



Iowa Department of Human Services

Terry E. Branstad
Governor

Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor

Charles M. Palmer
Director

October 4, 2013

GENERAL LETTER NO. 17-AP-26

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Child Welfare and Community Services
Division of Adult, Children and Family Services

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 17, **CHILD WELFARE APPENDIX**, Contents (pages 2 through 7), revised; pages 211, 215 through 218, and 218a, revised; pages 74a through 74f, 78a through 78h, 210a through 210f, and 218b through 218f, new; and the following forms:

- 470-5148 *Family Interaction Plan General Roles and Responsibilities, new*
- 470-5149 *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Agreement on Confidentiality, new*
- 470-5150 *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Referral, new*
- 470-4126 *Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Meeting Notes, new*
- 470-4126(S) *Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Meeting Notes (Spanish), new*
- 470-5161 *Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Meeting Notes, new*
- 470-5176 *Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Youth's Dream Path, new*
- Comm. 265 *Family Team Decision-Making Meetings, new*
- Comm. 265(S) *Family Team Decision-Making Meetings (Spanish), new*
- Comm. 283 *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Standards, revised*
- Comm. 435 *Family Interaction Standards, new*
- Comm. 439 *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Facilitator Approval, new*
- Comm. 440 *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making (FTDM/YTDM) Coaching and Mentoring Guidelines, new*

Summary

Chapter 17-Appendix is revised to:

- ◆ Add form 470-5148, *Family Interaction Plan General Roles and Responsibilities*. This form is the official family interaction plan developed for children placed out of the home and identifies responsibilities of identified team members.
- ◆ Add form 470-5149, *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Agreement on Confidentiality*. This form is an agreement between all members in attendance to a family team decision-making or youth transition decision-making meeting to keep personal and identifying information confidential.
- ◆ Add form 470-5150, *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Referral*. This form is used by the Department worker as a referral form to offer a family team or youth transition decision-making meeting to a child or youth or family.
- ◆ Add form 470-4126, *Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Meeting Notes*, and its Spanish translation, 470-4126(S). This form is the official family plan developed during the family team meeting.
- ◆ Add form 470-5161, *Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Meeting Notes*. This form is the official youth plan developed during the YTDM meeting.
- ◆ Add form 470-5176, *Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Youth's Dream Path*. This form is the official model to use during the YTDM meeting.
- ◆ Add Comm. 265, *Family Team Decision-Making Meetings*, and its Spanish translation, Comm. 265(S). Comm. 265 informs families on family team decision-making meetings:
 - Who is invited to these meetings,
 - What happens before these meetings,
 - What happens at these meetings, and
 - Who to contact should they have any questions.
- ◆ Change the name of Comm. 283 from *Family Team Decision-Making Evaluation Handbook* to *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Standards*. This set of standards and practice guidance ensures that every family is offered the opportunity to participate in the FTDM and YTDM process unless the family is unwilling or doing so would place a family member in danger.
- ◆ Add Comm. 435, *Family Interaction Standards*. This handbook provides a set of standards and practice guidance to achieve positive results associated with family interaction.
- ◆ Add Comm. 439, *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Facilitator Approval*. Comm. 439 provides direction on the protocol for approving and reapproving family team and youth transition decision-making facilitators.
- ◆ Add Comm. 440, *Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making (FTDM/YTDM) Coaching and Mentoring Guidelines*. Comm. 440 provides direction on the protocol for approving FTDM/YTDM coaches and mentors and identifies the roles and responsibilities of coaches.

Effective Date

Upon receipt.

Material Superseded

This material replaces the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 17, Appendix:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Contents (pages 2 and 3)	December 16, 2011
Contents (page 4)	June 29, 2012
Contents (page 5)	December 16, 2011
Contents (pages 6 and 7)	April 12, 2013
211	December 16, 2011
Comm. 283	3/07
215-217	December 16, 2011
218, 218a	April 12, 2013

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Refer questions about this general letter to your area service administrator.

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Family Interaction Plan General Roles and Responsibilities

Carefully planned family interaction is a powerful family reunification intervention tool. Family interaction can help implement many essential family reunification goals, including:

- Maintaining the parent, child, and sibling relationships,
- Learning and practicing parenting skills,
- Helping family members work through issues and connect to resources, and
- Documenting progress towards reunification goals.

Role of the DHS Worker

- Responsible for ensuring that a written family interaction plan is developed and revised with input from the family team,
- Abide by the *Family Interaction Standards* (Comm. 435),
- Work with the child and parent to help resolve setbacks in the family interaction plan, and
- Stress to all that safety is sole responsibility of the parent.

Role of the Parent

- Ensure safety and well-being of the children,
- Attend family interaction as scheduled and engage in discussion regarding progress and concerns observed in their interactions,
- Call in advance to cancel,
- Be receptive to guidance provided during interactions, and
- Follow family interaction plan.

Role of the Caregiver

Caregivers can be foster parents, resource families, relatives, kinship, suitable others, etc.

- Participate in the family interaction planning process,
- Communicate the daily activities and progress of the child,
- Collaborate with the family team and support the reunification process, and
- Recognize and understand separation and loss and how it affects child well-being.

Role of the Provider

- Abide by the *Family Interaction Standards* (Comm. 435),
- Support and communicate to the parent, caregiver, child, and DHS worker to ensure that family interaction occurs in a safe manner,
- Ensure families are aware of their responsibilities within family interaction planning, and
- Assist families in overcoming barriers to meeting the family interaction goals.



Family Interaction Plan

Background Information

Children's names	Date of initial plan
Placed with	Placement date for children
Why were the children removed from the home?	

Safety Concerns

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Family Interaction Plan (Based on developmental needs of the children and safety concerns.)

Types of Interaction	Frequency	Length of Interaction	Locations	Types of Supervision	Supervised By	Date Reviewed

Goals to be Accomplished During Family Interaction

Desired Behavioral Changes	Demonstrated By	Date Accomplished or Revised

Transportation (Describe how transportation will be provided.)

Expectations of the Family Interaction (To be completed at initial family team decision-making meeting.)

Any behaviors that provide an unsafe situation may terminate a family interaction.

[Family Interaction Plan General Roles and Responsibilities, Form 470-5148](#)

Purpose	The <i>Family Interaction Plan General Roles and Responsibilities</i> , form 470-5148, is the official family interaction plan developed for children placed out of the home. All children who are placed out of the home need to have a family interaction plan in place to ensure interactions occur in safe and healthy ways. The family interaction plan should be tailored to meet the safety needs of the family.
Source	Complete this form on line using the template in the public state-approved forms folder on Outlook. Print or photocopy supplies of the form as needed from the sample in the manual.
Completion	The most effective way of developing or reassessing a family interaction plan is during a family team meeting. The written family interaction plan may be incorporated as part of the family team meeting notes or identified separately on the family interaction plan form. However, not all children placed out of the home will have a family team meeting but family interaction planning should still occur.
Distribution	Give a copy of the completed family interaction plan to the identified team members. Keep the original form in the child's case file.
Data	Background Information. Enter the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Children's names. If multiple children have different needs or safety concerns, the family team may want to consider a separate plan for each child.◆ Date of initial plan. This is the date the first plan was developed.◆ Placed with. Document where the child is placed and with whom. If multiple children are in different places, indicate the type of placement (i.e., resource family, relative, residential placement, etc.).

- ◆ **Placement date for children.** This is the date the child was removed and placed out of the home.
- ◆ **Reason for removal.** Document why the child or children were removed from the home.

Safety Concerns. Enter the safety concerns. The elements to explore when assessing safety include three basic constructs: threats of maltreatment, child vulnerability, and caretaker's protective capacities.

- ◆ **Threats of maltreatment.** The aggravating factors that combine to produce a potentially dangerous situation.
 - Situation (unsafe home, criminal activity)
 - Behavior (impulsive actions, assaults)
 - Emotion (immobilizing depression)
 - Motive (intention to hurt the child)
 - Perception (viewing child as a devil)
 - Capacity (physical disability)
- ◆ **Child vulnerability.** The degree that a child cannot on the child's own avoid, negate or minimize the impact of present or impending danger.
 - **Present danger** means immediate, significant, and clearly observed maltreatment which is occurring to a child in the present or there is an immediate threat of maltreatment requiring immediate action to protect the child.
 - **Impending danger** means a foreseeable state of danger in which family behaviors, attitudes, motives, emotions, or the child's physical environment poses a threat of maltreatment.
- ◆ **Protective capacities.** The family strengths or resources that reduce, control, or prevent threats of maltreatment.
- ◆ **Family Interaction Plan.** The family interaction plan needs to consider the developmental needs of the children and the safety concerns. Frequent and developmentally appropriate family interaction benefits the child emotionally and is the strongest indicator of family reunification and achievement of permanency.

Family interaction should begin as soon as possible after removal from parental custody. At a minimum, interactions should occur within 24 hours of placement, be regular, and of increasing frequency and duration.

- ◆ **Types of interaction.** Document the type of interaction. Creativity in defining interactions should be supported. Every opportunity needs to be considered such as doctor visits, school activities, meetings, and other functions in which the family would have participated if the children were in the home.

Interactions should be built around meaningful activities including:

- Mealtimes,
- Bathing,
- Naptimes,
- Homework time,
- Doctors' appointments,
- School activities,
- Sports activities, and
- Should be geared towards the child's developmental abilities.

Creative planning should not only support face-to-face time but also other methods, such as calls, letters, texting, emails, and other electronic methods of communication. Families should be encouraged to explore other ways to connect and interact with one another.

- ◆ **Frequency and length of interaction.** Document the frequency and length of interaction. In determining how often and how long interactions should be, consider the following:
 - The age of the children.
 - The severity and chronicity of the abuse.
 - The potential for abduction or continued abuse of the children.
 - The progress of the parent in learning new skills or managing inappropriate behaviors, protective capacities displayed by the parent.

- ◆ **Locations of interaction.** Document the location where the interaction will occur.

Family interaction should occur in the least restrictive, most homelike setting that allows for natural interaction and appropriate to meet the child's needs for safety. Generally, the parental, relative, or resource family home will provide the best environment. When safety is an issue, a more secure setting should be chosen and a safety plan developed for the interactions to continue.

Consider the type of interaction as you document the location. For example, if an interaction is built around school activities, sport activities, or doctors' appointments, you would document the location of the event (i.e., school, gymnasium, ball field, doctor office, etc.).

- ◆ **Types of supervision.** Document the type of supervision for the identified interaction. Types of supervision include fully monitored, semi or partially monitored, or no supervision necessary. Supervision can be provided by a professional or other person identified by the team.
- ◆ **Supervised by.** If supervision is required, document who is responsible to provide supervision during interaction. This will be determined by the team. Consideration should be given based on the safety concerns and the developmental needs of the child.

Family interactions are most "natural" when interactions are supported by those with a relationship with the child, such as other family members versus professionals. Family supports can be relied on to assist with all aspects of services including attendance at meetings, role modeling, transportation, observing interactions, etc.

- ◆ **Date reviewed.** Document the date when the plan was reviewed with the family.

Goals. Document the goals to be accomplished during family interaction. Family interaction should focus on allowing the most natural parent-child interactions, such as:

- ◆ Cooking and eating a meal,
- ◆ Reading stories,
- ◆ Cleaning a room,
- ◆ Playing a game,
- ◆ Bath time,
- ◆ Naptime, or
- ◆ Bedtime routines.

The focus is on maintaining ties between the parent and child and assessing the parent's capacity to care for the child.

Goals are the desired behavioral changes to be accomplished during the family interaction. These behavioral changes are most likely related back to the safety concerns as identified by the team.

- ◆ **Desired behavioral changes.** Document the goals to be accomplished during family interaction.
- ◆ **Demonstrated by.** Document how the family and team will know if the goal is accomplished.
- ◆ **Date accomplished or revised.** Document the date when the goal was achieved or revised.

Family interaction needs to be reviewed during a family team decision-making meeting or by those the team identifies, at a minimum, when:

- ◆ There are changes in behavioral patterns demonstrated by the parents or children.
- ◆ Protective provisions that may be a safety concern change or arise.
- ◆ There is a change in family supports.
- ◆ There is a change in legal issues or court requirements (change in custody or guardianship) that may impact family interaction planning.
- ◆ Agreed upon behavioral changes are accomplished or not.

Transportation. Describe how transportation will be provided once individuals who are available to assist in transportation are identified. Transportation is a key component for interactions to be successful.

