Welcome to the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) online training session. This session will provide you with a review of 12 sections of Chapter 5, for General Case Management of the DCS Child Welfare Policy Manual. This training is intended to provide a high level overview of the sections covered in this chapter.
Audio Script:

Section 5.1 Transitioning From Assessment

This section provides an overview of tasks to be completed when a case is transferred from an Assessment Worker to an Ongoing Worker.
Continuity of Care for Children and Families

- Ideally, one FCM will serve the family throughout the life of the case.
- If case transfer must occur,
  - Review the Assessment Report (State Form 311) and the Case Preparation Tool and
  - Hold a Transition meeting, to include:
    - Assessment worker,
    - Ongoing worker and
    - Family whenever possible.

Audio Script:

Continuity of Care for Children and Families

DCS strives to ensure continuity of care for children and families served by the department. Ideally, this is achieved when one Family Case Manager is assigned to the family throughout the life of the case.

If case transfer must occur at the close of the Assessment and the initiation of Ongoing case management services, the assigned Family Case Managers should work closely together to ensure a smooth transition for the family.

Prior to the case transfer, review the Assessment Report (State Form 311) and the Case Preparation Tool.

Hold a transition meeting with yourself, the Assessment worker, and whenever possible, the family. Invite the Assessment and Ongoing Supervisors, members of the Child and Family Team and the resource family, if appropriate, to attend. The purpose of the meeting is to provide all parties with as much information as possible about the status of the case, and to engage the family in the planning process to assure a smooth transfer of the case.
Section 5.2 Gathering Case Information

Audio Script:
Section 5.2 Gathering Case Information

DCS will gather as much information as possible about the child and the family to assist in completing a thorough assessment of the functional strengths and underlying needs of the family. This information will be used in developing the case plan and establishing IV-E eligibility.
Assessing Family Strengths and Needs

- Review all existing Assessment materials.
- Analyze case information with regard to child safety, permanency and well-being.
- Summarize case information for CFT review and Case Plan development.
- Provide relevant information to service providers.

Audio Script:
Assessing Family Strengths and Needs
Review all Assessment and case materials to gain a thorough understanding of the family’s strengths and needs. These materials include, but are not limited to:

- The Child Abuse/Neglect Intake Report (Form 310)
- The Assessment Report (Form 311)
- The Safety Assessment and Risk Assessment
- The Strengths and Needs Assessment
- The Family Network Diagram
- Any notes, photographs, and recordings taken during the Assessment
- Medical information including the Medical Passport and Mental Health screen

(continued on next page)
The Child’s educational information
- IV-E and IV-EA eligibility
- Provider reports

As you review these documents, analyze the information to assess the impact on the child’s safety, permanency, and well-being.

Prepare a summary of the case information for presentation to the Child and Family Team. Together with the family and the Child and Family Team, develop a Case Plan that addresses the unique strengths and needs of the family.

When service providers are working with the family, make sure that those providers have all the information they need to respond effectively to the family.
Section 5.3 Engaging the Family

Engaging is the skill of establishing collaborative relationships with families served by DCS. When families are actively engaged in decision making and case planning, they are more likely to feel empowered and motivated to make the changes needed to provide for the safety and well-being of the children in their care.
Engaging the Family

- Build trust-based relationships with families and other partners by demonstrating:
  - empathy
  - professionalism
  - genuineness
  - respect

- Encourage the family’s active participation in Child and Family Team Meetings.

- Recognize and value the cultural context in which the family operates.

Audio Script:

Engaging the Family

Engagement is an on-going process of trust building, which begins when the Family Case Manager demonstrates empathy, professionalism, genuineness, and respect in all of their interactions with the family.

Communicate to family members that their active participation as members of the Child and Family Team is wanted, needed, and valued. To the extent possible, engage both maternal and paternal family members equally in the assessment and case planning process, from the first point of intervention.

