

# FAMILY GROUP DECISION-MAKING

## MODULE I HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF FGDM



# FGDM & RESOURCES



- ⌘ Engaging extended families—Throwing out the safety net for children.
- ⌘ Engage resources in the community.

**⌘ “CHILDREN ARE BEST PROTECTED  
WHEN FAMILIES ARE STRONG”**

**⌘ “TELL ME AND I’LL FORGET  
SHOW ME AND I MIGHT REMEMBER  
INVOLVE ME AND I’LL UNDERSTAND.”**

Chinese Proverb

# HISTORY



## Significant Political and Legislative Events

- ⌘ Industrial Revolution
- ⌘ The N.Y. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (1875)
- ⌘ White House Conference on Children (1909)
- ⌘ Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act (1974)
- ⌘ New Zealand FGDM and Oregon Family Unity Meeting
- ⌘ Family Preservation & Support Act of 1993
- ⌘ Adoptions & Safe Families Act (1997) = Concurrent Planning

# WHAT IS A FGDM CONFERENCE?



## **Structured Meeting:**

- ⌘ Pre-meeting activities
- ⌘ Information sharing and meeting confidentiality
- ⌘ Strengths and concerns (the Oregon model)
- ⌘ Family alone time (the New Zealand model)
- ⌘ Plan/Agreement
- ⌘ Closure
- ⌘ Post-meeting activities

# Family Group Decision-Making

## MODULE II MODELS OF FGDM



# THE NEW ZEALAND MODEL



- ⌘ 1989: The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act (CYPF)
- ⌘ Impact on practice
- ⌘ Cultural roots
- ⌘ Format
- ⌘ Video: “Mihi’s Whanau”

# THE OREGON FAMILY UNITY MEETING MODEL



- ⌘ 1989 context in the U.S. and worldwide
- ⌘ Family preservation
- ⌘ Promote early permanency planning
- ⌘ Community partnerships
- ⌘ Improve family cooperation for child safety

# THE OREGON FAMILY UNITY MEETING MODEL (cont'd)



## Format

- ⌘ Meeting preparation
- ⌘ Introductions and information
- ⌘ Identifying concerns
- ⌘ Acknowledging family strengths
- ⌘ Asking for best thinking with 2 options: family meets alone or everyone stays together
- ⌘ The plan is reviewed by all
- ⌘ Agreement is written up
- ⌘ Carrying out the plan and setting date to review

# THE CALIFORNIA MODELS



## SANTA CLARA COUNTY

- ⌘ "Family Conference": combination of New Zealand and Oregon models
- ⌘ Developed a "Family Conference Institute" to expand use of family conferencing
- ⌘ Support of their Board of Supervisors and Court use of agency and community facilitators