Resource family and other relative caregivers should be encouraged to transport children at least one way. Parents and extended family members should be expected to arrange their own transportation, though they may be given temporary support when necessary to ensure there is not a gap in family interaction; however, this will likely be accomplished by public transportation. Children in placement may have to be transported by provider or DHS staff, one or both ways to interactions.

Expectations. Expectations are the “nuts and bolts” of family interaction planning. Considerations when setting expectations could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◆ Behaviors that provide an unsafe situation may terminate the interaction. It is important that there is a follow up with the parents in order to reduce the risk for another unsafe situation.
- ◆ The use of physical discipline or threats towards others.
- ◆ Negative comments about others, which includes the children, family members, DHS worker, provider, and other professionals part of the team.
- ◆ Possession or bringing any drug paraphernalia, illicit substances, or alcohol to the interaction.
- ◆ All legal decisions or documents regarding contact, including No Contact Orders, etc. will be abided by all parties.
- ◆ Obtain approval before bringing any additional individuals to family interactions. Approvals are determined by your DHS case manager or family team.



Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making

Meeting Agreement on Confidentiality

A release of information form should be completed with the family for the purpose of a family team decision-making or youth transition decision-making meeting only.

Family/Youth Name	Facilitators
Date	Location

Pursuant to the confidentiality provisions of the Code of Iowa, we the undersigned, agree to keep confidential all personal and identifying information and records regarding the above named child and family except as otherwise provided for via separate and properly executed Releases of Information and in pending juvenile court or other court action.

The plan developed at the Family Team Decision-Making meeting or Youth Transition Decision-Making meeting will be shared with DHS and its contractors, the juvenile court, and legal parties to the Child in Need of Assistance (CINA) case and others present as identified by the family or youth.

Signature of Agreement on Confidentiality	Print Name, Address, Phone Number, and Email	Relationship	Date

Use the back page if needed for additional team members.

[Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Agreement on Confidentiality, Form 470-5149](#)

Purpose	The <i>Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Agreement on Confidentiality</i> is an agreement between all members in attendance to a family team decision-making (FTDM) or youth transition decision-making (YTDM) meeting to keep personal and identifying information confidential.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies of the form as needed from the sample in the manual. DHS workers may also complete this form on line using the template in the public state-approved service forms folder on Outlook.
Completion	FTDM/YTDM facilitators prepare this form before conducting or facilitating a family team or youth transition decision-making meeting.
Distribution	Keep the original form in the child or youth's case file.
Data	The form identifies all team members who participated in the family team or youth transition decision-making meeting agreeing to keep information confidential.

[Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Referral, Form 470-5150](#)

Purpose	The <i>Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Referral</i> is used by the Department worker as a referral form to offer a family team or youth transition decision-making meeting to a child, youth or family.
Source	Complete this form on line using the template in the public state-approved forms folder on Outlook. Print or photocopy supplies of the form as needed from the sample in the manual.
Completion	The Department worker, as the "referral worker," completes the form before making a referral for a family team or youth transition decision-making meeting.
Distribution	Keep the original form in the child or youth's case file.
Data	Date of referral. Enter the date of referral. Referred to. Enter the name of the referral agency that is responsible for assigning an approved facilitator. Referred by. Email. Enter the DHS worker's email address. Phone. Enter the DHS worker's phone number. County. Enter the county name or number. Parent/caregiver/noncustodial parent information. Enter the first and last name, role, phone number, address or email, and race. Child/youth information. Enter the first and last name, placement information, phone number, date of birth in mm/dd/yy format, FACS identification number, state identification number, and race.



Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting Referral

Date of Referral	Referred to	
Referred by		
Email	Phone	County

Parent/Caregiver/Noncustodial Parent Information

Name (last/first)	Role	Phone	Address or Email	Race

Child/Youth Information

Name (last/first)	Placement Information	Phone	Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)	FACS ID #	State ID #	Race

Check the boxes that apply.

Type of referral: FTDM YTDM

Was there a prior FTDM or YTDM? Yes No Date: _____

Are the family and youth aware a facilitator will be calling them? Yes No

Is court involved? Yes No

Is there a *No Contact Order* in place? Yes No
 If yes, between who? _____

Need a translator or interpreter? Yes No Language: _____

Is there a current *Family Interaction Plan* developed and in place? Yes No

Is there a formal documented concurrent plan? Yes No

What is the desired outcome of this meeting?

Potential Team Members

Member	Name	Email	Phone
Ongoing DHS Worker			
FSRP Contractor			
Child's Attorney/GAL			
CASA			
Mother's Attorney			
Father's Attorney			
Parent Partner			
Foster Parent/ Relative Caregiver			
Other/Role			
Other/Role			

When completing this section, consider and assess these safety and risk issues, at a minimum:

- Children are under 5 years of age
- Children have been identified as a victim in the past
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Denial of critical care
- Supervision
- Home environment
- Mental health issues
- Methamphetamine use or manufacturing
- Substance use or abuse (current or history)
- Domestic violence (current or history)
- Sex offender in the home
- Food, clothing, shelter and physical living conditions of the children
- Children in out-of-home placement with relative or nonrelative

Identify and document the safety and risk issues for the youth or family:

Identify and document the cultural needs and any special accommodations that the facilitator should be aware of:

Type of referral. Check whether this is a Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) or a Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) meeting.

Prior FTDM or YTDM. Check yes or no if there was a prior FTDM or YTDM meeting. If yes, enter the date of the prior meeting.

Contact call. Check yes or no if the family or youth are aware that the facilitator will be calling them.

Court involvement. Check yes or no if there is court involvement.

No Contact Order (NCO). Check yes or no if there is a NCO in place. If yes, enter who the NCO is between.

Translator or interpreter. Check yes or no if there is a need for a translator or interpreter. If yes, enter the specific language or interpretation needed.

Family Interaction Plan. Check yes or no if there is a current *Family Interaction Plan* developed and in place.

Concurrent plan. Check yes or no if there is a formal documented concurrent plan.

Desired outcome of this meeting. Enter the desired outcome of this meeting.

Potential team members. Enter the name, email address, and phone number of the potential team members to be invited to the FTDM or YTDM meeting.

Safety and risk issues. Identify and document the safety and risk issues for the youth or family.

NOTE: At a minimum, consider and assess the following:

- ◆ Children under five years of age
- ◆ Children identified as a victim in the past
- ◆ Sexual abuse

- ◆ Physical abuse
- ◆ Denial of critical care
- ◆ Supervision
- ◆ Home environment
- ◆ Mental health issues
- ◆ Methamphetamine use or manufacturing
- ◆ Substance use or abuse (current and history)
- ◆ Domestic violence (current and history)
- ◆ Sex offender in the home
- ◆ Food, clothing, shelter, and physical living conditions of the children
- ◆ Children in out-of-home placement with relative or nonrelative

Cultural needs and special accommodations. Identify and document cultural needs and any special accommodations that the facilitator should be aware of.



Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Meeting Notes Family's Plan

Case Information		
Children's Names		
Parent/Caregiver Name	Parent/Caregiver/Noncustodial Names	
Date of FTDM	Facilitator Name	Facilitator Approval Number
Next Court Hearing Date and Time	Type of Hearing	

Desired Outcomes of this Meeting

Family Functioning Domains

Child Well-Being (things to consider)			
• Physical and mental health	• School performance	• Relationship with siblings	
• Behavior	• Motivation/cooperation to stay with family	• Supports	
• Relationship with peers			
STRENGTHS:			
NEEDS:			
FAMILY/DHS GOAL:			
WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Parental Capabilities (things to consider)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision of children • Mental health • Informal support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary practices • Physical health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental/enrichment • Use of drugs/alcohol 	
STRENGTHS:			
NEEDS:			
FAMILY/DHS GOAL:			
WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Family Safety (things to consider)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical abuse • Neglect of child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual abuse • Domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional abuse 	
STRENGTHS:			
NEEDS:			
FAMILY/DHS GOAL:			
WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Family Interactions (things to consider)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonding with children • Expectations of children • Family interaction planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship between parents/caregivers • Mutual support within the family • Concurrent planning 		
STRENGTHS:			
NEEDS:			
FAMILY/DHS GOAL:			

WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

A written *Family Interaction Plan*, tailored to meet the safety needs of the family is developed or reassessed during a family team meeting involving a child who is placed out of the home to assure family interaction begins as soon as possible after removal from parental custody.

Home Environment (things to consider)

- Housing stability
- Food/nutrition
- Transportation
- Safety in community
- Financial management
- Learning environment
- Habitability of housing
- Personal hygiene
- Income/employment

STRENGTHS:

NEEDS:

FAMILY/DHS GOAL:

WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Other (Discuss concurrent planning/permanency goals, any interstate compact issues, child and family cultural factors, language barriers, or if the Indian Child Welfare Act applies, etc.)

STRENGTHS:

NEEDS:

FAMILY/DHS GOAL:

WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Crisis Plan

Discuss what will be done if some part of the plan breaks down and a crisis happens.

Risk identified and steps to address the risk issues:	By WHEN :	Completed/Ongoing



Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Meeting Notes

Family's Plan

(Notas de la reunión para la toma de decisiones en equipo familiar)

(Plan Familiar)

Datos del caso		
Nombres de los menores		
Nombre del padre/madre/tutor	Nombre del padre/madre/tutor/sin la custodia	
Fecha de la FTDM de de	Nombre del mediador	Autorización N°.
Fecha y hora de la próxima audiencia judicial de de	Tipo de audiencia	

Resultados esperados de la reunión

Áreas del Funcionamiento Familiar

Bienestar de los menores (cosas a considerar)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salud física y mental • Conducta • Relación con los pares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rendimiento escolar • Motivación/cooperación para permanecer con la familia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relación con los hermanos • Apoyo/asistencia 	
FORTALEZAS:			
NECESIDADES:			
OBJETIVO FAMILIAR/DE DHS:			
QUIÉN:	Acuerda hacer QUÉ:	Para CUÁNDO:	FECHA Finalizado/Modificado
		de de	de de
		de de	de de
		de de	de de

Capacidades de los padres (cosas a considerar)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisión de los menores • Salud mental • Apoyo/asistencia informal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prácticas disciplinarias • Salud física 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desarrollo/enriquecimiento • Consumo de drogas/alcohol 	
FORTALEZAS:			
NECESIDADES:			
OBJETIVO FAMILIAR/DE DHS:			
QUIÉN:	Acuerda hacer QUÉ:	Para CUÁNDO:	FECHA Finalizado/Modificado
		de de	de de
		de de	de de
		de de	de de

Seguridad familiar (cosas a considerar)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maltrato físico • Negligencia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuso sexual • Violencia doméstica 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maltrato emocional 	
FORTALEZAS:			
NECESIDADES:			
OBJETIVO FAMILIAR/DE DHS:			
QUIÉN:	Acuerda hacer QUÉ:	Para CUÁNDO:	FECHA Finalizado/Modificado
		de de	de de
		de de	de de
		de de	de de

Interacciones familiares (cosas a considerar)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vínculos afectivos con los hijos • Expectativas con respecto a los hijos • Planificación de interacciones familiares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relación entre los padres/tutores • Apoyo mutuo entre los integrantes de la familia • Planificación simultánea 		
FORTALEZAS:			
NECESIDADES:			
OBJETIVO FAMILIAR/DE DHS:			

QUIÉN:	Acuerda hacer QUÉ:	Para CUÁNDO:	FECHA Finalizado/Modificado
		de de	de de
		de de	de de
		de de	de de

Durante una reunión del equipo familiar, se desarrolla por escrito, o se reevalúa, el *Plan de Interacciones Familiares* correspondiente a un menor que ha sido reubicado fuera de su hogar, el cual es personalizado para satisfacer las necesidades de seguridad de la familia, con el fin de que las interacciones familiares comiencen lo antes posible después de la remoción.

Entorno familiar (cosas a considerar)

- Vivienda estable
- Alimentación/nutrición
- Transporte
- Seguridad en la comunidad
- Administración económica
- Contexto educativo
- Habitabilidad de la vivienda
- Higiene personal
- Ingresos/empleo

FORTALEZAS:

NECESIDADES:

OBJETIVO FAMILIAR/DE DHS:

QUIÉN:	Acuerda hacer QUÉ:	Para CUÁNDO:	FECHA Finalizado/Modificado
		de de	de de
		de de	de de
		de de	de de

Otros (Comente sobre la planificación simultánea o los objetivos de permanencia, temas relacionados con pactos interestatales, factores culturales del menor y su familia, barreras idiomáticas, o si corresponde aplicar la *Ley Indian Child Welfare*, etc.)