Recognize the cultural context in which the family lives, and strive to view the family’s strengths and needs within that cultural context. Respect for the family’s culture enables the Family Case Manager to integrate culturally relevant information while supporting the family in developing a plan of action that is meaningful to them.
Section 5.4 Non-Custodial Parents

The non-custodial parent is a person who does not have legal or primary physical custody of the child.
Working with the Non-Custodial Parent

- Diligently try to locate and engage non-custodial parents.
- Provide the Advisement of Legal Rights Form.
- Give primary placement consideration to non-custodial parent when selecting an out-of-home placement option.
- Conduct background checks, if warranted.
- Determine Child Support arrangements:
  - If court ordered, inform of obligation to pay
  - If not court ordered, assist in establishing

Audio Script:

Working with Non-Custodial Parents

DCS requires that diligent efforts be made to locate and engage the non-custodial parent throughout the life of the case. These efforts must be documented in ICWIS.

Provide the non-custodial with the Advisement of Legal Rights Form. This form describes the legal rights of the non-custodial parent, including the right to:

- Request that the child reside with him or her
- Visit with the child, unless the court has ordered no visitation
- Participate in the Child and Family Team meetings and in case planning for the child

(continued on next page)
Prior to considering an out of home placement, DCS will give first consideration to the non-custodial parent. You may conduct background checks on the non-custodial parent if there are risk factors present such as:

- The child, custodial parent or members of the Child and Family Team raises a concern about the placement
- The custodial parent or a member of the Child and Family Team reports past or current criminal behavior on the part of the non-custodial parent or
- The non-custodial parent does not have regular contact with the child

Determine whether the non-custodial parent is paying child support. If child support is court ordered, inform the non-custodial parent of their obligation to pay, if needed. If child support is not court ordered, assist the non-custodial parent in establishing child support responsibilities.
Audio Script:
Section 5.5 Alleged Fathers
The fact that paternity has not been established for a child does not mean that the father is unknown or that he and his family should not be involved the child’s life.
Paternity Establishment

- Refer a child’s case to the local prosecuting attorney’s office for the filing of a paternity action if:
  - The child is born out of wedlock and is alleged to be a child in need of services,
  - The child is under the supervision of the department,
  - The identity of the alleged father is known and
  - The DCS local office reasonably believes that establishing the paternity of the child would be beneficial to the child.

Audio Script:
Paternity Establishment

DCS will refer a child’s case to the local prosecuting attorney’s office for the filing of a paternity action, if the following conditions apply:

- The child is born out of wedlock and is alleged to be a child in need of services
- The child is under the supervision of the department
- The identity of the alleged father is known; and
- The local DCS office reasonably believes that establishing the paternity of the child would be beneficial to the child.
Working with the Alleged Father

- DCS will offer services to an alleged father while he is awaiting the results of paternity testing.

- DCS may recommend placement of a child with an alleged father or the family member of an alleged father before paternity has been established.

Audio Script:

Working with the Alleged Father

The Family Case Manager can begin to work with the alleged father of a child while paternity establishment is being established.

Offer services to the alleged father while he is awaiting the results of paternity testing.

Consider placement of a child with the alleged father or a member of his family, while awaiting his paternity establishment.
Audio Script:
Section 5.6 Locating Absent Parents

DCS will make diligent efforts to locate absent parents of children under the department's care, beginning in the Assessment phase.

This is important because failure to complete a diligent search for an absent parent may delay permanency options for a child under the care and custody of DCS. The court cannot terminate the parental rights of a missing parent until a diligent effort has been made to find that parent.
Locating Absent Parents

- Make diligent efforts to locate absent parents of children under DCS care and custody.
- Request a search of the Putative Father Registry and Parent Locator if the parent’s identity and whereabouts are unknown.
- Complete an Affidavit of Diligent Inquiry (ADI) to document for the court the efforts to locate the child’s parent.

Audio Script:
Locating Absent Parents

Make diligent efforts to locate the absent parents of children who are in the care and custody of DCS.

Be sure to request a search of the Putative Father Registry and the Parent Locator, in addition to other efforts to find the missing parent.