# THE CALIFORNIA MODELS (CONT'D)



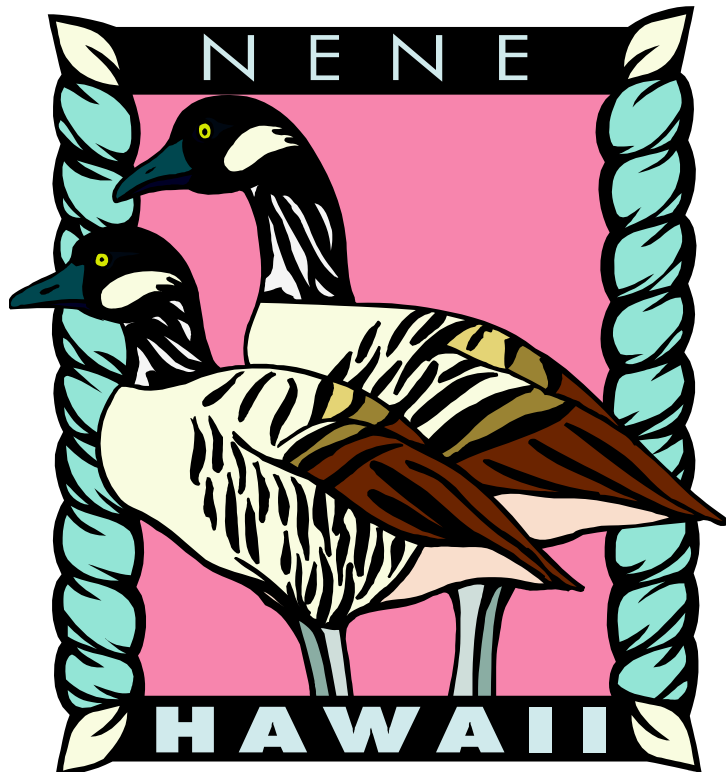
## STANISLAUS COUNTY

- ⌘ "Family Decision Meeting": emphasis on partnership with community
- ⌘ Non-negotiable family alone time
- ⌘ Coordinator only prepares for meeting, never facilitates
- ⌘ Facilitator only facilitates meeting

## SAN DIEGO COUNTY

- ⌘ "Family Unity Meeting" - used early Oregon model
- ⌘ Evolved to use family alone time exclusively
- ⌘ Successful drug court project

# 'OHANA CONFERENCING



- ⌘ Initiated in 1996 as a collaborative between Family Court, Department of Human Services, and the Wai'anae Community on the island of O'ahu
- ⌘ Unique in its use of community-based facilitators
- ⌘ Affirms the community role and responsibility in the protection of children at risk

# DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS FOR DISCUSSION



- ⌘ **Meeting format:** value of strengths and concerns and discussing strengths first
- ⌘ **Family alone time:** difficulty of professionals adopting this practice
- ⌘ **Facilitator neutrality:** agency versus external facilitator
- ⌘ **Mandated meetings or not:** pros and cons
- ⌘ **Facilitator skill level:** issues of clinically-trained facilitator?
- ⌘ **Coordination vs. facilitation:** can both be done?

# FAMILY GROUP DECISION-MAKING

## MODULE III CULTURAL COMPETENCY



# STARTING WITH OUR OWN FAMILIES



- ⌘ The key in New Zealand to accepting the new model was the focus on their own families

# STARTING WITH OUR OWN FAMILIES

## (CONT'D)



### EXERCISE:

- ⌘ Cite a brief case scenario
- ⌘ Ask participants to answer the following questions:
  - ☑ what if this child were my child?
  - ☑ What if this family involved in the child welfare system was my family?
  - ☑ What would I want for the child, for myself, for my family?
  - ☑ What outcomes would I prefer?
  - ☑ How would I want to work with a social worker?
  - ☑ How can the worker help me and my family?
- ⌘ Discuss in group format
- ⌘ Have participants keep questions to use as a reference when they meet a new family in their caseload.
- ⌘ Supervisors can use questions to pose to supervisees around case issues.

# TEACHING CULTURAL COMPETENCY



- ⌘ The cultural competency continuum goal is to move toward cultural proficiency
- ⌘ The continuum goes from cultural destructiveness to cultural proficiency

(Cross et al., 1989)

# TEACHING CULTURAL COMPETENCY

## (cont'd)



⌘ 5 essential elements to become culturally competent:

- ☑ value diversity
- ☑ be able to assess itself/oneself of their own culture
- ☑ to understand the “dynamics of difference” in cross-cultural interactions
- ☑ to sanction and incorporate the institutionalization of cultural knowledge and skills
- ☑ to contribute to adaptations to meet diversity needs of different groups

(Cross et al., 1989)

# VALUING DIVERSITY

## ⌘ The Cultural Sophistication Framework

☒ Describes competence on three levels:

- ☒ 1. Culturally incompetent
- ☒ 2. Culturally sensitive
- ☒ 3. Culturally competent

☒ Describes competence along four dimensions:

