

# UNDERSTANDING CHILD & FAMILY TEAMS (CFTS)

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Monthly Policy Webinar Series

Presented by

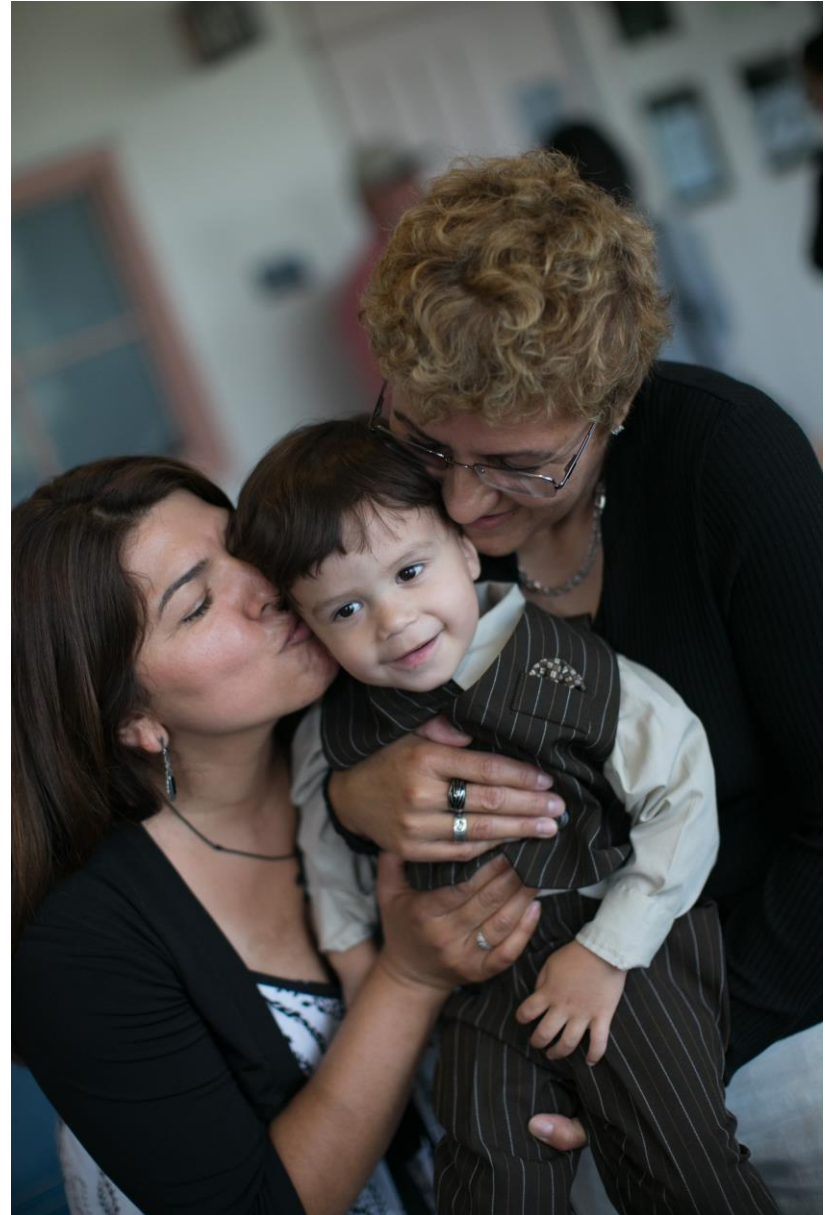


# Logistics

- Webinar will be recorded and archived at <http://kids-alliance.org/webinars/>
- All attendees will be on mute – type any questions you have into the chat box or if you experience technical difficulties email Shanti Ezrine at [s.ezrine@kids-alliance.org](mailto:s.ezrine@kids-alliance.org)
- A certificate of participation will be posted online after the webinar at <http://kids-alliance.org/webinars/>
- We will be answering your questions – please submit questions using the “chat” function on your GotoWebinar dashboard

# Today's Speakers

- Mary Sheppard & Lupe Grimaldi  
CA Department of Social Services
- Madeline Roachell & Regina Goree  
LA County Department of Children &  
Family Services
- Tim Halbur  
Teaming Participant
- Vanessa Hernandez  
California Youth Connection



# Agenda

- The reason for Child & Family Teams (CFTs)
- Requirements of a CFT
- CFTs in LA County
- Teaming from a caregiver's perspective
- Teaming from CYC's perspective



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**Mary Sheppard & Lupe Grimaldi**  
CA Department of Social Services



