



### **INFORMATION FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The program management team with the state office would like to introduce you to our new "Nuts & Bolts". Each month, we will share information with you in hopes that you find it useful for working with children and families. The theme for this month is "Assessment and Planning."

We would really love to hear your suggestions, comments, or ideas about this communication, so please send them to:

Carol Miller  
Program Support Specialist  
Email: [carolmiller@utah.gov](mailto:carolmiller@utah.gov)

Much of the information we will share with you comes from questions we receive from staff. We would like to encourage supervisors to review this information with your caseworkers and pick an area to target as a team. If you have questions or need clarifications around practice, please send them to me or to the appropriate program administrator. Thank you for all you do!

### **This Month's Articles:**

- [Engaging...It All Begins with CPS](#), by Darren Burdette, CPS Program Administrator
- [DV Notes](#), by Del Bircher, Domestic Violence Program Administrator
- [Indian Child Welfare Act \(ICWA\)](#), by Savania Tsosie, Indian Child Welfare Program Administrator
- [All Roads Lead Home - Tips for In-Home Cases](#), by Angela Robbins, In-Home Services Program Administrator
- [Kinship Care](#), by Judy Hull, Kinship Program Administrator
- [Permanency Pointers](#), by Tanya Albornoz, Permanency Program Administrator
- [TAL Tips](#), by Jane Lewis, Transition to Adult Living Program Administrator
- [Caring Connections](#), by Marty Shannon, Adoption Program Administrator

## ENGAGING...IT ALL BEGINS WITH CPS

*By Darren Burdette, CPS Program Administrator*

Typically, CPS is the first contact with families when a concern arises about the safety of a child. In this role, we often dictate first impressions for others as we go about our implementation of Practice Model skills. In other words, much of the success that Child and Family Services has in addressing safety with families is dependent upon the initial work done by CPS...especially if there is a transition of the family from one worker to another.

So, my challenge (as we start 2008) is that we spend an additional five minutes on each case engaging and getting to know the family, because it all begins with CPS.

*I would love to hear of any tips that you have used in your CPS casework or if you have any questions about your work, so please email me at [DBURDETT@utah.gov](mailto:DBURDETT@utah.gov).*

## DV NOTES

*By Del Bircher, Domestic Violence Program Administrator*

Studies have shown that 80 to 90 percent of children living in homes with domestic violence issues are aware of the violence. Often, parents tend to under report the extent to which children were aware of the violence. They often think that children are asleep or preoccupied when the violence occurred.

Girls whose fathers batter their mothers are 6.5 times more likely to be sexually assaulted by their fathers than girls from non-violent homes.

It is good to look at statistics, but how does this relate to casework? In an upcoming training we will all learn more about using the safety model in casework. The three key areas are explained as follows: The **safety assessment** guides the worker to a correct safety decision. From this safety assessment and **safety decision**, the worker and family can identify **safety interventions** to manage the threats of harm that are unique to the child and family.

When working with domestic violence cases it is important to look at **patterns of behavior**, not just what may seem an isolated event. As a result, you may want to consider how a family interacts with one another and determine if the worker may be able to educate family members on how their behavior impacts their children. After asking these questions you may also be better able to make a decision about what interventions to use to best manage threats of harm.

*If you have tips that you have used in your casework related to domestic violence, please email me at [dbircher@utah.gov](mailto:dbircher@utah.gov).*



## INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT (ICWA)

*By Savania Tsosie, Indian Child Welfare Program Administrator*

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) is a federal law that was passed in 1978 and it sets out rules that state courts have to follow in certain child custody “proceedings” involving Indian children.

- Under federal law, Child and Family Services and Utah courts have to follow these rules.
- These rules apply in cases where Indian children are being taken away from their parents or Indian custodians.
- The rules are designed to keep Indian children connected to their families and tribes. Maintaining this connection serves the best interests of Indian children and also promotes the stability and security of Indian tribes and families.
- One important way ICWA helps to keep children connected to their families and tribes is by requiring Child and Family Services to make special efforts to keep Indian families together. Child and Family Services must provide services that reflect the current social and cultural standards of the family’s Indian community (e.g., counseling and parenting classes). For details about ICWA, see Practice Guidelines [Section 705](#).

Over the millennium, Native Americans have faithfully and stalwartly held to a star core of common beliefs and customs, which include the clan system; responsibility to the family, the village/community, and the tribe; the willingness to share with others; and the sacredness and interconnectedness of all life and all children of the earth.

*Please email me at [STSOSIE@utah.gov](mailto:STSOSIE@utah.gov) if you have any questions or suggestions about ICWA. Thank you.*

## ALL ROADS LEAD HOME - TIPS FOR IN-HOME CASES

*By Angela Robbins, In-Home Services Program Administrator*

Too often our In-home cases focus only on the parents or on a delinquent child in the home. Any person living in the home should have their needs assessed by the caseworker. These needs assessments may be formal (evaluation by a doctor, school report, therapist note, Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment, etc.) or informal (notes from the family timeline, observations made during a structured home visit, trends observed by caseworker, etc.). Regardless of what type of assessment is used, **each person in the home should be identified and assessed** in the Child and Family Assessment. The caseworker should also assess how the family interacts together and any family dynamics that are known.



