



Issue 3 | June 2016

CPS Quarterly

Child Protective Services Newsletter



OCFS.NY.GOV

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Keys: A New Model of Supervision

By Grace A. Thompson, CDHS

“Most of the caseworkers feel this KEYS thing has really changed our work. We get so much more of what we need from supervisors. But what has it done for the supervisors?”

A caseworker posed this question to a director of services about two years after that district began using the model of supervision known as Keys to Excellence in Your Supervision, or KEYS.

So what is a “model” of supervision, anyway? It is simply a clear guide to daily interactions between supervisors and their staff as they work together to achieve hoped-for outcomes for children and families. These outcomes are based upon an agency’s articulated vision and values.

Understanding a model of supervision is crucial to making and sustaining desired changes within families and organizations. Our ability to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families relies heavily on a supervisor’s ability to support and educate staff while also managing administrative responsibilities. To do so, supervisors depend on their



Keys Illustration

organization’s structures and support.

What does KEYS do for supervisors? Supervision is about relationships, not just the work. This model of supervision is designed to integrate into the daily work of child welfare supervisors in a way that enhances their current efforts, minimizes disruptions, and supports and integrates with other state and local practice strategies. It is not more work: it is simply a guide to doing work consistently and effectively.

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One of the first attempts to incorporate Keys to Excellence in Your Supervision was the organization of a workgroup in 2009. The workgroup's goal was to develop a broad vision of supervision that could be replicated effectively across child welfare practices. As part of the early discussions between local district staff and OCFS staff, this representation (see key illustration, previous page) was created in 2009 to depict that original vision, with supervision in the center, impacting and integrating all strategies of child welfare work.

The workgroup took great care to ensure alignment and integration with all local and state child welfare practice strategies, such as solution-focused, trauma-informed casework; family assessment response (FAR); teaming; and working with program and practice toolkits.

Additionally, KEYS established:

- A set of standards for supervision
- Well-defined expectations
- Ongoing learning opportunities for child welfare supervisors at all levels
- Organizational structures that support excellence in supervision

Its goal is to facilitate ongoing supervisory development and effectiveness, which in turn improves outcomes. KEYS engages supervisors and

staff in solution-focused and strengths-based practices. It seeks to incorporate supervisor expertise in advancing agency effectiveness and continuous quality improvement (CQI). Agency leadership is also encouraged to engage in similar practices and behaviors. By doing so, management demonstrates commitment to a future of improved organizational effectiveness and positive outcomes for children and families.



“Our workforce is changing.”



Our workforce is changing. The way we respond to their needs must continue to evolve as well.

Incorporating the Principles of Partnership, today's diverse, multi-generational workforce responds to mutual respect, coaching, listening, and asking questions far better than historically more directive supervision that demanded that supervisors be “super-workers.”

A number of options are available to support this shift in supervisory practice. For experienced supervisors, a course entitled “KEYS Essentials” allows us to develop new strategies and skills that successfully meet the needs of our staff and our agencies. Supervisors with no more than two years

of experience will benefit from the course “KEYS Core for New Supervisors,” which also provides individual coaching to ensure mastery of those skills.

Local districts are being encouraged to develop an implementation team or steering committee to guide organizational support for all practice strategies, including supervision. Districts may also choose to participate in an anonymous,

district-specific survey and analysis of the experience of supervision from the perspective of both staff and supervisors. The survey can be followed up with onsite, customized support from OCFS and CDHS to enhance effectiveness. Supervision has been described as “the heart of everything we do.” How would you like to experience supervision?

More information about KEYS is available through your OCFS regional office or by contacting thompsga@buffalostate.edu.

Grace A. Thompson is the KEYS Coordinator in New York State and works at the Albany Regional Office of ICHP/CDHS/





A Framework for Family Assessment Response (FAR) Shadowing

By Christa Doty, Butler Institute for Families

As your workers embark on a shadowing experience, The Butler Institute encourages you to set them up for success by having a pre-visit and post-visit conversation. The pre-visit conversation is meant to help them be purposeful about what they are looking for. The post-visit is for debriefing, assessing differences and exploring how to incorporate new techniques into their skill sets. Below are some questions and/or ideas that may guide you in these different stages.

Pre-Visit

- What are you hoping to gain from shadowing the experienced FAR worker?
- From what you know about FAR, what will you be tuned into that would differentiate it from PD? Some of the things that may be observed:
 - ✓ The partnership with the family within the process
 - ✓ Inviting the process to be family-led
 - ✓ Bringing the child’s voice into the conversation within the family meeting
 - ✓ A global assessment vs. incident focused
- How will you pay attention to the worker’s

techniques and avoid getting into the particulars of the case?

Post-Visit

- What did you see that you are already doing? What did you notice was a difference in approach?
- What did you like about how the worker engaged specific members of the family?
- What might you do to expand on her/his engagement with a family experiencing similar challenges? How might you help the family think of solutions to their challenges?
- What did you see that you feel would be a real challenge for you to duplicate, given that you’re new to FAR engagement strategies?
- How did the family respond positively to the worker’s approach and style that you would like to emulate?

The above questions can serve as a platform for any type of worker shadowing and for supervision/coaching sessions. The questions would change if the shadowing activity has a different area of focus. Ultimately, they create a wonderful vehicle for new workers and supervisors/coaches to engage in creative thinking and meaningful discussion together.

KUDOS!



- Jefferson County has become the newest LDSS to begin FAR implementation.
- Brooklyn is the most recent borough in NYC to engage in FAR. They launched on May 1, 2016.