# Today we will cover:

- **The Continuum of Care Reform (CCR)**
- **The Child and Family Team (CFT) Process: Requirements and Guidelines**
- **The Composition of the CFT and Natural Supports**
- **CFT Best Practices**
- **Policy Letters and Resources**

# The Continuum of Care Reform (CCR)



# Legislation

- Senate Bill 1013 (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2012)
  - Reform Group Homes and Foster Family Agencies with robust & diverse stakeholder input
  - Legislative report with recommendations
  - Builds on previous reform efforts: SB 933, RBS Reform
- Assembly Bill 403 (Chapter 77, Statutes of 2015)
  - Enacted major components of the CCR effort
- Assembly Bill 1997 (Chapter 612, Statutes of 2016)
  - Adopts changes to further facilitate the implementation of the CCR recommendations adopted by AB 403
- Assembly Bill 404



# Vision

- All children live with a committed, permanent and nurturing family with strong community connections and where their “voice” is heard.
- Services and supports should be individualized and coordinated across systems so children shouldn’t change placements to get services.

# Vision

- When needed, congregate care is a short-term, high quality, intensive intervention that is just one part of a continuum of care available for children, youth and young adults.
- Effective accountability and transparency drives continuous quality improvement for state, county and providers.

# CCR Key Strategies

- Strengthening Collaboration
- Increasing Capacity for Home-Based Care
- Limiting use of Congregate Care
- Core Services
- Increased Engagement



# The Child & Family Team (CFT)

A group of individuals who are convened by the placing agency and who are engaged through a variety of team-based processes to identify the strengths and needs of the child or youth and his or her family, and to help achieve positive outcomes for safety, permanency, and well-being.

***Per Welfare & Institutions Code,  
Section 16501(a)(4)***



# CFT REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

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# ALL COUNTY LETTER 16-84 AND MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS INFORMATION NOTICE 16-049

- Implementation of CCR requires that child welfare and/or juvenile probation departments provide a CFT to all children, youth and nonminor dependents who enter foster care on and after January 1, 2017.
- This requirement also applies to children, youth and nonminor dependents already in a foster care placement prior to January 1, 2017.
- 60 day requirement once the child, youth or nonminor dependent enters the foster care system.
- A CFT meeting must be held at least once every six months.

# Why Child & Family Teams?

- Implementation of CCR requires that child welfare and/or juvenile probation departments provide a CFT to all children, youth and nonminor dependents who enter foster care on and after January 1, 2017.
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# Why Child & Family Teams?

- Families are their own experts and achieve success if given the supports to do so
- Improved outcomes for children and families
- Promotes collaboration, communication and shared decisions
- Services are most effective when delivered in the context of a single, integrated plan