Complete an Affidavit of Diligent Inquiry (ADI) to document for the court the efforts you have made to locate the missing parent.
Section 5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings

Audio Script:
Section 5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings
DCS will facilitate the Child and Family Team meeting process with every family served as an effective practice approach of case planning and service delivery. If a Child and Family Team meeting is not completed, a case conference will be facilitated with appropriate parties.
Child and Family Team Meetings

- DCS will offer the Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting process to every family served as the desired mode of case planning and service delivery.

- The CFT process:
  - Encourages a strength-based approach
  - Focuses on underlying needs of the family

Audio Script:

The Child and Family Team meeting model encourages a strengths-based approach to initial and ongoing assessments of children and their families. The Child and Family Team meeting process focuses on the underlying needs of the family rather than behavioral symptoms. The child and the family’s identified strengths play an essential role in determining what interventions might be most successful.
Section 5.8 Developing the Case Plan

Audio Script:
Section 5.8 Developing the Case Plan
DCS will have an Indiana Child Welfare Information System approved Case Plan completed within 45 days of removal or disposition, whichever comes first, for the following children: (see next slide)
Case Plan Requirements

- DCS will have an approved case plan within 45 days of removal or disposition, whichever comes first for:
  - Every child adjudicated as a CHINS,
  - All children with an open case type,
  - Children at imminent risk of removal

Audio Script:

Case Plan Requirements

- Every child who has been adjudicated a Child in Need of Services
- All children with an open case type
- Children who are at imminent risk of removal; and
- A juvenile delinquent or status offender for whom DCS has been ordered to pay for the placement and the child is IV-E eligible.
Case Plan Requirements cont’d

- Seek input from the CFT and other professionals who have expertise relating to the child and family's strengths and needs.

- Include the resource family and the CASA in developing the Case Plan.

- Update the case plan at least every 180 days from the effective date of the previous plan.

Audio Script:

Case Plan Requirements cont’d

DCS will seek input from professionals who may not be members of the Child and Family Team but have expertise relating to the child and family's strengths and needs (for example physicians, mental health professionals, school personnel, and other community service providers), for the purpose of developing the Case Plan.

DCS must include the resource parents and Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) in developing the Case Plan, if they are not already members of the Child and Family Team.

DCS will ensure that the Case Plan is updated at least every 180 days from the effective date of the previous plan and anytime there is a significant change (for example a change in placement, in the child or family’s identified needs, or in the permanency plan, the parents failure to participate in services or cannot be located, etc.).
Section 5.9 Informal Adjustment

A program of Informal Adjustment is used when an allegation of child abuse or neglect is substantiated, and voluntary participation in services is the most appropriate plan to protect the safety and well-being of the child.
Informal Adjustment

An Informal Adjustment (IA) will be initiated when:

- A CA/N allegation is substantiated,
- Voluntary participation in family and/or rehabilitative services is the most appropriate course of action,
- The parent/guardian/custodian consents to an Informal Adjustment and
- Juvenile court approval is requested and obtained.

Audio Script:

Informal Adjustment

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will initiate a program of Informal Adjustment when:

- A child abuse/neglect allegation is substantiated
- Voluntary participation in family and/or rehabilitative services is the most appropriate course of action to protect the safety and well-being of the child
- The parent, guardian, or custodian consents to an Informal Adjustment; and
- Juvenile court approval is requested and obtained.
Informal Adjustment cont’d

- The duration of the IA will be no more than six (6) months.
- If a parent/guardian/custodian fails to comply with the services outlined in the IA agreement:
  - File a petition for compliance with the court
  - Consider filing a CHINS petition

Audio Script:
Informal Adjustment cont’d

The duration of an Informal Adjustment will be no more than six months. When requesting an extension of the original six month IA agreement or by the filing of a CHINS petition, DCS will redetermine if the child continues to be at imminent risk for placement and whether reasonable efforts are continuing to be made to safely maintain the child at home.

DCS will file a petition for compliance if a parent, guardian, or custodian fails to comply with the services outlined in the IA agreement.