FORTALEZAS:

NECESIDADES:

OBJETIVO FAMILIAR/DE DHS:

QUIÉN:	Acuerda hacer QUÉ:	Para CUÁNDO:	FECHA Finalizado/Modificado
		de de	de de
		de de	de de

QUIÉN:	Acuerda hacer QUÉ:	Para CUÁNDO:	FECHA Finalizado/Modificado
		de de	de de

Plan en caso de crisis

Explique qué se hará si parte del plan fracasa y se produce una crisis.

Riesgo identificado y acciones para resolverlo:	Para CUÁNDO:	Finalizado/Continúa
	de de	

Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Meeting Notes, Form 470-4126 or 470-4126(S)

Purpose The *Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Meeting Notes*, form 470-4126 or 470-4126(S), is the official family plan developed during the family team meeting.

Source Complete either the English or Spanish version of this form on line using the templates in the public state-approved forms folder on Outlook.

Print or photocopy supplies of the English or Spanish version of this form as needed from the samples in the manual.

Completion The FTDM facilitator engages the family team and develops the family's plan after a family team meeting is held.

Distribution The facilitator gives a copy of the completed form to the identified team members. Keep the original form in the child's case file.

Data **Case Information.** Enter the following information:

- ◆ Child or children's name or names
- ◆ Parent or caregiver's name
- ◆ Parent, caregiver or noncustodial parent's name
- ◆ Date of the Family Team Decision-Making meeting
- ◆ Facilitator's name
- ◆ Facilitator's approval number
- ◆ Next court hearing date and time
- ◆ Type of hearing

Desired Outcomes of this Meeting. Enter the desired outcome of the meeting.

Family Functioning Domains. The family functioning domains provide a consistent format for collecting, considering, and analyzing information about children and families. This consistency ensures that functioning areas most critically impacting safety, permanency, and well-being are addressed and targeted for service intervention. Use of the domains creates a common, consistent language as information about children and families flows from child protective workers to ongoing workers and service providers.

The domains provide a “common lens” through which the strengths and needs of the child and family can be assessed, discussed, and used in planning and service provision.

The family functioning domains consist of the following broad areas of functioning (each domain area has related subcategories):

- ◆ Child Well-Being
 - Child’s physical and mental health,
 - Behavior,
 - Relationship with peers,
 - School performance,
 - Motivation and cooperation to stay with family,
 - Relationship with caregivers,
 - Relationship with siblings, and
 - Supports.
- ◆ Parental Capabilities
 - Supervision of children,
 - Mental health,
 - Informal supports,
 - Disciplinary practices,
 - Physical health,
 - Developmental and enrichment activities, and
 - Use of drugs or alcohol.
- ◆ Family Safety
 - Physical abuse,
 - Neglect of a child,
 - Sexual abuse,
 - Domestic violence, or
 - Emotional abuse.
- ◆ Family Interactions
 - Bonding with child,
 - Expectations of children,
 - Family interaction planning,
 - Relationship between parents or caregivers, and
 - Mutual support within the family.

NOTE: A written Family Interaction Plan, tailored to meet the safety needs of the family is developed and/or reassessed during a family team meeting involving a child who is placed out of the home to assure family interaction begins as soon as possible after removal from parental custody.

◆ Home Environment

- Housing stability,
- Food and nutrition,
- Transportation,
- Safety in community,
- Financial management,
- Learning environment,
- Habitability of housing,
- Personal hygiene, and
- Income and employment.

◆ **Other.** Additional issues or concerns about the child or family.

NOTE: Discuss concurrent planning and permanency goals, any interstate compact issues, child and family cultural factors, language barriers, or if the Indian Child Welfare Act applies.

Complete the family functioning domain section of the FTDM family plan by working through each domain category. Consider the child and family's strengths and needs in the various domain areas as you have discussions during the family team meeting. Fill in the narrative "strengths" and "needs" section of each applicable domain. Needs in any domain should be related to and discussed within the context of how the needs affect child safety, permanency, or well-being.

Establish a goal for each applicable domain area where a need is identified. It is critical that goals be developed in partnership with the family. Goal statements should be strength-based and focused on achieving the outcomes essential for safety, permanency, and well-being.

After reviewing the strengths, needs, and goals for each domain area, identify the strategies, services, and informal supports that may be helpful to achieving the goals.

- ◆ In each domain area where goals are identified, list the steps necessary to bring about the changes needed to accomplish the goal for that domain. The steps should clearly identify:
 - Who is responsible,
 - What do they agree to do, and
 - By when.
- ◆ Document the date for when the goal was completed or modified.

Crisis Plan. Identify and discuss what will be done if some part of the plan breaks down and a crisis happens.

Identify the risks and necessary steps needed to address the risk. The steps should clearly identify when and dated when completed or if ongoing.

Signatures and Notifications. Enter the name of invited team members, including their role, contact information, and check whether or not they attended the family team meeting.

Waiting Child Enrollment, Form 470-3351

Purpose	Form 470-3351 is used to enroll a child available for adoption with Iowa KidsNet. The information contained in the form allows Iowa KidsNet to register a child on our web site, compose the child's biography, and register the child with AdoptUsKids, if desired. (See AdoptUsKids Website Waiver, Form 470-4155 , if you do not want your child listed on AdoptUsKids.)
Source	It is preferred that this form be completed electronically.
Completion	<p>The child's adoption worker completes a copy of this form after a child's parental rights have been terminated and the child needs to be listed with Iowa KidsNet to recruit an adoptive family. If you have a sibling group to list with Iowa KidsNet, please complete a separate enrollment form for each child in the sibling group.</p> <p>If a child remains listed with Iowa KidsNet one year or longer, complete an update of the enrollment form each year or more frequently if there is a significant change in the child's circumstances.</p>
Distribution	<p>Fax, mail, or e-mail the completed form to:</p> <p>Iowa KidsNet Attn: Della Degner 3125 Cottage Grove Avenue Des Moines, IA 50311 ddegner@iowakidsnet.com Fax: 515-271-7450 Phone: 515-271-7399</p> <p>Place a completed copy of the <i>Waiting Child Enrollment</i> form in the child's case record.</p>

[Youth Transition Decision-Making \(YTDM\) Meeting Notes, Form 470-5161](#)

Purpose	The <i>Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Meeting Notes</i> , form 470-5161, is the official youth plan developed during the YTDM team meeting.
Source	Complete this form on line using the template in the public state-approved forms folder on Outlook or print or photocopy supplies from the sample in the manual.
Completion	The YTDM facilitator engages the youth team and develops the youth's plan, with the youth, after a family team meeting is held.
Distribution	The facilitator disseminates the completed form to the identified team members. Keep the original form in the youth's case file.
Data	<p>Case Information. Enter the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Youth's name◆ Parent/caregiver name (if applicable)◆ Parent/caregiver/noncustodial names◆ Date of the youth transition decision-making meeting◆ Facilitator's name◆ Facilitator's approval number◆ Next court hearing date and time◆ Type of hearing <p>Desired Outcomes of this Meeting. Enter the desired outcome of the meeting.</p> <p>Fostering Connections. The five fostering connections areas provide a consistent format for collecting, considering, and analyzing information about the youth. This consistency ensures that functioning areas most critically impacting health, housing, education, employment, and supportive relationships. Use of the five areas creates a common, consistent language as information about the youth flows from child protective workers to ongoing workers and service providers.</p> <p>The five areas provide a "common lens" through which the strengths and needs of the youth can be assessed, discussed, and used in planning and service provision.</p>



Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Meeting Notes Youth's Plan

Case Information

Youth Name		
Parent/Caregiver Name	Parent/Caregiver/Noncustodial Names	
Date of YTDM	Facilitator Name	Facilitator Approval Number
Next Court Hearing Date and Time	Type of Hearing	

Desired Outcomes of this Meeting

Fostering Connections

Education (things to consider)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation date • Academic performance • GED, high school diploma • IEP or other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extracurricular activities • Job training options • I-JAG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College visits/applications • Financial aid applications • ACT/SAT/COMPASS 	
STRENGTHS:			
NEEDS:			
GOAL:			
WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Employment (things to consider)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Dress for success • Vocational rehabilitation/Iowa Works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application/interview skills • Maintaining employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop resume • Informal support 	
STRENGTHS:			
NEEDS:			
GOAL:			
WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Health (things to consider)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance cards: medical/dental/vision • Medication management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to physician • SSI • Physical health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hygiene • Mental health • Reproductive health 	
STRENGTHS:			
NEEDS:			
GOAL:			
WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Housing (things to consider)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe, affordable, and stable • Current housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 18 • SAL 		
STRENGTHS:			
NEEDS:			
GOAL:			

WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Supportive Relationships (things to consider)

- Aftercare
- AMP
- Family interaction plan
- Healthy family connections
- Adult services
- Community/church connections
- Peers
- Permanency pact
- Mentors

STRENGTHS:

NEEDS:

GOAL:

WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Other (Discuss financial management, life skills, vital documents: birth certificate, Social Security card, driver's license or state picture ID, Selective Service, healthcare proxy, etc.)

STRENGTHS:

NEEDS:

GOAL:

WHO:	Agrees to do WHAT:	By WHEN:	DATE Completed/Modified

Crisis Plan

Discuss what will be done if some part of the plan breaks down and a crisis happens.

Risk identified and steps to address the risk issues:	By WHEN :	Completed/Ongoing

The five fostering connections areas consist of the following broad areas of functioning (each area has related subcategories):

- ◆ **Education.** Academic performance, graduation date, GED or high school diploma, extracurricular activities, job training options, IEP, financial aid, ACT/SAT/COMPASS tests.
- ◆ **Employment.** Transportation needs, dressing for success, vocational rehabilitation, application and interview skills, maintaining employment, resume, informal support.
- ◆ **Health.** Insurance cards (medical, dental, vision), access to a physician, medication management, SSI, physical health, hygiene, mental health, reproductive health.
- ◆ **Housing.** Safe, affordable and stable, after 18, SAL, PAL, current housing.
- ◆ **Supportive Relationships.** Aftercare, healthy family connections, peers, AMP, adult services, permanency pact, community connections, mentors, church.
- ◆ **Other.** Discuss financial management, life skills, vital documents (birth certificate, Social Security card, driver's license or state picture identification, Selective Service, healthcare proxy, etc.).

NOTE: Discuss concurrent planning and permanency goals, any interstate compact issues, child and family cultural factors, language barriers, or if the Indian Child Welfare Act applies.

Complete the fostering connections section of the YTDM youth plan by working through each category. Consider the youth's strengths and needs in the various areas as you have discussions during the youth's transition team meeting. Fill in the narrative "strengths" and "needs" section of each applicable area. Needs in any area should be related to and discussed within the context of how the needs affect the youth's well-being.

Establish a goal for each applicable area where a need is identified. It is critical that goals be developed in partnership with the youth. Goal statements should be strength-based and focused on achieving the outcomes essential for the youth.

After reviewing the strengths, needs, and goals for each area, identify the strategies, services, and informal supports that may be helpful to achieving the goals.

- ◆ In each area where goals are identified, list the steps necessary to bring about the changes needed to accomplish the goal for that domain. The steps should clearly identify:
 - Who is responsible,
 - What do they agree to do, and
 - By when.
- ◆ Document the date for when the goal was completed or modified.

Crisis Plan. Identify and discuss what will be done if some part of the plan breaks down and a crisis happens.

Identify the risks and necessary steps needed to address the risk. The steps should clearly identify when and dated when completed or if ongoing.

Signatures and Notifications. Enter the name of invited team members, including their role, contact information, and whether or not they attended the YTDM meeting.



Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Youth's Dream Path

Case Information

Youth Name

Parent/Caregiver Name

Parent/Caregiver/Noncustodial Names

Date of YTDM

Next YTDM Meeting

Facilitator Name

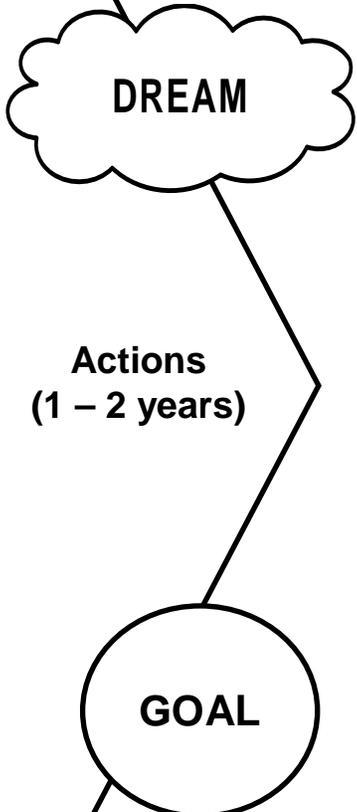
Facilitator Approval Number

Next Court Hearing Date and Time

Type of Hearing

Desired Outcomes of this Meeting

The Dream Path

Now	What will happen	Who will help me	0 – 3 months	4 – 9 months	Date:
Education					 <p style="text-align: center;">DREAM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Actions (1 – 2 years)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GOAL</p>
Employment					
Health					
Housing					
Supportive Relationships					
Plan B					

[Youth Transition Decision-Making \(YTDM\) Youth's Dream Path, Form 470-5176](#)

Purpose	The <i>Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Youth's Dream Path</i> , form 470-5176, is the official model to use during the YTDM meeting.
Source	Complete the form on line using the template in the public state-approved forms folder on Outlook. Print or photocopy supplies of the form as needed from the sample in the manual.
Completion	The YTDM facilitator develops the youth's dream path, in collaboration with the youth, after a youth transition decision-making meeting is held.
Distribution	The facilitator gives a copy of the completed form to the identified team members. Keep the original form in the youth's case file.
Data	<p>Case Information. Enter the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Youth name◆ Parent/caregiver name◆ Parent/caregiver/noncustodial names◆ Date of the meeting◆ Date of the next YTDM meeting◆ Facilitator name and approval number◆ Next court hearing date and time◆ Type of hearing◆ Action plan <p>Desired Outcome of this Meeting. Use the Dream Path as a tool for the stabilization and action planning parts of the YTDM meeting.</p> <p>The Dream Path includes the stabilization phase which identifies the five Fostering Connection areas that need to be addressed and stabilized in the first column.</p>

The five Fostering Connections areas are:

- ◆ Education
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Health
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Supportive Relationships

Complete the stabilization section of the YTDM youth plan by working through each of the five fostering connections categories from left to right. Under the column, "What will happen," establish a goal for each applicable area where a need is identified. It is critical that goals be developed in partnership with the youth. Goal statements should be strength-based and focused on achieving the outcomes essential for the youth.

After reviewing the strengths, needs, and goals for each area, identify the "Who will help me" (services or supports that may be helpful) to achieving the goals.

In each category list the action steps needed to achieve the goal. The steps should clearly identify:

- ◆ If youth is in agreement;
- ◆ Who is responsible;
- ◆ What do they agree to do; and
- ◆ By when, which is documented under either the 0 to 3 months column or the 4 to 9 months column.

Crisis Plan (Plan B). Identify and discuss what will be done if some part of the plan breaks down and a crisis happens.

Identify the risks and necessary steps needed to address the risk. The steps should clearly identify when and dated when completed or if ongoing.

To move into the Dream Path phase. Each YTDM meeting begins with a review of the five Fostering Connections areas to determine if changes or adaptations need to be made. Once the youth has achieved stability, the longer range planning can begin. The 'Dream' written in the 'cloud' on the far right of the document is reviewed and steps are determined to head in that direction. Action plans are developed with a six to nine months' time frame.

Each additional meeting of the team can look ahead further. The youth will be fully listened to and have input every step of the way. If there is disagreement, take the time to discuss the issue and resolve it before moving forward.

Each meeting covers strengths of the youth and a review of the previous assignments. A new Plan B will be established each meeting as well. Completion of the YTDM process is determined by the youth and the team. It can continue informally after the youth ages out of the system, if desired.

How long will the meeting take?

The meeting usually takes 90 minutes to 2 hours. How long the meeting lasts depends on what needs to be done.

Will my children be at the meeting?

Children care about what happens in their family. Children are usually invited to the family team meeting because they have important things to say about what they would like to see happen.

You and your facilitator will decide if your children will be part of your family team meeting. Sometimes children do not attend or come for only part of the meeting, especially if they are younger.

If I have questions, who do I ask?

Contact your DHS ongoing social worker if you have questions.



Comm. 265 (Rev. 9/13)

Family Team Decision-Making Meetings

What is Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM)?

Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) is a way for the family to work together with the Department to make plans and decisions about how to help the family. It draws upon a family's strengths, experiences, knowledge, and resources to create a plan that provides for the safety and well-being of children in the family.

There will be a meeting scheduled that involves people who care about you and want you and your family to do well.

Who comes to the meeting?

The meeting may involve your family, other relatives, friends, church members, or others in the community. You and your DHS ongoing social worker will determine whom to invite. The meeting may also involve people from the community who provide services to you and your family, like a family counselor.

An approved FTDM facilitator will lead the meeting.

What happens before the meeting?

- Your FTDM facilitator will meet with you and your family to describe what the meeting will be like and ask you what you would like to see happen as a result of the meeting.
- You will be asked, "At the end of this meeting, what would you like your family team to have accomplished?"

You and your facilitator will:

- Start to list strengths your family has that can be used to make things better.
- Make a plan on how your story will be shared at the meeting.
- Decide if you want to tell your family story at the meeting.
- Make a list of people you want to invite to the meeting.
- Decide on a time and place where you would feel comfortable having the meeting.

- Think about creative ways to solve any problems in getting the people together. For example, arranging child care or finding a ride to the meeting.

What happens at the meeting?

Family team meetings begin with the team members being introduced to each other. Next, the facilitator explains the purpose of the meeting and your family team develops rules for the meeting.

After that, your family story will be shared so that everyone knows the same information.

You and your team will then talk about your family strengths and how to use them to make things better.

Your team may choose to brainstorm what to do.

You and your team will create your family plan to address your goals and family needs.

¿Cuánto tiempo durará la reunión?

Generalmente, la reunión dura entre 90 minutos y 2 horas. La duración de la reunión depende de los problemas que se deban resolver.

¿Mis hijos estarán en la reunión?

A los niños les interesa lo que pasa en su familia. Normalmente, se invita a los niños a las reuniones del equipo familiar porque tienen cosas importantes para decir sobre lo que les gustaría que ocurriera.

Usted y el mediador decidirán si sus hijos participarán en las reuniones del equipo familiar. A veces, los niños no van a las reuniones o van sólo a una parte de la reunión, especialmente si son pequeños.

¿A quién le pregunto si tengo dudas?

Comuníquese con su asistente social de DHS si desea hacer preguntas.



Comm. 265(S) (Rev. 9/13)

Family Team Decision-Making Meetings

**(Reuniones
para la toma de
decisiones en
equipo familiar)**

¿Qué es *Family Team Decision-Making* (FTDM)?

La toma de decisiones en equipo familiar (FTDM, por su sigla en inglés) es una manera de que la familia y el Departamento trabajen juntos para planificar y decidir cómo ayudar a la familia. Se utilizan las fortalezas, las experiencias, los conocimientos y los recursos familiares para crear un plan, con el fin de brindarles seguridad y bienestar a los niños de dicha familia.

Se programará una reunión con gente que se interesa por usted y desea que usted y su familia estén bien.

¿Quiénes van a la reunión?

En la reunión pueden participar su familia, otros parientes, amigos, miembros de la iglesia u otras personas de la comunidad. Usted y su asistente social de DHS decidirán a quién invitar. También pueden participar personas de la comunidad que les presten servicios a usted y a su familia, como un terapeuta familiar.

Un mediador acreditado en FTDM dirigirá la reunión.

¿Qué se hace antes de la reunión?

- El mediador en FTDM se reunirá con usted y su familia para explicarles cómo será la reunión y preguntarles qué les gustaría que suceda como resultado de la reunión.
- Les preguntará: “¿Qué les gustaría que el equipo familiar logre al final de la reunión?”

Usted y el mediador:

- Harán un listado de las fortalezas que posee su familia y que se pueden utilizar para que las cosas mejoren.
- Planearán la manera en que se contará su historia familiar en la reunión.
- Decidirán si será usted quien cuente su historia familiar en la reunión.
- Harán un listado de la gente que usted desea invitar a la reunión.
- Decidirán un horario y un lugar que le sea conveniente para realizar la reunión.

- Pensarán maneras creativas para resolver los problemas y que todos puedan asistir a la reunión. Por ejemplo, conseguir niñera o transporte.

¿Qué ocurrirá durante la reunión?

Las reuniones del equipo familiar comienzan con la presentación de los integrantes del equipo. Después, el mediador explica el propósito de la reunión y el equipo establece las reglas para el desarrollo de la reunión.

A continuación, se contará su historia familiar para que todos compartan la misma información.

Luego, usted y el equipo conversarán sobre las fortalezas de su familia y cómo se podrían utilizar para que las cosas mejoren.

El equipo podría hacer una puesta en común de ideas para decidir qué hacer.

Usted y el equipo crearán su plan familiar para lograr sus objetivos y resolver los problemas familiares.

Comm. 265 or Comm. 265(S), Family Team Decision-Making Meetings

Purpose	Comm. 265 or Comm. 265(S), <i>Family Team Decision-Making Meetings</i> , informs families on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Family team decision-making meetings,◆ Who is invited to these meetings,◆ What happens before these meetings,◆ What happens at these meetings, and◆ Who to contact should they have any questions.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies of Comm. 265 or Comm. 265(S) as needed from the sample in the manual.
Distribution	Give or mail Comm. 265 or Comm. 265(S) to families.

Comm. 283, Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Standards Handbook

Purpose	The <i>Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Standards Handbook</i> provides a set of standards and practice guidance to achieve positive results associated with the family team and youth transition decision-making process. These standards were developed to ensure that every family is offered the opportunity to participate in the FTDM and YTDM process unless the family is unwilling or doing so would place a family member in danger.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies of the handbook as needed from the sample in the manual.
Completion	DHS workers may access this set of standards and practice guidance to aid in understanding the family team decision-making and youth transition decision-making process.



Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Standards

Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) is both a philosophy and a practice strategy for delivering child welfare services. The Department of Human Services (DHS) child welfare focus is on serving families with children at serious risk of harm from abuse and neglect. Building teams at the time of crisis to support families where there is a risk of serious harm to the child has been identified as a means to address the factors that:

- Threaten the child's safety,
- Establish permanency for the child, and
- Promote well-being which are central expectations in the provision of child welfare services.

The FTDM process can be used to enhance the core strength based casework functions of:

- Family engagement,
- Assessment,
- Service planning,
- Monitoring, and
- Coordination resulting in a FTDM family plan.

When properly applied, the FTDM process:

- Supports a trust-based relationship,
- Facilitates family engagement, and
- Sustains the family's interest and involvement in a change process.

Within the context of practice, family team meetings allow for:

- Regular monitoring of the case plan,
- Ongoing evaluation of benchmarks and goals,
- What is working and what is not working so that intervention strategies can be changed or modified as circumstances change.

The outcomes of the family team meetings are:

- Child and family stability,
- Safety,
- Permanency, and
- Well-being during the family's involvement with the Department and following case closure.

The FTDM process promotes unity of effort and provides an opportunity for all helping professionals to develop a shared understanding of the family's situation, which are critical elements in attaining positive results. The FTDM process should be a proportional response to the needs of the child and family that is coordinated across systems involved with the family. The FTDM process provides an opportunity to build an informal network of friends and family that can provide support during and after the family's involvement with DHS.

For those youth transitioning into adulthood the Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) model will be used. The model has two key components: Engagement/Stabilization and the Dream Path process to promote self-sufficiency.

YTDM applies the FTDM process, philosophy, and practice strategy for youth transitioning into adulthood. Building teams to support youth and young adults who are at risk of homelessness, unemployment, and poor health has been identified as an effective means to address the factors that threaten a successful transition.

YTDM can be used to enhance core casework functions of:

- Youth engagement,
- Assessment,
- Service planning,
- Monitoring, and
- Coordination.

When properly facilitated, the YTDM planning process:

- Supports a trust-based relationship,
- Facilitates youth engagement, and
- Sustains the youth's interest and involvement in a successful transition process.

YTDM provides a positive and action-oriented response by caring adults and professionals to address the needs and desires of the youth. The YTDM planning process will help the worker complete case plans through a youth-adult partnership approach. Planning for education, employment, health, support networks, and housing will all be addressed throughout the process.