# The Child & Family Team Model Overview

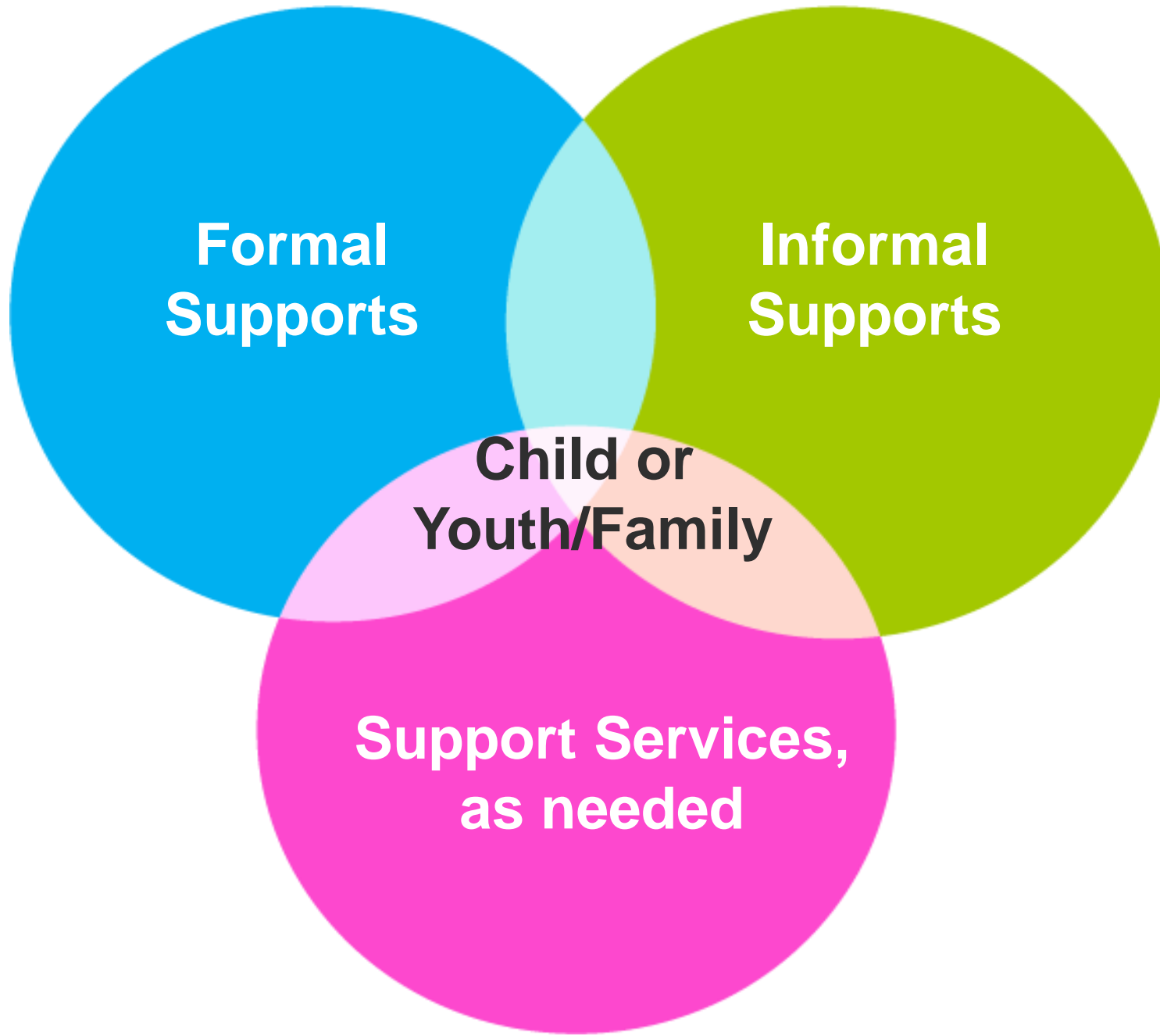
- Child, youth, or nonminor dependent and family
- Informal Supports: Natural supports so the family's support system will continue to exist after formal services are completed
- Formal Supports: Placing Agency Worker (Child Welfare and/or Juvenile Probation)
- Support Services Providers, as needed

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# Composition of the CFT

- The child, youth, and family voice, choice, and preferences are an integral part of the CFT process.
- Child or youth, family, current caregiver, placing agency representative, family members, and anyone identified by the family as being important.
- Others involved could be: youth's tribe or Indian custodian, behavioral health staff, foster family agency social worker, school personnel, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Regional Center providers, and others.



## **CHILD/YOUTH, NONMINOR DEPENDENT AND FAMILY**

### **INFORMAL SUPPORTS**

- Friends
- Extended Family
- Neighbors
- Coaches
- Faith-Based Connections
- Any person(s) identified by the family as important

