



Building a Team that Functions Effectively

Whether the purpose is to collaborate on Foster/Kin Family Recruitment or discuss the well-being of a specific child, there is a progression of development when any new team comes together. This process includes:

- Determining shared goals and objectives
- Identifying and respecting complimentary roles and individual expertise
- Resolving conflicts in the best interests of the goals and objectives determined
- Assessing achievements and progress toward goals and objectives
- Creating new goals and objectives based on an assessment of the team's strengths and needs

Teams should form for a clear purpose if they are to be successful. Participants need to have an understanding of why they are coming together and what issues they will be addressing. This focus may shift over time.

It is important to create operating agreements or "team agreements" at the first meeting. These may include practical issues such as sending an agenda before each meeting and choosing a facilitator, timekeeper and note-taker. It is also important to discuss meeting courtesy such as respecting the opinions of others, giving everyone a chance to speak, being good listeners, beginning and ending on time, cells on vibrate, etc. These agreements can be revisited at each meeting and added to as necessary.

A team is most effective when each member feels valued and leaves the meeting with a tangible task to complete. Always have another meeting scheduled prior to leaving the meeting. A regular day and time each month is what usually works best.

Basic principles of team development are as follows.

Forming: This is the initial stage of identifying who is going to be in the group and how you will all operate together. It is important to recognize that each agency will need to identify who is the most beneficial member of their organization to be on this team. Your team may change faces in its early inception.

Storming: With any group of people, disagreements are likely. The "team agreements" may need to be expanded. It is ok to disagree. Keep an open mind. It is ok to have a certain function on a team as opposed to everyone doing everything.



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Norming: This is the stage that the team is figuring out how they will work together. Usually the purpose of the group is fully identified and some team agreements have been reached. People are finding their places on the team.

Performing: Now your team is fully functional and able to produce results. Expect disagreements and things not always going as planned. With that in mind, you can adapt to the circumstances and continue to be productive.

Transforming: Assessing and reassessing goals, objectives, accomplishments and areas of expertise within the group.

Develop an email list and have regular contact with your group members between meetings. Be prepared for the need to have individual meetings with various members of your group. There will be the need to work between meetings on specific objectives.

TEAMWORK INCREASES WORKING RELATIONSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS THAT WORK!

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_86.htm