is tolerant as a caregiver.
- The caregiver displays concern for the child and the child's experience and is intent on emotionally protecting the child.
- The caregiver and child have a strong bond and the caregiver is clear that the number one priority is the well-being of the child.
- The caregiver expresses love, empathy and sensitivity toward the child; experiences specific empathy with the child's perspective and feelings.

Protective Factors

Concept is defined as:

“conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families”
(Davies, 2004)

Vulnerable Child—A child who is...

- Unable to protect him or herself
- Dependent on others for sustenance and protection
- Defenseless, exposed to behavior, conditions or circumstances that he or she is powerless to manage
- Susceptible and accessible to a threatening parent or caregiver

Activities

- Jones and Turner Families
- Delaney and Benton Families

Documentation

- Without documentation, it would be like practicing all year for a stage performance and then be told there was no performance to begin.
- Provides an ongoing —picture of the nature of agency involvement with families, the progress toward achieving outcomes, and the basis of decisions that eventually lead to case closure.