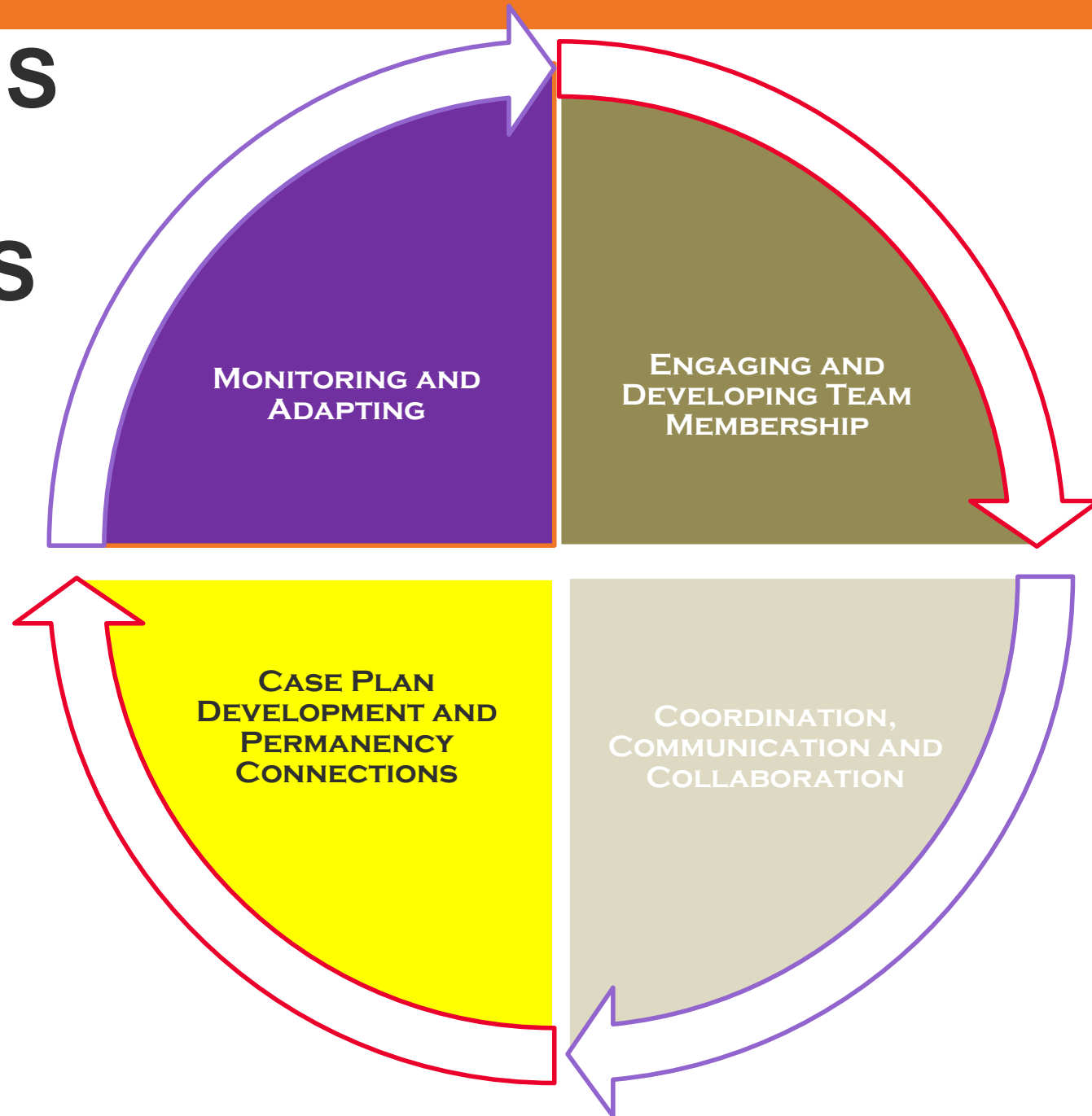
### **FORMAL SUPPORTS**

- Child Welfare, Juvenile Probation, Behavioral Health
- Educational Professionals
- Representatives from other agencies providing services

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# THE CFT IS A PROCESS



# What events should trigger a CFT meeting?

- Placement disruption,
- Change in service needs,
- Planning for respite care,
- Addressing barriers which affect the coordination of regular sibling and/or family visits, and/or
- Difficulties in coordinating Independent Living Skills Programs, including logistics, transportation, etc.



# CFT Meeting Frequency

- The placing agency will convene a CFT meeting no less than once every six months
- Best practice dictates that meetings should be held as frequently as needed to address emerging issues, provide integrated and coordinated interventions, and refine the plan as needed
- Frequency and timing of meetings should be decided by members of the team

# Meeting Frequency, Location, & Logistics

- CFT meetings should be held in a location that is most convenient for the child, youth, nonminor dependent and family
- If a team member is unable to attend the meeting in person (due to proximity issues or other conflicts), encourage participation by video conferencing or phone

# CFT Best Practices

- Prepare the Family
- Be Up Front
- Team Approach
- Trust Building
- Maintain Cultural Humility



# Available Resources

- Core Practice Model Guide
- Medi-Cal Billing Manuals, Versions 1 & 2
- All County Letter (ACL) NO. 16-84 Mental Health Substance Use Disorder Services (MHSUDS) Information Notice NO. 16-049
- County Fiscal Letter (CFL) NO. 16/17-22
- County Fiscal Letter (CFL) NO. 17/18-09

# Forthcoming Resources

- Integrated Core Practice Model Guide, Integrated Training Guide and the Version 3, Medi-Cal Billing Manual
- All County Letter (ACL) 17-84
- All County Information Notice: Youth, Parent, and Professionals CFT Brochures
- All County Letter (ACL): CFT Documentation in CWS/CMS

- For CFT questions, please contact [CWScoordination@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CWScoordination@dss.ca.gov)
- For questions related to CCR, please contact [CCR@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CCR@dss.ca.gov)



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## **Madeline Roachell & Regina Goree**

County of Los Angeles, Department of Children &  
Family Services

# Better Outcomes for Kids

## LA's 6 Strategies

The Los Angeles Shared Core Practice Model (LA SCPM) initiative employs six major strategies:

- 1) reducing caseloads,
- 2) increasing placement resources,
- 3) improving access to mental health services,
- 4) increasing training and coaching for staff,
- 5) enhancing the quality improvement process, and
- 6) **using a family-directed teaming process (CFTs).**