**CHALLENGE:** Look at the Child and Family Assessment for each family you are working with. Ensure that all persons in the household are identified in the assessment. Determine what type of further assessment may be needed, if any, to better understand the needs of that individual.

*Do you have “new” ideas to freshen up casework? Do you have any “out of the box” tips that other In-Home workers can try? I’m looking for tried and true ideas from the field to share with other caseworkers. Please send any of your engaging, teaming, assessing, planning, intervening, or organizational tips to [arobbins@utah.gov](mailto:arobbins@utah.gov). Thank you in advance!*

## KINSHIP CARE

Judy Hull, our Kinship Program Administrator, is out on family leave for the next few weeks. Once she returns, we will happily send you information about the Kinship program area!

## PERMANENCY POINTERS

*By Tanya Albornoz, Permanency Program Administrator*  
Involving the Team in the Planning Process

One of the areas that we are struggling with on the Case Process Review (CPR) is the requirement to involve all of the Child and Family Team members in the development of a Child and Family Plan. Each time a Child and Family Plan is developed, you must involve the Child and Family Team members in the planning process and specifically document what input they gave to the plan. You should document the manner in which each member provided input on the Child and Family Team Meeting tab on the Child and Family Assessment (in person, input sought individually, etc.). If a team member cannot be present at a Child and Family Team Meeting, you may obtain input from them by phone or in a written format (such as email). All input received from team members should be shared with the rest of the team at the Child and Family Team Meeting. You should also document the specifics of each team member’s input in your activity logs.

We are required to seek input from the following Child and Family Team members when writing a new Child and Family Plan:

- 1) Children 12 years and older;
- 2) ALL parents / guardians (the exception is if parental rights have been terminated);
- 3) ALL step-parents.

There are activity policies that can be added to an activity log to clearly identify that these individuals have been involved in the case planning process.



One final note - if a parent is incarcerated and still retains parental rights (i.e., their rights have not been terminated), the ongoing caseworker should make every effort to include them in the planning process. Most correctional facilities make it easy for caseworkers to speak with parents in order to include them in the planning process. There are several ways to accomplish this. For example, caseworkers can visit the parents in person at the correctional facility, as well as send the parents a letter asking them to write back or call the caseworker collect in order to discuss the service plan. It is not acceptable for a caseworker to exclude a parent from the planning process simply because they are incarcerated.

*If you have tips that you have used in your casework or questions related to permanency and/or Out-of-Home Services, please email me at [TALBORNO@utah.gov](mailto:TALBORNO@utah.gov).*

## TAL TIPS

*By Jane Lewis, Transition to Adult Living Program Administrator*

### Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment Coding

Did you know the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) can be used for children as young as 8 years old and through adulthood as an assessment tool? Currently, ACLSA is required for all young people age 14 years and older, and their caregivers complete an ACLSA annually to measure the skills and knowledge needed to prepare the youth to live independently.

One of the challenges we have is in tracking the results of the assessment and using them as part of the Child and Family Assessment, so here are the codes that need to be used. The codes must be entered where the “Organization ID” is asked for on the ACLSA:

- Salt Lake Valley Region - UTDCFS18
- Northern Region - UTDCFSN
- Western Region - UTDCFSW
- Eastern Region - UTDCFSE
- Southwest Region - UTDCFSSW

The “Youth ID” is the youth’s **SAFE case number**. The youth and caregivers must use the same Youth ID and enter the same email address in the “**Matching E-mail Address**” section on the **Login Information** page. The caseworker’s email is used in the “**Matching E-mail Address.**” The **Matching Score Report** is emailed immediately after clicking on the “I’m Finished” button. The Score Report is sent in the email as a PDF attachment. (See Practice Guidelines [Section 303.15](#), pages 104-105, June 2007.)

*Please share your casework ideas, successes, and struggles related to TAL Services by emailing me at [JHLewis@utah.gov](mailto:JHLewis@utah.gov).*



## CARING CONNECTIONS

*By Marty Shannon, Adoption Program Administrator*

### A Family Needs to Know

We know that placement stability is a crucial part of promoting the well-being of children or youth who are not able to remain safely in their parent's home. Finding a caregiver who is up for the challenge of caring for a child who is in crisis resulting from the removal from their home is a daunting task. Engaging and teaming with the potential placement parents as well as the child are crucial components for an adaptable transition and future stability with the placement family. One of the things we can do to increase the likelihood of the child doing well with a new family is to help the placement family feel like they are an important part of our 'team of caring for the child.'

As part of the team, the potential caregiver family needs to know everything we know about the child they will be caring for in order to meet the child's needs. Whether the potential caregiving family is a licensed foster family or a relative caregiver, our Practice Guidelines direct us to give the child's potential caregiver all of the information we know about the child. Thus, we should talk with the family about the child and encourage them to read the child's file for any information available. For details see Practice Guidelines [Sections 301.4 and 505](#).

*If you have any other information you'd like to share with everyone related to adoption services, please email me at [MSHANNON@utah.gov](mailto:MSHANNON@utah.gov).*