- ☒ 1. Cognitive
- ☒ 2. Affective
- ☒ 3. Skills
- ☒ 4. Overall effect

(Fullan & Pomfret, 1977)

# ASSESSING ONESELF



- ⌘ Importance of the family
- ⌘ Self differentiation definition
- ⌘ “My family” exercise
- ⌘ Examples of culturally destructive attitudes and practices towards families in child welfare exercise

# DYNAMICS OF DIFFERENCE

## ⌘ The social worker needs to be aware of the family's:

- ☒ Communication styles, how decisions are made, how they accept outsiders' interventions, and where they range within the family in acculturation to the mainstream culture
- ☒ Different family values, general and specific beliefs about themselves in relation to the world, about their desires and future hopes for the children, their child rearing methods, and expectations of behavior and development
- ☒ Intergroup differences and how socioeconomic and acculturation factors affect families in their expression of their cultural preferences

# DYNAMICS OF DIFFERENCE (CONT'D)

- ⌘ **The social worker needs to be knowledgeable in general about:**
  - ☑ multicultural array of populations and their origins and geographical areas of residence within one's location of practice
  - ☑ the current and historical institutional and structural acts of racism, discrimination, and barriers to opportunities which serve to oppress individuals and families of color and differing national origins.
  - ☑ those experiences and knowledge that all families possess that are sources of their strength. This is essential for social workers to maintain as social workers collaborate with client families to move toward problem resolution

# DEFINITIONS OF FAMILY



- ⌘ Extended and single-parent families
- ⌘ Families in poverty
- ⌘ Practitioner's task
- ⌘ Incorporation of cultural knowledge and skills
- ⌘ Adaptations to meet diversity needs of different groups
- ⌘ Families in transition
- ⌘ Culture shock
- ⌘ Different acculturation rates

# WORKING WITH FAMILIES OF COLOR AND ETHNICITY, IMMIGRANT, REFUGEE, AND FAMILIES OF DIFFERENT COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

## ⌘ Significance of racial discrimination

- ☒ must be acknowledged and understood by practitioners working with families
- ☒ these experiences affect the individual, the dynamics internal to the family, and
- ☒ their interface with systems and providers of service outside of the family

## ⌘ Three generation and skipped generation families

- ☒ this population growing -- parents, children and grandparents, 2.2 million to 3.4 million between 1970 and 1993

# SUBSTANCE-ABUSING FAMILIES



- ⌘ CWLA in 1990 cites substance abuse as affecting at least 80% of all cases of “substantiated abuse and neglect”
- ⌘ little support for treatment programs
- ⌘ drug exposure of children in child welfare
- ⌘ placement options are critical, thus the family conference important in its emphasis on kinship placements

# OTHER FAMILY STYLES



⌘ The Multicrisis Family

⌘ The Same-Sex Family

⌘ The Faith Community Family

# **FAMILY GROUP DECISION-MAKING**

## **MODULE IV**

### **MICRO, MEZZO, AND MACRO LEVEL SKILLS**



# MICRO SKILLS

⌘ **Importance of the core value that families have the ability to come up with solutions to their issues and concerns.**

- ☒ Trust
- ☒ Bridge building
- ☒ Group skills
- ☒ Reframing
- ☒ Power issues
- ☒ Neutrality
- ☒ Transference and counter-transference
- ☒ Confrontation and conflict management
- ☒ Behavioral focus

# MEZZO SKILLS



- **The conference as “group”**
- **Engaging the participants**
- **Community involvement**
- **Working with cultural differences**
- **Anger and hostility management**

# MACRO SKILLS



- ☒ **Change management context: awareness of culture of the implementing agency**
- ☒ **Awareness of stakeholders: who is impacted, who needs to be brought in**
- ☒ **Marketing techniques: how to aid in change in culture and educate about model**