# CFT Overview

- **Infrastructure**
  - Policy
  - Tracking
  - Workgroups
  - Teaming (Organization & Office)



# CFT Overview (Cont'd)

- **4-Step CFT Certification Process**

- Classroom Training
- Coaching (See-One/Do-One)

- ***1) staff engagement***
- ***2) family engagement***
- ***3) CFT meeting***
- ***4) Debrief***

....1,2,3**4**steps



# CFT Coaching Model

- **County-wide Coach Developers**
  - 12 staff certified at the highest level
- **Office Coaches**
  - 2 staff per office certified @ the “coach developer” level (apx. 40 people)
- **Coaching Roundtable**
  - Monthly meeting for all coach developers
- **Regional Office “Implementation Teams”**
  - Consisting of ARA, coaches, supervisors and other practice and data champions to develop office specific training, certification and practice implementation plans



# CFT Coaching Model

- **Coaching Practice & Skills Development**
  - Implementation support
  - Role Clarification
  - CFT Skills Labs
  - Helping staff deal w/ tough questions
    - Strategies



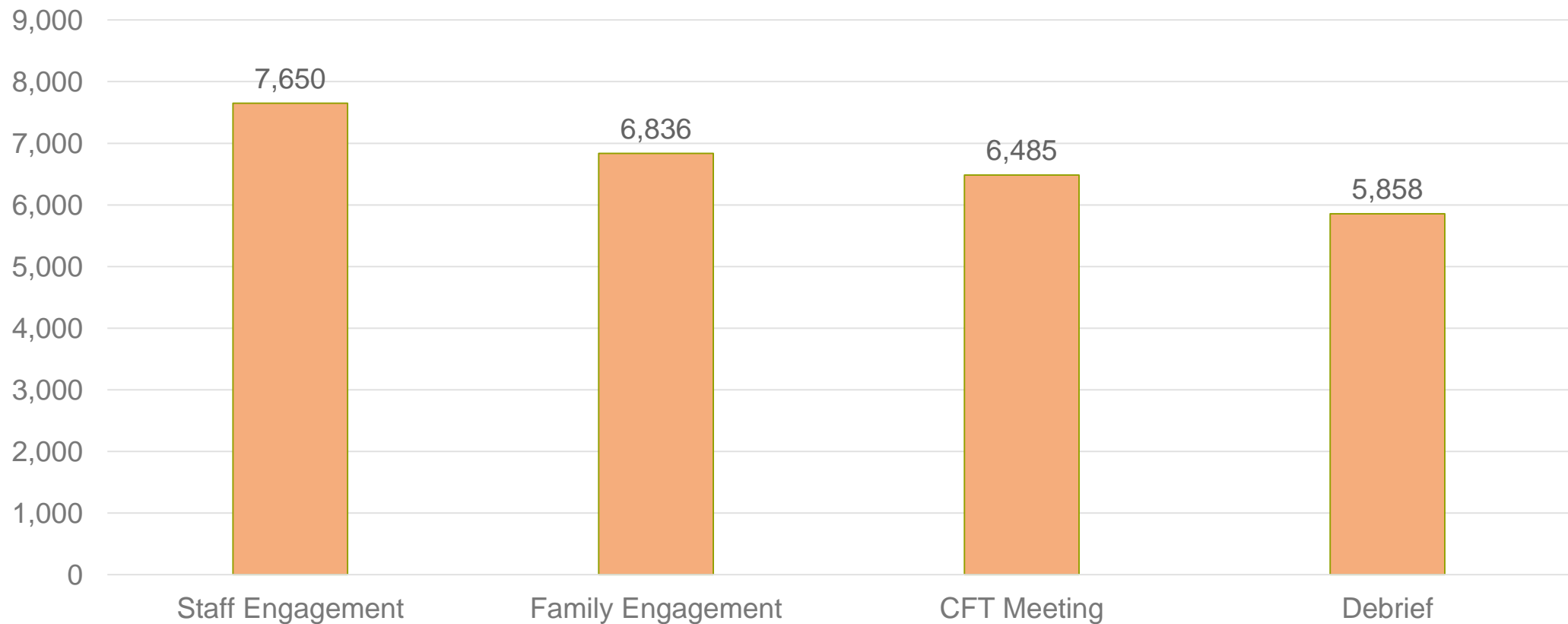
# Data

- Evaluation measures
- #s
- Trends
- Outcomes (to date)