DCS will consider filing a CHINS petition if the parent, guardian, or custodian does not comply with the terms of the IA or the best interests of the child requires additional services for which court intervention is needed.
Section 5.10 Family Services

Family services are provided to prevent a child being removed from his or her parent/guardian/custodian, or to help reunite the child with his or her parent/guardian/custodian when removal has occurred.
Family Service Provision

- Family services will be provided to all children and families with an open case.
- Make referrals on behalf of the child and/or family to appropriate services within 10 business days.
- Offer services to the child and/or family regardless of their participation, until the court:
  - Closes the Informal Adjustment case or
  - Dismisses the CHINS case.

Audio Script:

Family Service Provision

DCS will provide family services to all children and families with an open case type to address their identified needs.

DCS will make referrals on behalf of the child and/or family to appropriate services within 10 business days of a need for services being identified.

DCS will continue to offer services to the child and/or family regardless of participation, until the court:

- Closes the Informal Adjustment (IA) case; or
- Dismisses the CHINS case.
Section 5.11 Mental Health Services

DCS will assure that all children supervised by DCS have access to necessary mental health care and treatment, if the need is indicated by a comprehensive mental health assessment.
Mental Health Screening

- Ensure that a mental health screen is completed:
  - For every child under the supervision of DCS, regardless of age, within five (5) days of removal or opening a case with their family, whichever occurs first.
  - Within two (2) weeks of a placement change, if the child is not currently receiving mental health services.

Audio Script:

Mental Health Screening

DCS will complete a mental health screen for every child under the supervision of DCS, regardless of age, within five days of removal or opening a case with the family, whichever occurs first.

DCS will complete a mental health screen within two weeks of a placement change, if the child is not currently receiving mental health services.
Mental Health Assessment

- If the child exhibits behaviors that would cause a reasonable person to believe he/she is a danger to him/herself and/or others:
  - Refer the child for a comprehensive mental health assessment by a qualified mental health professional within 10 business days of the mental health screen.
  - Follow up to make sure the assessment has been completed within 30 days of the referral.

Audio Script:

Mental Health Assessment

If indicated by the child’s mental health screen, or if the child exhibits behaviors that would cause a reasonable person to believe he/she is a danger to him/herself and/or others, DCS will ensure that the child is referred for a comprehensive mental health assessment by a qualified mental health professional within 10 business days of the screen and will follow up to make sure the assessment has been completed within 30 days of the referral.

DCS will assure that all children supervised by DCS have access to necessary mental health care and treatment, if indicated by a comprehensive mental health assessment.
Audio Script:

Section 5.12 Closing a CHINS Case

The determination to close a CHINS case is a joint decision with DCS, the Child and Family Team, and the family.
Slide 29 - 5.12-1 - Closing a CHINS Case

Deciding to Close a CHINS Case

- Close a CHINS case when the safety, permanency, and well-being can be assured over time for all children in the home.
- Facilitate a Child and Family Team meeting to determine:
  - Appropriateness of case closure and
  - Family supports needed beyond case closure.

Audio Script:

Deciding to Close a CHINS Case

DCS will close a CHINS case at such time as the safety, permanency, and well-being can be assured over time for all children in the home.

DCS will facilitate a Child and Family Team meeting unless the family chooses not to participate in the Child and Family Team, to determine the appropriateness of case closure and what if any family supports needed beyond case closure.
Criteria for Closing a CHINS Case

Prior to case closure DCS will work with the Child and Family Team to assure continuation of informal support services needed for successful reunification, adoption or any other permanent placement. These supports may remain in place following case closure.

DCS will recommend closure of a CHINS case:

- When the terms of the Dispositional Order or permanency goals have been met or
- When the child turns 18 years of age and the coercive intervention of the court is no longer needed or
- At or before the time the child becomes 21 years of age, when the case has remained open for services needed after the child turned 18 with approval of the court.
Congratulations!

If you have any additional questions regarding these policies, please contact either your Supervisor, Director, or Regional Manager.

Audio Script:
Congratulations! You have completed Chapter 5 General Case Management Computer Assisted Training. If you have any additional questions regarding these policies, please contact your Supervisor, Director, or Regional Manager. You can also email policy at DCSPolicy@dcs.in.gov. Thank You!