In order to achieve positive results associated with the FTDM and YTDM process; this set of standards and practice guidance was developed in collaboration with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and external stakeholders to ensure that every family is offered the opportunity to participate in the FTDM and YTDM process unless the family is unwilling or to do so at this time would place a family member in danger.

*** All standards are applicable for FTDMs and YTDMs; however, some of the standards require specialized attention when facilitating a YTDM. When YTDMs require specialized attention, those will be italicized and starred (**).*

Standard 1: Team members keep personal and private details of the family confidential to ensure privacy and demonstrate respect for the family.

Creating a safe environment in which personal information may be shared without fear of redissemination is a critical element in building trust and openness in the FTDM process. The facilitator discusses privacy and confidentiality with the family and participants during the preparatory phase. All team members must sign a confidentiality agreement before participating in the meeting. The facilitator explains the importance of privacy and confidentiality at the start of the meeting, and stresses this again at its conclusion. All team members are informed of the following exceptions to maintaining confidentiality that would be reported as mandated by law:

- New allegations of suspected child abuse or neglect;
- A belief that the individual intends to harm himself; or
- A belief that a person intends to bring harm to others.

Founded child abuse report information shall not be shared at family team meetings due to child abuse confidentiality laws. {Legal reference: Iowa Code Section 235A.15(2)}. A person who receives child abuse information may not give that information to another person unless permitted by law. {Legal reference: Iowa Code Section 235A.17(1)}. The purpose of the FTDM process is not to discuss the details of the *Child Protective Services Assessment Summary* but to address underlying needs and build on strengths.

The family signs an acknowledgement that the FTDM family plan developed at the family team meeting will be shared with DHS and its contractors, the juvenile court, and legal parties to the Child in Need of Assistance (CINA) case. The family is given the option of permitting the facilitator to share the FTDM family plan with others who are present at the meeting. When the family does not permit dissemination of the FTDM family plan to those who have identified responsibilities in carrying out the FTDM family plan, the facilitator ensures that the individuals understand what their role is in supporting the family as described in the plan.

*** For YTDM, the facilitator will make sure the youth understands that their YTDM plan may become a part of their Case Permanency Plan. ***

Standard 2: Preparation of all participants including children and youth when appropriate, custodial parents, noncustodial and parents not residing in the home, as well as, other key identified supports is required for successful family team decision-making (FTDM).

The initial phase of the FTDM process is to support the development of a positive, trusting working relationship with family and other team members. The preparation phase of the FTDM process is separate from actual facilitation of the family team meeting. The time necessary to complete preparation will depend on individualized family needs. The facilitator preferably begins the preparation process through a face-to-face visit, whenever feasible or appropriate, and at a minimum through, phone calls. Advance preparation is necessary for successful family team meetings. Participants are more effective in raising their concerns and proposing solutions when they understand the purpose of the meeting, and have time to prepare for their role in the meeting.

Through preparation for the family team meeting, the facilitator learns more about the family and their strengths, as well as, their desired outcomes for the family team meeting. The facilitator is a carrier, not creator, of information.

The facilitator will address any needs for the family at the meeting such as:

- The need for an interpreter,
- Including participants through a conference call,
- Transportation assistance,
- Child care during the meeting, or
- To exclude certain individuals from part or all of the meeting (for reasons such as domestic violence).

Outline of Facilitator's Roles and Responsibilities in Preparation

The facilitator shall discuss the following with the parents:

- Confidentiality and privacy with the participants;
- The philosophy and purpose of the FTDM process;
- The reason for the family team meeting, which could include family interaction planning (ensure that the family understands);
- The family's perspective on what brought them to DHS attention;
- The family's strengths and challenges;
- The family dynamics to understand and respect the unique culture of the family;
- Identification of formal and informal supports who will assist in achieving outcomes; and
- The location and time for the family team meeting.

The facilitator shall discuss with the social worker:

- Any other potential participants for consideration;
- Their desired outcome of the meeting; and
- Potential conflicts and any non-negotiables.

The facilitator shall discuss with other participants:

- The philosophy and purpose of the FTDM process;
- Their role within the FTDM process;
- Potential conflicts; and
- The value of their participation in the FTDM process.

*** For YTDM, the preparation process shifts from the family and parents to focus specifically on the youth in transition to adulthood. The youth partners with the facilitator in a leadership role. The preparation interview is used to:*

- *Explain the mission and principles of the YTDM planning process,*
- *Explain the various planning tools used, and*
- *Establish a list of individuals that the youth feels close to and may want to invite as part of the youth's team while including the Department worker, juvenile court officer, and guardian ad litem.*

This preparation process also supports the youth as they begin to prepare an "All About Me" or youth story that highlights the youth's strengths and interests.

The facilitator shall discuss with the youth:

- *Which tools they wish to use and the parts of the gathering they wish to lead,*
- *How the team should be assembled to provide support during youth transition, and*
- *How the action plan will be developed with identified roles and responsibilities.*

YTDMs may also require determination of what the youth needs to fully participate in the meeting, such as:

- *Additional face-to-face preparation,*
- *Transportation,*
- *Child care,*
- *A reminder call,*
- *An interpreter,*
- *A peer support, and*
- *Other related supports. ***

Standard 3: The family is engaged throughout the family team decision-making process with focus on case planning, coordination, communication, and accountability.

Family engagement is the ongoing process of developing and maintaining a mutually beneficial, trust-based relationship that empowers and respects the family and sustains their interest and participation in a necessary and time-limited change process. Diligent effort is made to join with the family and the family's natural supports throughout the FTDM process to ensure that needs are met and child safety and well-being are assured. Successful and productive relationships with families are earned over time through repeated, positive contacts that develop trust. Family members should be allowed opportunity to define who their family team meeting includes so that the circle will be widened as completely as possible to include those with a relationship with the child or with other members of the family team. This process begins at the preparation meetings and is ongoing.

The facilitator is responsible for implementing family engagement strategies, including the following:

- The family is treated with genuineness, empathy, and respect;
- The Department's concern and reason for involvement is stated clearly, directly, and honestly;
- The family has an opportunity to tell their story of "what brought them to the attention of the Department";
- The team engages the family around a shared concern for the safety of the child and well-being of the family;
- The family achieves a clear understanding of the safety and risk issues for the child;
- The family is empowered to identify and define what it can do for itself and where the family or individual members need help;
- The team focus is on family strengths (e.g., culture, traditions, values, and lifestyles) as building blocks for services and family needs as a catalyst for service delivery; and
- The family develops natural supports that will enhance the family's capacity and build a circle of support that will see the family through difficult times.

The 'art' of practice within the FTDM process is a careful balance that includes a demonstrated respect for the family, the expectation that change will occur, and overseeing accountability for that change.

The FTDM process engages the family in the process of identifying and establishing supports, both formal and informal to help the family achieve outcomes. For a family team meeting to be successful the child, the family, its informal supports, and all involved helping professionals must be viewed as full, participating team members, further increasing the family engagement into the process. By having all services and supports present at family team meetings, all contributors are aware of and in agreement with the plan, understand their role and how it relates to that of other contributors, and know what others expect of them. This mutual understanding helps to assure unity of effort and improves the effectiveness of team functioning.

All team members should be present whenever major decisions are made. All team members should commit to attendance for the entire length of the family team meeting, which is usually on average 90 minutes to 2 hours, but the length of time may vary depending on individualized family needs. Periodic assessment of the team composition should be made to determine if the composition is adequate to meet the planning and resource needs of the family.

The focus of family team meetings is to enhance the core casework processes of:

- Family engagement,
- Communication,
- Functional assessment,
- Service planning,
- Monitoring,
- Evaluation of results, and
- Provide input into key decisions affecting child safety, permanency, well-being, and sustainable family changes.

The family team is the framework for child welfare and child protection resolutions, rather than the Department of Human Services. The FTDM process promotes a spirit of shared responsibility to the safety and well-being of children and families by engaging extended family, kin, professionals from other disciplines, and other community members.

Family team meetings are formed, convened, and function to produce the FTDM family plan and the family case permanency plan. Family team meetings are reconvened throughout the duration of DHS involvement with the family. Families remain engaged throughout the process. Using the FTDM process the team works to determine behavior changes within the family that will assist in determining when goals have been met and when conditions for safe case closure exist. This will be planned and discussed with the team members early in the process.

Family team meetings provide an opportunity to regularly assess and monitor the effectiveness of services and interventions while continuing the ongoing process of family engagement and assessment. If services or interventions are found to be unsuccessful or unresponsive, the family team has an opportunity to modify the FTDM family plan to meet the family's changing needs. When progress is slow or the prognosis for reunification is declining, the family team can play an important role in helping families understand, accept, and participate in concurrent planning and the necessary permanency decisions.

The above strategies can help to build accountability while maintaining a balance between family-centered practice and the necessary protective authority of DHS and the juvenile court system in ensuring child safety, permanency, and well-being.

While services may not always be delivered as requested by the family, services are to be delivered in a manner that reflects partnership between DHS and the family.

Family team meetings should occur at critical junctures throughout the *Life of the Case* (LOC). These include:

- The development of the FTDM family plan for each case;
NOTE: In cases where removal has occurred, efforts will be made to hold a family team meeting before or directly following the date of the removal;
- When case progress indicates a need for concurrent planning;
- When benchmarks and goals are not achieved (determine a need to reassess services and supports, interventions, etc.);
- When placement changes, level of care changes, or permanency decisions are made;
- Youth led team 90 days before turning age 18 in addition to any other meetings held; and
- Before safe case closure to plan for sustainability.

In addition to the above, there may be requests for a family team meeting to be held to address a specific issue. Every attempt should be made to accommodate requests as possible.

The team helps the family identify, develop, and sustain informal supports. The process of recruiting and maintaining informal supports begins at the case onset, is ongoing, and should be reassessed periodically by the team. The core principle is that the FTDM family plan is a collaborative plan between the family system and the child welfare system that both have agreed will address the issues and both will collaborate to implement.

*** For YTDM, engage the team around a shared desire for supports and services to be in place when formal services are no longer provided. This provides an opportunity for a successful transition into adulthood, including the safety, well-being, and happiness of the youth. Discuss the critical issues that the youth wishes to address. Help the youth and team achieve a clear understanding of the steps that need to be taken to assure a safe and successful transition and stability in health, housing, employment, education, and supportive relationships through establishing team member's responsibilities and timelines.*

Youth should be encouraged to invite a peer who is able to advocate for the youth to be a part of the team. Critical junctures as to when YTDM are appropriate include:

- A youth in care reaches age 16 and a referral is made to begin transition planning; or*
- A youth is between age 16 and 21 and an YTDM has not yet been established, but the youth agrees to participate in the process and a referral is made. ***

<p>Standard 4: Cultural dynamics of the child and family are identified and accommodated through adjustments in strategies, services, and supports for the family in the family team decision-making process.</p>
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Cultural competence means the ability of individuals and systems to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and faiths or religions in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, tribes, and communities, and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

Successful cultural competence includes:

- A basic understanding of the values and beliefs within the culture coupled with eliciting information from the child and family about traditions, cultural beliefs, behaviors, and functioning;
- Demonstration of values and attitudes that promote mutual respect;
- Communication styles that reflect sensitivity and competence to the values and beliefs of others;
- Accommodations in the physical environment including settings, materials, and resources that are culturally and linguistically responsive;
- Acknowledgement of the role of race, ethnicity, economic status, spirituality, and culture play in families lives; and
- Demonstration of a genuine interest in the family's culture and an understanding of how that culture has been historically treated by the dominant culture.

The facilitator of a family team meeting should possess a level of competence and understanding of the culture in which the family has gained its understanding of child rearing practices. Families who speak languages other than English may require greater preparation in advance of meetings and cultural accommodations such as through the use of interpreters or co-facilitators who speak the language to ensure their full participation in a family team meeting.

Accommodations should be made to meet the special needs of the child or family through the team formation. Examples of such circumstances include cases where the family does not speak English or is not part of the majority culture. Additional team members may be needed to provide support to a child or to help team members manage behaviors and make a positive contribution. When special circumstances exist, it may be necessary to involve an individual who has specialized knowledge and skills. For example, someone who is a member of the family's culture or ethnic group could be a team member, co-facilitator, or as a support person for a team member.

<p>Standard 5: Family team meetings are facilitated by a person who has the training, knowledge, skills, and abilities to guide the family team.</p>

The facilitator may be a:

- DHS staff member, case manager or supervisor;
- Provider staff;
- Community partnership staff;
- Family support staff;
- Parent partner; or
- Others trained to facilitate family team meetings.