# 4-Step Process

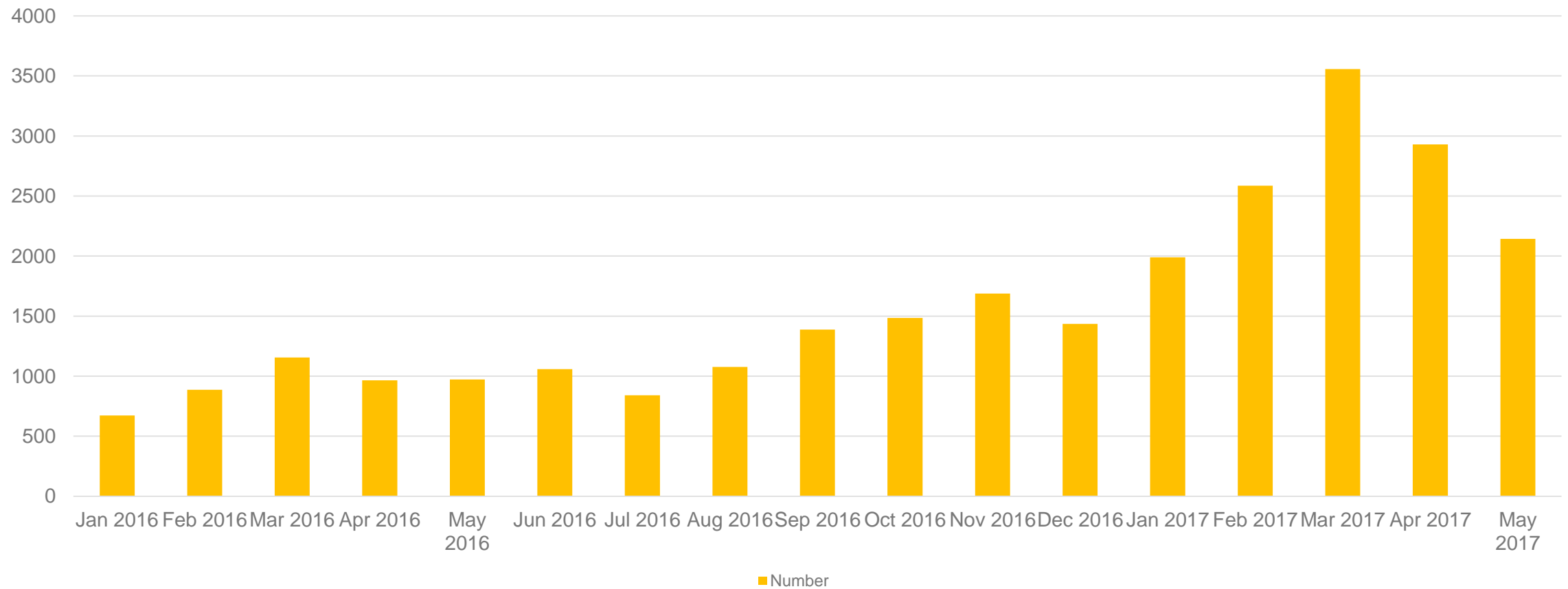
## CFT 4- Step Process January 2016 - May 2017



