

Executive Summary **STRUCTURED DECISION MAKING**

Course Description

Structured Decision Making is a case management tool designed to help Counties and workers assess families at critical decision making points. It is also designed to facilitate service delivery and give Counties information about the case type and severity as well as and factors that influence decisions in placement, risk level and case plans. The SDM system has different decision making tools for different decision making points in a case. There is a tool to decide: how quickly to investigate a referral, whether a child is safe in their home, whether to open a case, level of service to give to a family and factors to focus on in developing a case plan. There are also reassessment tools for family maintenance and reunification cases that help workers decide whether to continue services, close a case, or reunify a family. In this class workers will learn the philosophy and goals of the SDM. They will also have an opportunity to use and practice each tool. This class is designed for Counties that are using SDM. Other Counties are welcome to attend to gain and understanding of SDM. However to use the tools requires that the County be participating in the SDM program.

Target Audience

This class is designed for new or experienced workers who work in an SDM Counties.

Outcome Objectives

As a result of this training, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the philosophy and goals of the SDM model.
2. Understand that different tools make different decisions.
3. Know the policy and procedures for each tool and where to find this information.
4. Understand and practice each decision making tool.
5. Understand the importance of using the definition and documenting their decisions.

Ways Supervisors Can Support the Transfer of Learning

BEFORE the training:

1. Talk to the worker about how SDM is used in their unit and County.
2. Talk about the importance of using decision making tools and how it has affected practice. Use case examples.
3. Talk about issues that have influenced decisions in the County and how tools help workers make more objective decisions. Give them examples from past experiences.
4. Using one of the workers cases discuss points in the case where SDM would be used. Ask the worker what factors might influence the workers decision. Share examples of factors that have influences cases in the past that could influence this case

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AFTER the training:

1. Ask the worker what they learned about decision making. What emotional issues affected their decisions?
2. Have the worker use SDM on an existing case.
3. Have a couple of workers complete a case as a group and compare answers. Review use of definitions and making decisions based on facts.
4. Monitor, especially in the beginning when workers are developing habits, that they are using the definitions and documenting why they make the decision they made.
5. Discuss a recent removal of a child and review the safety assessment. Review a recent case where the child remained in their home. How did the safety intervention work?
6. Review a recent case and look to see that the case plan fits the needs and strengths assessment.
7. Watch to see when workers are using the definitions and complement them.

Brief Outline

Day One

Lecture: What is SDM?

Overview of the rationale for decision making tools

History of SDM

Philosophy and goals of the SDM system

Priority response

Using case material participants will complete the tool

Policy and procedures

Safety Assessment

Using case material participants will complete the tool

Policy and procedures

Risk Assessment

Using case material participants will complete the tool

Policy and procedures

Needs and Strengths Assessment

Using case material participants will complete the tool

Policy and procedures

Day Two

Morning

Risk Reassessment – in home cases

Using case material participants will complete the tool

Policy and procedures

Practice and review

Participants will be given a higher risk case and complete all the decision making tools covered in day one.

Afternoon

Reunification Reassessment

Using case material participants will complete the tool

Policy and procedures