Efforts must be made to maintain continuity of the facilitator in successive meetings.

It is important to select the most appropriate and effective facilitator for the family based on the presenting circumstances and is best to use a neutral facilitator. There may be some situations where a positive, trusting relationship exists, and the family may be comfortable and agree to someone associated with the case (case manager, supervisor, provider, etc.) conducting the family team meeting. Each situation should be considered individually to ensure the choice of facilitator is respectful of the family's needs and wishes.

Initial classroom training establishes the foundation for FTDM implementation and facilitation. There will be one approved standard three day curriculum for facilitators to complete. Approved trainers may include supplemental training as appropriate.

FTDM facilitator skills are enhanced by:

- Continual classroom skill based training;
- Facilitation coaching and evaluation; and
- Formal approval of Iowa FTDM facilitators.

A critical component supporting the development of the FTDM process is coaching, mentoring, and supervision. Coaches, with FTDM experience, knowledge, and approved FTDM status will serve in the role of supporting the development of newer facilitators through co-coordinating family team meetings and serving as mentors when challenges and issues arise. Those aspiring to become an approved facilitator will take the initial FTDM facilitator training and be coached and mentored by an approved coach or mentor. A specific training is required to become an approved coach or mentor. Facilitators should have access to quality supervision.

The competency of a facilitator is determined by demonstrated knowledge and skills. At a minimum, facilitators are approved by DHS when they:

- Understand principles and purpose of the FTDM process.
- Demonstrate the skills to prepare for, facilitate, and complete follow-up family team meetings as a means for creating sustainable family change.
- Set and maintain the environment: Facilitate in a manner that:
 - Supports a trust-based environment,
 - Assures and monitors conditions of safety;
 - Encourages openness,
 - Enhances a nonjudgmental environment;
 - Assists team members to be respectful, attentive, friendly, and culturally competent.
- Manage the facilitation process:
 - Introduction,
 - Purpose,
 - Confidentiality,
 - Set ground rules,
 - Set the stage for the family to tell their story,
 - Keep people on track and manage group dynamics,
 - Encourage equal participation,
 - Value contributions,
 - Demonstrate reframing,
 - Summarizing,
 - Acknowledging,
 - Building consensus,
 - Manage power and control issues,
 - Provide consultation to the family, and
 - Set the stage for family time, if used.
- Facilitate discussion leading the team to develop a FTDM family plan for the family during a family team meeting that accurately identifies the strategies and agreements made during the family team meeting. The plan should include strengths that relate and can be directed at the:
 - Needs,
 - Concerns,
 - Supports,

- Outcomes,
 - Behavioral results action steps,
 - Safety plan,
 - Crisis plan,
 - Re-evaluation,
 - Agreement, and
 - Next steps.
- Develop or update the *Family Interaction Plan*.
 - Conduct and manage follow-up meetings.

Facilitator approval is accomplished by:

- Completed DHS approved three day classroom facilitator training;
- Completed classroom training on family interaction as part of the FTDM course or through a separate learning opportunity;
- Completed a family team meeting as co-facilitator with an approved coach and mentor;
- Completed a family team meeting as lead facilitator with an approved coach and mentor;
- Received completed evaluation form on demonstrated facilitation skills and meeting outcomes as the co-facilitator and lead facilitator; and
- Evaluation forms are submitted to Service Area and approval number is received.

Approved facilitators will be required to complete a minimum of three hours of continuing education on an annual basis.

The competency of a coach and mentor is determined by demonstrated knowledge and skills. At a minimum, coaches and mentors are approved by DHS when they:

- Completed the required training on coaching and mentoring;
- Actively facilitated family team meetings for two years; and
- Submit at least two recommendations with an application to be a coach and mentor.

*** YTDMs are facilitated by a person who has completed the YTDM facilitator approval process.*

*YTDM facilitation requires an additional training as well as coaching and mentoring in the YTDM process, including demonstrated use of a Dream Path tool with an approved facilitator who has provided coaching and written feedback. ***

Standard 6: A quality assurance and improvement process is used to assess and improve the quality of the family team decision-making meeting and each facilitator.

It is part of ongoing practice development and improvement to assess the effectiveness of family team meetings in regard to engaging families, conducting assessment and planning activities, and determining service interventions.

The measurable indicators of family team meeting effectiveness include the following for each FTDM standard:

- **Confidentiality and privacy:** The family's privacy and confidentiality is maintained by team members based on the family's report of such.
- **Preparation:** Specified preparation is completed with participants in advance of the meeting.
- **Engagement:** Family engagement is reflected in their active participation in the case planning process and as reflected in the family's case plan.
- **Cultural:** Appropriate integration of cultural accommodation in the meeting process is acknowledged by the family.
- **Training and skills:** The facilitator demonstrates knowledge and skills sufficient to professionally facilitate the meeting and ensure the meeting's goals are achieved and reflected in the family's case plan.
- **Quality assurance and improvement:** One standardized measurement process is used statewide to assess and maintain quality of all family team meetings and facilitation. When issues are identified, adjustments and adaptations are made to improve the process and results. The inability by a facilitator to adhere to the FTDM standards after adjustments or adaptations have been attempted will ultimately result in loss of facilitator approval status.
- **Participants and voices:** Involvement of the child's parents, custodians, the child, any noncustodial parent and informal supports is demonstrated through preparation before the meeting and participation in the meeting unless there is an identifiable reason for this not to occur.
- **Family interaction:** A thorough *Family Interaction Plan* is developed, written, and initiated for out-of-home placements. If a *Family Interaction Plan* is in place, the plan is reviewed or modified at all subsequent family team meetings.

Standard 7: The preparation and decision-making process will, at a minimum, incorporate the voices of children and youth when appropriate, noncustodial and parents not residing in the home, as well as, other identified key family supports.

Family team meetings are about creating viable, workable, mutually agreed upon plans with families to achieve safe case closure. It is necessary to give a voice to children and youth concerns, wants, and needs. Children and youth have voices that must be heard in the planning and decision-making process.

According to Iowa's Blueprint for Forever Families, not only do youth need to have a voice in the FTDM process, but also immediate and extended family members, both maternal and paternal. This must occur not only when it is convenient or when most parties are in agreement, but when there is conflict, confusion or uncertainty. When barriers are identified, strategies must be implemented to ensure key players' voices are heard:

- Spending quality preparation time with family members so that the facilitator can include the voices of youth, custodial and noncustodial parents, and other important family members;
- Youth or other family members who are unable to be present need an opportunity to still be heard, either over the phone or by providing written information to the facilitator to be shared during the meeting;
- Using peer support to assist youth in finding their voice. Examples include: Iowa Foster Care Youth Council and Dream Teams;
- Providing parents and youth appropriate materials about the process and their rights within the process;
- Being mindful that children benefit from the active positive involvement of both mothers and fathers. The FTDM process is designed to support the inclusion of both parents. Efforts to engage noncustodial parents and parents not residing in the home, as well as, incarcerated parents needs to occur from the beginning and throughout the *Life of the Case*; and
- In situations where a meeting may place the child or other team members in danger (such as families who experience domestic violence), explore other options for including all team members. For example: separate meetings, conference calls, or written representation.

*** Informal, natural supports, if developed effectively, can help support and sustain a positive transition for a youth over time as the formal system moves out of the youth's life. These supports can also help the youth deal with future challenges without the need for system intervention. The team provides informal supports, as well as, helps the youth connect with additional community members and others that may assist the youth with attaining life goals. When preparing for YTDM, ask the youth about what role parents will play. ***

Standard 8: Family interaction planning is discussed and a *Family Interaction Plan* is developed or reassessed during every family team decision-making meeting involving a child who is placed out of the home.

The philosophy of family interaction is a different way of thinking about how children who have been removed from the home continue to have meaningful interactions with the people who care about them in the least traumatic way possible. All children who are placed out of the home need to have a *Family Interaction Plan* in place to ensure this occurs in safe and healthy ways. The most effective way of developing a *Family Interaction Plan* is during a family team meeting. Family interaction philosophy is based on the following foundations:

- **Children and parents have a right to spend time together.** Interactions between parents and children should only be limited when there is some threat of harm that makes it necessary to do so. **NOTE:** Interactions with siblings should be considered when applicable.
- Family interactions should be a planned intervention central to the reunification process. When interactions need to be monitored by others, there should be clear goals set that identify for everyone what has to be different in order for interactions to move to a less restrictive plan.
- These goals should be identified when developing the *Family Interaction Plan*. The plan should be developed during a family team meeting by the entire team, and a deadline to review progress should be set at the initial meeting.
- Interactions between parents and children should be in the most homelike setting possible so the child can feel safe. This means we should strive to use the parent's home when possible, relative's homes, foster homes, and as a last resort, a neutral setting that is as homelike as it can be.
- Interactions should be built around meaningful activities: mealtimes, bathing, naptimes, homework time, doctors' appointments, school activities, sports activities, and should be geared towards the child's developmental abilities.
- Family interactions are the responsibility of the entire team working with the family.
- A written *Family Interaction Plan*, tailored to meet the safety needs of the family is developed during or reassessed during family team meeting involving a child who is placed out of the home to assure family interaction begins as soon as possible after removal from parental custody. These must never be used as a threat or form of discipline to the child or to control or punish the parent.
- The written *Family Interaction Plan* may be incorporated as a part of the family team meeting notes or identified separately on a *Family Interaction Plan* form.
- Research tells us that successful reunification can be achieved more timely when we closely team with birth parents and involve them as full partners in their plan.

Family interaction planning, in addition to the above foundations, should always focus on the safety concerns. The elements to explore in assessing safety include three basic constructs: threats of maltreatment, child vulnerability, and caretaker's protective capacities.

- **Threats of maltreatment** mean the aggravating factors that combine to produce a potentially dangerous situation.
 - Situation (unsafe home, criminal activity)
 - Behavior (impulsive actions, assaults)
 - Emotion (immobilizing depression)
 - Motive (intention to hurt the child)
 - Perception (viewing child as a devil)
 - Capacity (physical disability)
- **Child vulnerability** means the degree that a child cannot on the child's own avoid, negate or minimize the impact of present or impending danger.
 - **Present danger** means immediate, significant, and clearly observed maltreatment which is occurring to a child in the present or there is an immediate threat of maltreatment requiring immediate action to protect the child.
 - **Impending danger** means a foreseeable state of danger in which family behaviors, attitudes, motives, emotions, or the child's physical environment poses a threat of maltreatment.
- **Protective capacities** mean family strengths or resources that reduce, control, or prevent threats of maltreatment.

*** Facilitators should recognize that the desire of a youth may be to reconnect with their birth family regardless of the permanency goal and the team should be prepared to address and support this in their transition.*

*When considering family interaction planning with youth consider all supportive relationships, which could include community connections, mentors, caring adults, extended family, siblings, peers, etc. ***

[Comm. 385](#), **Overview of Iowa's Adoption Subsidy Program**

Purpose	Brochure Comm. 385 explains eligibility for the adoption subsidy program and the supports available.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies of this pamphlet from the sample in the manual.
Distribution	Provide this brochure to families who are considering adopting a child through the Department.
Data	The brochure addresses how to decide if special needs adoption is right for a family, the purpose of the subsidy program, eligibility for subsidy, and the agreement to future adoption subsidy.

Comm. 386, Financial Assistance for Relative Caretakers

Purpose	Brochure Comm. 386 outlines the financial resources available to relatives when a child is placed in their care.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies of this pamphlet from the sample in the manual.
Distribution	Provide this brochure to families when a child is placed in their care through the Department.
Data	The brochure provides a brief description of the Family Investment Program, licensed foster care, Medicaid, Child Care Assistance, and Food Assistance. The descriptions include basic eligibility factors and how to apply for the program.



Family Interaction Standards

The philosophy of family interaction is a fundamental way of thinking about how children who have been removed from the home continue to have meaningful interactions with the people who care about them in the least traumatic way possible. For parents, family interaction is the time to:

- Enhance the parent's ability to adequately and appropriately care for and relate to the child;
- Help the parents develop appropriate parenting behaviors; and
- Identify and resolve problems before the child returns home.

Supporting family interaction involves a certain level of risk. Family interaction is not an event, but a process.