# FAMILY GROUP DECISION-MAKING

## MODULE V

## PRACTICE



# STEP 1: THE PRE-MEETING



⌘ Initial contact and invitations

⌘ Parents

⌘ Extended family and kin

⌘ Professionals

⌘ Exclusions

⌘ Veto power

⌘ Veto power

⌘ Issue of children

⌘ Attorneys

⌘ Violent individuals

⌘ Location

⌘ Food

# STEP 2: ROLE PLAY EXERCISE



- ⌘ Goal: to find a placement resource within the family for the 4-year-old, Vicente.
- ⌘ Mother is ill and cannot provide a home
- ⌘ Father is incarcerated

# STEP 3: POST-MEETING ACTIVITIES



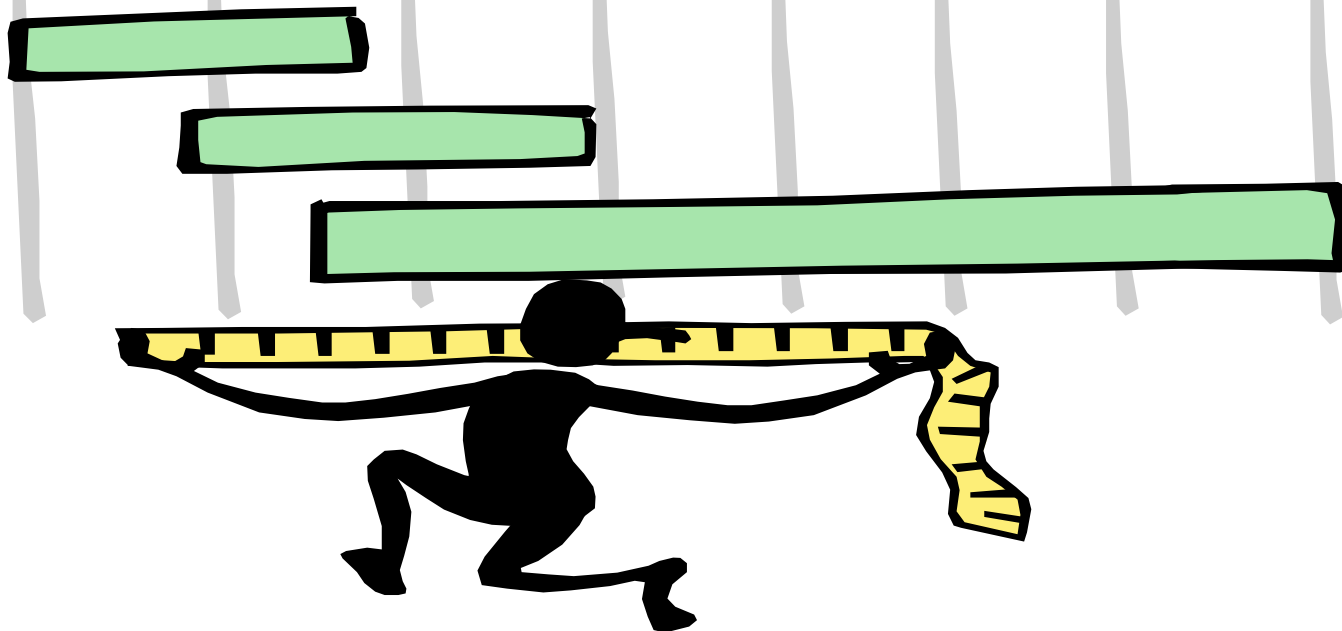
⌘ **Critical reflection**

⌘ **Monitoring the family plan agreement**

# FAMILY GROUP DECISION-MAKING

## MODULE VI

### OUTCOME MEASURES



# ISSUES TO CONSIDER



- ⌘ **Variables**
- ⌘ **Influence of implementing agency**
- ⌘ **Model definitions**
- ⌘ **Implementation in the context of the change environment**

# ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS



- ⌘ Example of the effective participatory practice model
- ⌘ Canadian project example
- ⌘ Surveys as a tool
- ⌘ Factors to measure