Data Source: CFT data was extracted from Cognos Workspace Advanced 6/6/2017

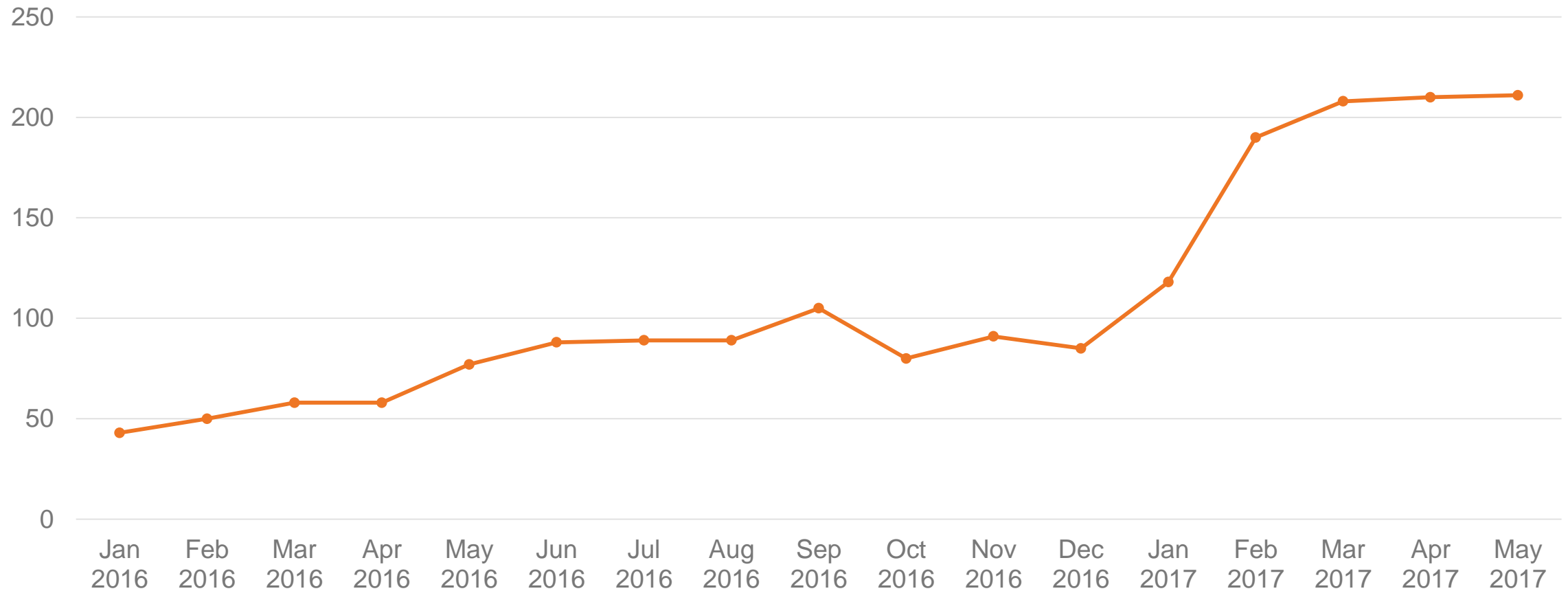
# Initial CFTs

Number of Initial CFTs by Month  
January 2016 - May 2017



# Subsequent CFTs

Number of Follow-Up CFTs by Month  
January 2016 - May 2017





## Impact

CFT Impact  
Analysis (Jan.  
2014 - Oct. 2016)  
Methods: Sampled  
the CFT group and  
the non-CFT group  
from referrals and  
cases at 99% CI

### Cases with CFTs

#### Average Number of Referral Days

33.4 days

#### Average Number of Subsequent Referrals

2.3 referrals

#### Referrals being promoted to Cases

37%

#### Average Number of Placements

1 placement

#### Permanency within 12 Months

17%

### Cases without CFTs

#### Average Number of Referral Days

43.7 days

#### Average Number of Subsequent Referrals

1.9 referrals

#### Referrals being promoted to Cases

16%

#### Average Number of Placements

3 placements

#### Permanency within 12 Months

52%

# Best Practices

- **Infrastructure**

- Create a unified vision
- Develop policy and operational guidelines to provide the needed language, definitions and expectations for the work
- Identify agency and community partnerships and involve them in building the implementation plan



# Best Practices (Cont'd)

- **Skills Lab**
  - Provide a safe space to learn and “practice”
  - Teach workers to craft services which address underlying needs
  - Include CFT action plans in court reports



# Best Practices (Cont'd)

- **Fidelity**

- Attend to fidelity early on
- Identify what you want staff to “know and do” then train it and measure it

- **Tracking**

- Create a tracking & utilization report
- Identify outcome measures **prior** to implementation
- Identify outputs that support implementation



# Lessons Learned

- **Developmental Stages**
  - Culture change is a process that evolves over time
  - Adapting and using a common language is a gauge of how you are progressing
  - DCFS developed competencies through certification



# Lessons Learned (Cont'd)

- **Documentation**
  - **If it doesn't get into the court report it doesn't count!**
  - CFT Action Plans
  - Court Reports



# Summary

- **Sustaining momentum**
  - Motivation
    - Meet with your coaching team regularly
    - Continue to coach and train staff post-certification
    - Identify outside resources to help equip the team and provide ongoing support



# Summary (Cont'd)

- **Inspiration**

- Share family success stories, “aha” moments, staff breakthroughs and insights
- CFT planning and organizing and delivery improves over time
- Small wins over time create organizational success





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**Tim Halbur**  
Teaming Participant