The goals of family interaction:

- Reduce the child's sense of abandonment and loss upon removal;
- Reduce the threats of maltreatment requiring that family interactions be monitored;
- Interactions provide the opportunity for families to:
 - Maintain relationships,
 - Enhance well-being,
 - Provide families with the opportunity to learn, practice, and demonstrate new behaviors and patterns of interaction.
- Maintain meaningful contact consistent with the development or special needs of the child and family that will further progress toward achieving permanency for the child;
- Maintain relationships with siblings, parents, and other individuals;
- Provide opportunity to assess the caregiver and child relationship; and
- Provide opportunity to assess caregiver needs:
 - Parent training
 - Community resources and referral
 - Concrete supports

In order to achieve positive results associated with family interaction, this set of standards and practice guidance was developed in collaboration with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and external stakeholders to ensure that family interaction is to maintain the parent-child relationship and other family attachments and reduce the sense of abandonment which children experience at placement.

Standard 1: Family Interaction is a planned ongoing process that requires thorough preparation to make sure that parent-child and other family involvement is maintained while ensuring the safety needs of the child are addressed.

All children placed out of the home need to have family interaction planning to ensure interactions occur in safe and healthy ways. Family interaction should occur in the least restrictive, most homelike setting that allows for natural interaction and appropriate to meet the child's needs for safety. This means we should strive to use the parent's home when possible, relative's homes, foster homes, and as a last resort, a neutral setting that is as homelike as it can be.

Creativity in defining interactions should be supported. Every opportunity needs to be considered such as doctor visits, school activities, meetings and other functions in which the family would have participated if the children were in the home. Interaction planning with siblings should be considered when applicable. Interaction planning allows the team to assess parental abilities, the parent child bond, and other family relationships. It also allows the opportunity to assess the caregiver's needs regarding community resources and concrete supports.

All members of the family and team will be prepared to participate in family interaction planning by ensuring a concrete explanation of the family interaction goals have been provided to the family. Family interaction needs to address the reasons for placement and the safety concerns that exist. All participants in interaction planning should be aware of:

- The goals of family interaction planning,
- Their possible roles and responsibilities, and
- Involvement in implementing family interactions.

Family interaction is successful when caregivers (i.e., foster parents, resource families, relatives, kinship, suitable others, etc.) are included early in this process to show they are part of the team. It is important that the caregivers have a voice in when and how the caregiver can be an active part of the planning process. Caregivers may need some encouragement and preparation about the importance of their involvement and the importance of family interaction for the family and siblings. The caregivers will know of the daily activities of the child so that the parent can be included in medical, school, and therapy appointments.

Standard 2: Family engagement is the ongoing process of developing and maintaining a mutually beneficial, trust-based relationship that empowers and respects the family and sustains their interest and participation in the change process. Family engagement is essential to ensuring effective family interaction planning.

Diligent effort is made to join with the family and the family's natural supports throughout the case to ensure that needs are met and child safety and well-being are assured. Successful and productive relationships with families are earned over time through repeated, positive contacts that develop trust.

Family members are encouraged to define what "family" means to them and who "family" is. Attempts are made to engage all identified family members in services including attendance at the family team meeting and support of family interactions. Family interactions are most "natural" when interactions are supported by those with a relationship with the child, such as other family members versus professionals. We know that the wider the circle of "family" the more likely the family will remain engaged with one another beyond case closure. Family supports can be relied on to assist with all aspects of services including attendance at meetings, role modeling, transportation, observing interactions, etc.

The parents, custodial and noncustodial, children and youth, and other key family supports voices will be heard during family interaction planning. Each person's input is valued and needed to ensure quality interactions that meet the unique needs of each family. It is strongly recommended that interactions should be planned with careful consideration to developmental guidelines and the attainment of optimal family engagement.

Standard 3: Family Interaction planning and implementation ensures that children and youth maintain relationships with parents, kin, and other supports.

The primary purpose of family interaction is to maintain the parent-child relationship and other family attachments and to reduce the sense of abandonment which children experience at placement.

Removal is a traumatic event for a child. Children who have been removed from the home need to continue to have meaningful interactions with the people who care about them in the least traumatic way possible. It is critical to a child's emotional and mental health that the child's connections to family, community, kin, and friends be preserved to the greatest extent possible as the family works towards permanency. A child's connections should be identified and efforts made to ensure the child has access to them as soon as possible.

In cases where parents are incarcerated, efforts should be made to facilitate interactions as appropriate and allowable through the facility. Interaction planning will include not only interaction with primary caregivers, but the child's other connections. Creative planning should not only support face-to-face time but also other methods, such as calls, letters, texting, emails, and other electronic methods of communication. Families will be encouraged to explore other ways to connect and interact with one another.

Ongoing training and support, and clear identification of participant's roles and responsibilities are critical to the success of family interaction. All participants involved in family interaction planning need to have a clear understanding of the importance of connection not only from the perspective of the child's emotional and mental health, but also from the standpoint of effectively working towards permanency. This shared vision is as important as the logistics of interaction planning.

Standard 4: Family Interaction is incorporated throughout the *Life of the Case (LOC)*.

Family interaction is an effective strategy used to meet behavioral outcomes that must be achieved to reach permanency. Successful family interaction planning requires that a family select, own, and support the desired outcomes of adequate family functioning and well-being leading to permanency. Setting clear and measurable outcomes allows all those involved in planning to understand and agree about what it will take to achieve permanency from the beginning of the case. Progress toward these goals and benchmarks should be reviewed ongoing with the family, preferably during a family team meeting. This provides critical opportunities for the team to assess movement toward permanency and adapt family interaction planning accordingly.

The focus should be not on process and compliance but rather on the safety concerns identified at the time of removal. The elements to explore in assessing safety include three basic constructs: threats of maltreatment, child vulnerability, and caretaker's protective capacities.

- **Threats of maltreatment** mean the aggravating factors that combine to produce a potentially dangerous situation.
 - Situation (unsafe home, criminal activity)
 - Behavior (impulsive actions, assaults)
 - Emotion (immobilizing depression)
 - Motive (intention to hurt the child)
 - Perception (viewing child as a devil)
 - Capacity (physical disability)
- **Child vulnerability** means the degree that a child cannot on the child's own avoid, negate or minimize the impact of present or impending danger.
 - **Present danger** means immediate, significant, and clearly observed maltreatment which is occurring to a child in the present or there is an immediate threat of maltreatment requiring immediate action to protect the child.
 - **Impending danger** means a foreseeable state of danger in which family behaviors, attitudes, motives, emotions, or the child's physical environment poses a threat of maltreatment.
- **Protective capacities** mean family strengths or resources that reduce, control, or prevent threats of maltreatment.

Family interaction needs to be reviewed, at a minimum, when:

- There are changes in behavioral patterns demonstrated by the parents or children.
- Protective provisions that may be a safety concern change or arise.
- There is a change in family supports.
- There is a change in legal issues or court requirements (change in custody or guardianship) that may impact family interaction planning.
- Agreed upon behavioral changes are or are not accomplished.

Standard 5: Cultural dynamics of the child and family are identified and accommodated through adjustments in strategies, services, and supports for the family in the family interaction process.

Cultural competence means the ability of individuals and systems to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and faiths or religions in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, tribes, and communities, and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

Successful cultural competence includes:

- A basic understanding of the values and beliefs within the culture coupled with eliciting information from the child and family about traditions, cultural beliefs, behaviors, and functioning;
- Demonstration of values and attitudes that promote mutual respect;
- Communication styles that reflect sensitivity and competence to the values and beliefs of others;
- Accommodations in the physical environment including settings, materials, and resources that are culturally and linguistically responsive;
- Acknowledgement of the role of race, ethnicity, economic status, spirituality, and culture play in families lives; and
- Demonstration of a genuine interest in the family's culture and an understanding of how that culture has been historically treated by the dominant culture.

Involving the family in interaction planning will ensure the family's culture and rituals are respected. The family's cultural dynamics will be taken into consideration during family interaction planning. There will be a basic understanding of the family's values and beliefs, religious practices, communication, and any necessary accommodations to family interaction planning. For example, tribal holidays and events will be recognized and planned for accordingly.

Individuals who may be supervising family interactions should possess a level of competence and understanding of the culture in which the family has gained its understanding of child rearing practices. Families who speak languages other than English may require cultural accommodations such as through the use of interpreters or someone supervising who speaks the language to ensure clear communication during family interactions.

Accommodations should be made to meet the special needs of the child or family during family interaction planning. Examples of such circumstances include cases where the family does not speak English or is not part of the majority culture. Individuals may be needed to provide support to a child or to help manage behaviors during an interaction. When special circumstances exist, it may be necessary to involve an individual who has specialized knowledge and skills to supervise interactions. For example, someone who is a member of the family's culture or ethnic group could be the one supervising interactions.

Standard 6: A *Family Interaction Plan* is developed or reassessed during every family team meeting involving a child who is placed out of the home.

A written *Family Interaction Plan*, tailored to meet the safety needs of the family will be provided to assure family interaction begins as soon as possible after removal from parental custody. *Family Interaction Plans* must never be used as a threat or form of discipline to the child or to control or punish the parent. When the family has input and feels engaged in the process, they are more likely to successfully follow through with the plan and achieve permanency.

The *Family Interaction Plan* should be reviewed and revised during a family team meeting. However, not all children placed out of the home will have a family team meeting but family interaction planning should occur. Subsequent family interaction planning may or may not occur in a family team meeting. When behavioral outcomes are met (or not met) before the next scheduled family team meeting, the *Family Interaction Plan* may be reviewed before the meeting. Family interactions are the responsibility of the entire team working with the family.

It is critical for the team to keep in mind during the completion of the *Family Interaction Plan* that frequent and developmentally appropriate family interaction benefits the child emotionally, and is the strongest indicator of family reunification and achievement of permanency. Interactions must attempt to involve the parents in routine activities of parenting and provide opportunities to enhance their parenting skills. Interactions should be built around meaningful activities including:

- Mealtimes,
- Bathing,
- Naptimes,
- Homework time,
- Doctors' appointments,
- School activities,
- Sports activities, and
- Should be geared towards the child's developmental abilities.

The following logistics need to be explored during the development of the *Family Interaction Plan*:

- Who is available to assist with transportation,
- Who is available and suitable to supervise the interactions,
- Who is allowed to be present during interactions, and
- What behaviors would immediately terminate an interaction.

In the event that a team member is not present during the family team meeting but is identified as a support to carry out the interactions, follow up communication must occur to ensure that they are available and in agreement to the *Family Interaction Plan*.

The *Family Interaction Plan* will identify the benchmarks that parents need to accomplish to achieve permanency. Interactions will become more frequent and for longer periods of time as the parents continue to meet behavioral benchmarks that reduce threats and increase their protective capacities. The level of supervision will also decrease as parents become better able to protect the children. The *Family Interaction Plan* will be reassessed and modified in the event that the permanency goal for the child changes.

Consideration regarding revisions to family interaction could be reviewed by addressing the following questions:

- What were the changes we expected to see within the context of the safety constructs?
- Have we accomplished the agreed-upon behavioral changes? If not, why not?
- How are we going to benchmark and communicate about benchmarks?
- How will we know when we are done, not just compliance, but sustained behavioral changes which will ensure as we depart?
- What will it take to maintain or increase family interactions for this family? (specific protective capacities, reduced child vulnerability, supports (formal or informal), services, etc.)
- What has been tried in family interaction planning in moving to the next phase? Identify strengths and risks that can be tried again or modified? (informal supports, visiting children in their current placement, etc.)
- What new things that haven't been tried before, could be tried to increase family interactions? (informal supports, services (including placement), or court actions, etc.)
- How can we involve the family, including the noncustodial parent, more fully in achieving family interactions while addressing child safety, reducing risks, and increasing strengths? (FTDM, youth-led meeting, engaging extended family, concrete supports, parent partners, etc.)

Standard 7: A quality assurance and improvement process is used to assess and improve the quality of Family Interaction.

It is part of ongoing practice development and improvement to assess the effectiveness of family interaction in regard to engaging families, conducting assessment and planning activities, and facilitating the timely and safe return of children to their homes.