Do you have high fives for some of your colleagues and friends? Send them to us for inclusion in an upcoming newsletter:

leslie.wilmot@du.edu





FAR Celebrates Two-Year Milestone

By Valerie Moore, Division of Child Protection

How Far Can We Go? That was the theme of a one-day symposium to celebrate the second anniversary of the Family Assessment Response (FAR) demonstration project, held at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center in Queens on Tuesday, October 6.

A demonstration project within the Queens Borough Office of the Division of Child Protection, FAR offers an alternative approach to full-scale child protective investigations. Since its launch in January 2013, 1,118 families have participated in FAR.

Tuesday's symposium gave staff, stakeholders, and community representatives the opportunity to reflect upon the work that has been done over the last two years and

plan next steps for a system-wide rollout.

In her opening remarks, Commissioner Gladys Carrión reiterated her support for FAR, which began during her term as commissioner of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). She noted that FAR gives us an opportunity to re-focus our work when addressing the issues that bring a family to the attention of authorities. She congratulated the staff of the Queens Borough Office for their successful implementation of FAR and for their work as "helping professionals."

Queens Borough Commissioner Marsha Kellam commended her staff for their hard work and



Staff and leadership from the NYC Boroughs participate in the FAR Symposium

dedication, and DCP Deputy Commissioner William Fletcher asked attendees, "Are you ready for FAR, NYC?"

A highlight of the day was an inspirational address by keynote speaker Naomi Griffith, a national consultant on child welfare issues. Griffith, who spent many years as a social worker in the North Carolina

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They're Back! Calls with a FAR Coach

- Are you interested in using a new FAR tool or approach with families and just not sure how to get started?
- Do you have a particular case that you'd like to discuss in more detail and brainstorm for solutions?
- Are you a supervisor interested in developing a plan for implementing group supervision?
- Does your county need support with creating an enhanced culture for FAR?
- Are you and OCFS regional staff members looking for more ways to support FAR jurisdictions?



If you answered yes to any of the above, you just might be interested in a "Call with a Coach"!

These 60 – 90 minute sessions are available to any

LDSS FAR staff, OCFS regional office staff, and any agency stakeholders interested in exploring specific aspects of FAR practice, supervision and/or implementation.

The Butler Institute's FAR team is offering virtual coaching sessions on a first come, first served basis. Click on the registration link below to view scheduling options. Sign up for a date and time that works best for you and/or your team, provide your name, contact information, and a brief description of what you are interested in discussing during your session. We'll confirm your session within a few days of signing up and send an Outlook scheduler to confirm. Click here to register:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0a44a8af2ba4f49-calls>





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and Alabama child welfare systems, asked the audience, “How did you get here?” She noted that becoming a social worker takes years of outreach and meeting families where they are.

Griffith challenged attendees to recommit to being allies to families, not just investigators. “What you are doing with FAR is making a commitment to families so that they can see the positives of asking for help,” she added.

Great Resources!



There are a myriad of wonderful resources available to child welfare professionals, community members, families, and children floating about on the internet. We’ve included some of our recent favorites here. We’d love to get more from you to share. Please feel free to send your favorites for inclusion in a future issue. If they are in the public domain we will include them. Otherwise, we will try to get special permission to highlight portions and/or incorporate a link. Thanks!

- ◆ April is Child Abuse Prevention Month... but these Tip Sheets for parents and others from the Child Welfare Information Gateway website are great year round. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resource-guide/tip-sheets/>
- ◆ May is National Foster Care Month. Here are some great ideas for supporting special caretakers. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>
- ◆ BRO Regional Specialist Angela Dibiase passed along this solution-focused practice toolkit from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) in London. https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/2015/solution-focused-practice-toolkit/?_

National Conference Sponsored by the Children’s Bureau!

The 20th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect will be held August 31 to September 2, 2016 at the Grand Hyatt Washington in Washington, DC. The conference theme is “Building Community, Building Hope.” The fall grantee meetings will be held in conjunction with the national conference on Monday and Tuesday, August 29 to 30, 2016. Additional detailed information about your specific Grantee Meeting will be provided to you by your Federal Project Officer in early 2016. For more information on the 20th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect please visit www.2016nccan.com



To send resources, notices, and kudos for inclusion in the CPS newsletter, please email info to leslie.wilmot@du.edu.



Upcoming Training Sessions

Register TODAY! The Butler Institute and CDHS will be hosting the following trainings at the dates, times, and locations listed below:

May 10-11 | FAR Process & Practice Training: In Orange County, hosted by CDHS

June 1 | Solution-Focused FAR Practice Training: In Orange County, hosted by CDHS

June 2 | Assessing Safety and Risk in FAR: In Orange County, hosted by CDHS

June 3 | Supervising to a Practice Shift: In Orange County, hosted by Butler Institute

May 24-25 | FAR Process & Practice Training: At the CDHS Buffalo Office, Hosted by CDHS

June 20 | Solution-Focused FAR Practice training: At the CDHS Buffalo Office, Hosted by CDHS

June 21 | Assessing Safety and Risk in FAR: At the CDHS Buffalo Office, Hosted by CDHS

June 22 | Supervising to a Practice Shift in FAR: At the CDHS Buffalo Office, Hosted by Butler Institute



What do you love most about your work with Butler?

My work at Butler allows me to build relationships with people who are equally as passionate about helping children and supporting families. From everyday citizens, to students, to directors of child welfare programs, each has something valuable to contribute and I enjoy working across projects to discover what each role brings to helping meet the needs of struggling children and families in our communities.

Lara Bruce, MSW
Program Associate

'Whadaya' need to know?



Join us for an upcoming training event or webinar! If you don't see a specific topic of interest offered, contact lara.bruce@du.edu and we'll see what we can do to meet your needs.



"If we don't stand up for children... then we don't stand for much."

- Marian W. Edelman