# My teaming experience

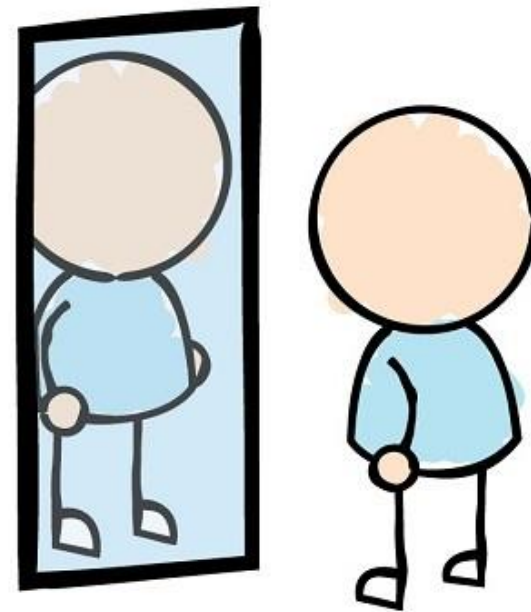


# Family Liaison



# Reflection

- Preparation
- Empowerment
- Valued





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**Vanessa Hernandez,**  
**Statewide Legislative Coordinator**  
California Youth Connection



# CYC Talks:

## Child & Family Teams





CALIFORNIA **YOUTH** CONNECTION

*Our Voices, Our Future*



# Mission

California Youth Connection (CYC) is a youth led organization of current and former foster youth who empower each other and their communities to transform the child welfare system through practice, policy & legislative change.



# Vision

Foster youth will be equal partners in contributing to all policies and decisions made in their lives. All youth in foster care will have their needs met and the support to grow into healthy and vibrant adults.



# Empowerment

We do this through creating space where we value and uplift lived experience as the single most important voice in the child welfare landscape.



That being said- CYC members were  
incredibly excited to hear that  
Child & Family Teams are an  
integral piece of CCR.





CYC members are hopeful that this  
can be an authentic space where  
youth & family voice is heard  
and most importantly  
RESPECTED.

(And hopefully not emulate some  
questionable TDM's they \*might\*  
have experienced before)

**CYC's Tips on how  
to execute an  
AWESOME CFT**



- Be Genuine
- Be Transparent
- Listen
- Write down comments
- Listen
- Strength Based Approach
- Empathize

# Be Genuine

Role, title aside- be yourself

Make eye contact

Do NOT put a stack of paperwork  
between you and the young person.

Say hello



# Be Transparent

- Talk about roles/expectations for the meetings
  - Talk about what the CFT can & cannot influence
- Talk about time (for the meetings & action items)
- It's okay to not know all the answers. It is NOT okay to ignore topics/questions that are hard.



As Vanilla Ice would say....  
Stop. Collaborate &

# Listen

# **How to signal that you are listening**

- Do not interrupt**
- Write down feedback/comments**
- Restate what you heard in your own words.**
- Verify that you captured their thoughts/ideas accurately.**

# Show Empathy

"Even with the best of intentions, a system that tells me where I can and cannot live, where I can and cannot go to school and who I can and cannot talk to, is intimidating."

Remember that many times, a CFT is a meeting where a young person walks into a room of all adults who have made life altering decisions about their lives.



**Here is what our members are  
saying directly...**



Vanessa Hernandez ▶ CYC Advisory



August 12 at 2:09 PM

Hey CYC,

Has anybody participated in a "Child & Family Team" (CFT) this year? Would you like to share what worked/didn't work with other folks working on CCR? Contact me if you're interested. Info in the comments below!

Best,  
Nessa



Like



Comment



**Vanessa Hernandez**

Yes! Working on a webinar and they are asking "how can we best prepare youth before they enter a CFT"

Friday at 7:39 PM · Like · Reply



**Eric** [REDACTED]

Explaining the process of the CFT is crucial. Some come in, not knowing they have a voice. I don't know how other counties are splitting up their meetings but for me, especially in ER, I take the youth out of the room and explain my role and the purpose of the meeting. I also explain that it's difficult to talk about certain things openly in front of your parents, which is where bringing them outside of the room allows for them to freely share. When I tell youth that their voice is just as important, they tend to share more.

Friday at 7:57 PM · Like · Reply · 1



**Eric** [REDACTED]

And also, can we please talk about including the family's voice in case planning? This is extremely important.

Friday at 8:04 PM · Like · Reply · 1

Write a comment...

GIF



Post





Eric [redacted]

**Vanessa Hernandez** I think that it allows for a youth to feel like someone understands from their point of view. Many youth feel open to talking to me because I am a former foster youth. I think it allows for the dialogue to be had and then we process what might be our next steps. I ask them "Do you feel comfortable in sharing or do you want me to share with the team?" Some share something with me privately that they wouldn't share in the team meeting because they are worried about what parents might do after that meeting. Then we process what that looks like. I could go on and on lol.

I sit on the county's CCR Steering Committee and my unit specifically handles the facilitation of the CFT meetings. If you have any questions, let's collab!

Friday at 9:52 PM • Like • Reply



Write a reply...







# QUESTIONS?

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