

## **Engagement Tip Sheet**

When you are working on engagement with a youth, family member or system partner, you are working to communicate effectively and have your audience pay attention to you. This is done in a way that promotes trust and respect. Asking what the youth and family want out of the HFW process, validating what they are going through, and having Support Partners as a part of the HFW team helps with engagement. This is what sets HFW apart from traditional services.

Our Five Day HFW Team Training binder cautions us not to make conclusions or assumptions about needs, and to not provide solutions. When engaging youth and families, we want to keep the end in mind. How will the youth and family sustain self-efficacy once HFW ends? What is our purpose for working with the youth and family? The HFW process promotes building teams that brainstorm ideas to help youth and families meet their goals. Providing solutions from the beginning will not help youth and families manage their behavioral health challenges, and will not help foster independence. In everything that we do, it is with purpose and intent. This will help when the youth and family are in the Transition phase, because they have learned from the beginning how to use their supports rather than depend on a service or you as the HFW workforce.

- Treat others how you want to be treated - Think about how others have tried to get to know you.
- Be yourself - If you try to be something that you are not the youth/family will pick up on it.
- Be open - Just because you are not in a supportive role does not mean that you cannot share your life experiences.
- Know your material - When entering into a home, be confident about who you are and what you know about the process.
- Practice your skills - This is why we do behavioral rehearsals and peer to peer exercises.
- Have a purpose - Always have a purpose to your visit. Know why you are going out to visit a family and your agenda.
- Adjust as needed - Don't be thrown off if the family wants to talk about something else.
- Conversation piece - When asking questions regarding each domain, make it a conversation rather than an assessment.
- Barriers to engagement - Families are on their guard when talking to professionals.
- Start from the beginning - Families may tell you one of their biggest needs at the beginning of the Engagement phase. If warranted, immediately begin a stabilization plan.