

Family Engagement

This building block fulfills the mission of “transforming how services are delivered” by giving a stronger voice to children and families regarding child welfare decisions that impact their lives.

One mechanism for achieving true family engagement is through the use of family engagement meetings. The purpose of establishing family engagement meetings in Virginia is to institute a consistent method of deliberately and meaningfully involving families in decision making. These meetings enable youth and families to:

- Actively engage with identified supports, child welfare staff and other important stakeholders in facilitated meetings.

- Family engagement meetings utilize a teamed approach to making decisions and occur throughout the family’s involvement with the agency such as, removal from the home or prior to a change in placement. [The Children’s Services Practice Model](#) states that children and families have the right to have a say in what happens to them and will be treated with dignity and respect.

- Bring together a team of individuals in order to recognize that family members are the experts about the own families and should always be consulted when decisions are made regarding safety, permanency, and well-being.