

Building Trusting Relationships Genuineness, Empathy, and Respect

Engagement

Talk about what has been working for you as you meet with families. What are your needs? If you are ready to improve your skills in engagement, this guide can support you as you assess and plan.

Explore:

When you think about engagement, what are your strengths?
What improvements would you like to make in your use of engagement?

Assessment

Scaling:

On a scale of 1 (need to learn) to 10 (can mentor), where would you place yourself?
(Record on the functional assessment.)



Scaling Continuum:

Learning Learning the Skills	Working Using the Skills with Families	Mentoring Using the Skills to Mentor
1. Demonstrate genuineness with others verbally and through actions.	1. Demonstrate genuineness to families verbally and through actions.	1. Demonstrate genuineness to families and caseworkers verbally and through actions.
2. Communicate trustworthiness to others through acceptance and honesty.	2. Communicate trustworthiness to families through acceptance and honesty.	2. Communicate trustworthiness to families and caseworkers through acceptance and honesty
3. Show respect to others by recognizing strengths and being open minded.	3. Show respect to families by acknowledging their strengths and providing full disclosure about needs.	3. Show respect to families and caseworkers by acknowledging their strengths, providing full disclosure about needs and processing their needs with them.

Learning Learning the Skills	Working Using the Skills with Families	Mentoring Using the Skills to Mentor
4. Demonstrate empathy by listening to others and observing their nonverbal responses.	4. Demonstrate empathy with families by listening to their family story and providing feedback by asking questions and clarifying your understanding about what the family shares.	4. Demonstrate empathy with families and caseworkers by listening, observing, and coaching them through tasks, and then by providing honest, strengths-based feedback.

Planning

1. What will it look like when you are able to engage as you would wish?
2. What steps can you take that will lead to the desired result?

Practice Opportunities

Mentor with Caseworker	Caseworker with Family	Family with Family
Treat caseworker with genuineness, empathy, and respect.	Treat family with genuineness, empathy, and respect.	Coach family in treating other family members with genuineness, empathy, and respect.
Model for caseworker how to treat families with genuineness, empathy, and respect.	Model for family how to treat families with genuineness, empathy, and respect.	Support family in developing a plan using the worksheet “Developing A Plan To Build And Maintain Trusting Relationships” to engage or further engage a family member or neighbor they desire to improve their relationship with.
Support caseworker in developing a plan using the worksheet “Developing A Plan To Build And Maintain Trusting Relationships” to engage or further engage a family.	Develop a plan using the worksheet “Developing A Plan To Build And Maintain Trusting Relationships” to engage or further engage a family.	

Knowledge Base

Concept:

Using genuineness, empathy, and respect to build and maintain trusting relationships with families.

Basic Elements:

Genuineness

Empathy

Respect

Definitions:

Genuineness:

Genuineness is “being *you*”; being congruent in what you say and do; being non-defensive and spontaneous. To be genuine you need to be aware of your feelings and at the same time respond to the family member in a respectful manner that opens up rather than closes communication. Genuineness helps to reduce the emotional distance between you and the family member and helps the family member to identify you as another human being similar to him/herself. You can demonstrate genuineness by:

- Being yourself and balancing this with your professional role, and acting consistent with how you feel or believe.
- Making sure that your nonverbal behavior, voice tone, and verbal responses match or are congruent.
- Communicating trustworthiness and acceptance.
- Being able to express yourself naturally without artificial behaviors.
- Being non-defensive.
- Self-disclosing in a purposeful and brief manner.

Empathy:

Empathy is a process in which you attempt to experience another person’s world then communicate an understanding of and compassion for the person’s experience. You develop a sense of what the situation means to the other individual. Empathy is being able to see through another’s eyes and understand their worldview. The two-step process involved in demonstrating empathy is:

- Recognizing the person’s experience, feelings, and nonverbal communication.
- Communicating with words your understanding of the person’s experience. Your communication will reflect your understanding of their ideas and feelings. Accurate empathy helps create a climate where the family member is willing and able to explore his/her issues and problems. Communicating with empathy results in more openness in people.

Respect:

Respect is believing that there is value in each human being and that there is potential in that person as well. There are two aspects of respect: 1) your attitude or value about people and 2) your ability to communicate respect in observable ways. Respect involves valuing the family member as a person, separate from any evaluation of his/her behavior. Respect is recognizing the dignity and worth in each human being. When communicating respect, there is warmth that is conveyed to people that says you accept them, you like them, you care about them, and you have concern for them. Respecting a person does not mean sanctioning or approving his/her thoughts or behaviors of which society may disapprove. Values and beliefs that convey respect include belief in the following: all human beings are worthy; each person is a unique individual; people have the right to self-determination and to make their own choices; and people can change. Respect can be communicated and demonstrated by:

- Communicating warmth.
- Showing commitment.
- Recognizing a person's strengths.
- Being open-minded.
- Using a person's strengths.