The measurable indicators of the effectiveness of family interaction include the following for each family interaction standard:

- **Process planning:** Families are adequately prepared for the family interaction planning process, emphasizing the importance of active family participation, the safety needs of children, and the progression of the family interaction process as reflected in family team decision-making documentation or initial family interaction planning.
- **Engagement:** Family engagement is evidenced in their active and ongoing participation in the family interaction planning process, reflected in the *Family Interaction Plan*.
- **Connections:** The *Family Interaction Plan* should include not only planned interactions with primary caregivers, but the child's other critical connections, such as noncustodial parents, extended family, community ties, and friends.
- **Life of the Case (LOC):** *Family Interaction Plans* will be implemented, reviewed, and revised on an ongoing basis throughout the Life of the Case.
- **Cultural competency:** Appropriate integration of cultural accommodation in the family interaction planning process is acknowledged by the family.
- **Family Team Decision-Making:** A thorough *Family Interaction Plan* is developed during family team meetings for all children placed out of home. If a *Family Interaction Plan* is already in place, the plan is reviewed or modified during all subsequent family team meetings.
- **Quality assurance and improvement:** One standardized measurement process is used statewide to assess and maintain quality of all family interactions. When issues are identified, adjustments and adaptations are made to improve the process and results.

Comm. 435, Family Interaction Standards

Purpose	The <i>Family Interaction Standards</i> , Comm. 435, provides a set of standards and practice guidance to achieve positive results associated with family interaction. These standards were developed to ensure family interaction maintains the parent-child relationship and other family attachments and reduces the sense of abandonment which children experience at placement.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies of Comm. 435 as needed from the sample in the manual.
Completion	DHS workers may access this set of standards and practice guidance to aid in understanding family interaction philosophy.

[Comm. 437](#), Iowa Foster Child and Youth Bill of Rights

Purpose	Comm. 437, <i>Iowa Foster Child and Youth Bill of Rights</i> , is used to inform the child, parents, and caretakers about the rights and responsibilities of a child in foster care. These rights were developed by Iowa youth to empower children and youth in foster care and to improve casework practice.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies of this flier from the sample in the manual.
Distribution	At the time a child enters foster care, provide the flier to the child, their parents, and caretakers as appropriate and discuss.
Data	The flier provides a tool to start a discussion with a child, parent, or caretaker that will promote respectful and engaging care of the child.



Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making (FTDM/YTDM)

Facilitator Approval

Protocol for Approving FTDM Facilitators

The competency of a facilitator is determined by demonstrated knowledge and skills. At a minimum, facilitators are approved by DHS when they have:

- Completed DHS-approved Facilitator Training;
- Completed a family team decision-making meeting as co-facilitator with an approved coach and mentor who has provided coaching and written feedback; and
- Completed a family team decision-making meeting as lead-facilitator with an approved coach and mentor who has provided coaching and written feedback.

Protocol for Approving YTDM Facilitators

You must meet all of the requirements above for FTDM, in addition to the following:

- Completed DHS-approved YTDM Facilitator Training;
- Completed a youth transition decision-making team meeting as co-facilitator with an approved coach and mentor who has provided coaching and written feedback; and
- Completed a youth transition decision-making team meeting as lead-facilitator with an approved coach and mentor who has provided coaching and written feedback.

Request for Approval

- For FTDM/YTDM facilitator approval, send the application to:
[YOUR SERVICE AREA CONTACT]
- A statewide approval list will be maintained by the service areas at that will include:
 - Facilitator number, name, and contact information;
 - Agency name, number, and phone (if applicable);
 - DHS or private designation; and
 - Date of approval and name of the person approving.
- DHS local office will receive and process applications within 20 business days. If approval is not given, reasons will be provided with an opportunity to resubmit the application for approval when the reasons are ameliorated.

Transition Process

- All current FTDM facilitators must complete the refresher course by June 30, 2013.
- The ongoing approval process will begin July 1, 2013, and conclude June 30, 2015, to allow a two year period of six continuing education program hours.
- Facilitators who completed the three day FTDM course or the one day YTDM course before September 1, 2012, must take the refresher course.

If a facilitator completed the training after September 1, 2012, they do not have to attend the refresher course.

During this transition process, any experienced approved facilitator may serve as a coach and mentor in the above requirements.

Request for Re-approval

All individuals wishing to be reapproved as a FTDM/YTDM facilitator will need to submit the following documentation:

- Training certificate or CEUs from required training (six hours of continuing education required every two years); and
- Three satisfactory surveys completed by the parent or caregivers and youth from three separate FTDMs. (For YTDM re-approval, at least one of the three must be YTDM.)

Application for Approval

FTDM Facilitator: Initial Re-approval

YTDM Facilitator: Initial Re-approval

Application

Last Name	First Name
Mailing Address	
Phone	Email
Name of Agency (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> DHS <input type="checkbox"/> Private
Signature	Date

Attach

Initial Approval

- Training certificate or CEUs from required training.
- Verification of being coached by an approved facilitator and copies of written feedback provided by the coach (Required two Family Team Decision-Making Meetings).

Re-approval (two year approval)

- Training certificate or CEUs from required training.
- Completed satisfaction surveys for three separate FTDM completed by parent or caregivers and youth (for YTDM re-approval, at least one of the three must be YTDM).

Approval

Facilitator Number	
Date Approved	Approved By

FTDM/YTDM Facilitator Evaluation Checklist

Role (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitator <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Facilitator	Date
Name	Family/Youth Name

AREA AND COMPETENCIES	Yes	No	NA	Comments
Preparation				
1. The family and youth understand the purpose and philosophy of the family team or youth transition decision-making process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Family members and youth are ready, able, safe, and eligible candidates for team participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. The right people are invited to the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People necessary for the major decisions to be made. • People invited by the family or youth for their own support. • People invited by the agency for service provision. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Participants know the purpose of the meeting and how to contribute in a positive way by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coming prepared and ready for decision making. • Speaking to their concerns in constructive ways. • Listening with respect to others' concerns. • Recognizing and building on family and youth strengths and needs. • Sharing information, ideas, and resources. • Keeping personal and confidential information private. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Participants know what to bring to be prepared, as well as, when and where to meet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Logistic arrangements are made, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting place and time that is mutually convenient for the family and youth and other participants. • Meeting place that is conducive for private and confidential conversations. • The agenda includes any family or youth rituals to begin or end meeting and address all relevant areas of the family's plan. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Facilitator is prepared to accomplish the primary purpose of the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Facilitator and DHS staff is prepared to follow-up on decisions made and on next step plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Facilitation				
9. Convenes the meeting, defines the goals and ground rules of the meeting, introduces participants and their roles, and defines decisions to be made and the possible range of actions to follow decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

AREA AND COMPETENCIES	Yes	No	NA	Comments
<p>10. Uses consensus-building decision-making techniques, handles any conflict as it surfaces, selects appropriate idea-building processes, solicits all viewpoints, clarifies options, refocuses as necessary to stay on task and on time, monitors and manages the flow of the discussion to ensure that all are heard and no one dominates, brings discussion to closure with decisions made, and moves on to next steps, assignments and commitments. This is done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on results, processes, and relationships. • Designing pathways to action for realizing opportunities, building capacities, and solving problems. • Seeking maximum, appropriate involvement in decisions. • Facilitating the group to build agreements and meet challenges. (What could go wrong with this plan?) • Coaching others to do their best. • Confronting problems honestly and respectfully. • Managing power and control issues that arise. • Balancing family-centered proactive with protective authority to keep children safe and help parents succeed. • Celebrating successes and accomplishments. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>11. Builds an understanding of the family and youth and requirements for safe case closure from assessment information, court requirements, and family and youth team discussions, by using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family and youth's story, strengths and needs, risks, barriers to family and youth change, and family and youth desires to improve. • Requirements for safe case closure (behavioral changes). • Changes the family and youth must make plus their potential, motivation, and progress as it is being made (prognosis). 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>12. Makes decisions, sets goals, secures commitments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set goals for change, selects change strategies, plans interventions and support with family and youth and supporters. • Secures commitments from participants for plans made. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Service Planning and Follow-up				
<p>13. The family team and youth transition decision-making meeting provides a basis for service planning, coordination, communication, and accountability.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

AREA AND COMPETENCIES	Yes	No	NA	Comments
<p>14. The family and youth team develops, monitors, and evaluates an individualized, strengths-based, needs driven service plan that fills safety and permanency requirements while meeting the unique needs of the youth and family identified in the assessment. Via the planning process, the service team assists the family and youth to develop and use a network of informal supports that can help sustain the family and youth over time. The family and youth service plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines agreed upon goals for the family and youth that include a measure of caregiver behavior changes that are consistent with safe case closure requirements. • Focuses on achieving safety, permanency, and well-being. • Addresses the child's needs for attachment, safety, and security. • Plans for family preservation or reunification, as indicated. • Identifies alternative permanency plans, safety plans, crisis plans, and any transition plans that may be necessary. • Uses supports and services that are most likely to work for the family and youth and be a good fit for the family and youth and situation. • Specifies services and supports provided that are culturally competent and community based. • Defines how goals are to be measured via behavior changes. • States consequences of not making behavior changes. • Sets time limits, clear expectations, and alternatives. • Defines accountability for actions of the family and youth and service providers and way that accountability will be ensured. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

AREA AND COMPETENCIES	Yes	No	NA	Comments
15. The family and youth team develops, monitors, and evaluates any individualized child service plans for a youth with special needs. The youth service plan (family's plan): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses the special needs of the child or youth. • Defines treatment goals and strategies (including an IEP). • Builds resiliency and improves the youth's functioning in daily settings, including home and school. • Uses collaboration as appropriate, between health care, mental health, special education, developmental disabilities, or juvenile justice services. • Provides integration and coordination of services across settings, providers, levels of care, and funding sources. • Provides for age-appropriate transitions. • Prevents unnecessary disruption of the youth's education. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16. The effectiveness of each family team and youth transition decision-making meeting is assessed by the team and with adjustments made to improve the ongoing process and results for the family and youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17. The effectiveness of planned services is evaluated and results are achieved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Comments Section

Strengths
Needs and Areas for Improvement
Strategies to Address Needs

This review of my skills has been shared with me.

Facilitator	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> It is my recommendation that this facilitator not be approved as a <input type="checkbox"/> FTDM <input type="checkbox"/> YTDM (check one) facilitator by DHS at this time.	
<input type="checkbox"/> It is my recommendation that this facilitator completes the strategies to address needs and be observed and evaluated before approval as a facilitator.	
<input type="checkbox"/> It is my recommendation that DHS approve this facilitator to conduct FTDM meetings. The facilitator has the skills and has demonstrated competency in FTDM facilitation.	
<input type="checkbox"/> It is my recommendation that DHS approve this facilitator to conduct YTDM meetings. The facilitator has the skills and has demonstrated competency in YTDM facilitation.	
Evaluator	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional comments pages have been attached.	

Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making (FTDM/YTDM) Meeting Satisfaction Survey

We are interested in your opinion. There is no right or wrong answer. By filling out this survey, you can help us learn what parts of our process are most helpful to you, and what we can do to better help families. **Thank you!**

Date of Meeting	Facilitator Name	Facilitator Number
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About You (Please check the box regarding your relationship to the child, children, youth or family.)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Provider | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent partner | <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney/GAL/CASA | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member/friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute caregiver | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Did the time and location of the FTDM/YTDM work for you? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Before attending, did someone explain the purpose of the FTDM/YTDM? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Before attending, did someone explain the reason for your participation at the FTDM/YTDM? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Were you involved in deciding who would attend your meeting? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Did the facilitator make an effort to get the people you wanted at the FTDM/YTDM? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you believe you had an equal chance to offer your ideas? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Did the facilitator discuss the need to keep private the personal details of the family and youth? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Overall, I believe the facilitator had the skills, knowledge, and ability to facilitate an effective FTDM/YTDM. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | I am satisfied with the plan that was made.
If not, why? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | I believe the family and youth's strengths were clearly identified.
If not, why? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | I believe the family and youth's needs were clearly identified.
If not, why? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | I feel the plan addressed the immediate safety needs of the family and youth.
If not, why? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | I believe the cultural dynamics of the family and youth were identified and accommodated.
If not, why? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | I believe I played a part in developing the plan.
If not, why? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | I believe that the plan that was developed addressed the family and youth's needs.
If not, why? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | I felt I was treated with respect at the FTDM/YTDM meeting.
If not, why? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | If needed, was a <i>Family Interaction Plan</i> developed or reassessed?
If yes: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Did the <i>Family Interaction Plan</i> clearly outline when and how interactions will occur? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Did the <i>Family Interaction Plan</i> clearly outline and identify what needs to happen to move safely to less supervision or reunification? |

Comm. 439, Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Facilitator

Approval

Purpose	The <i>Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Facilitator Approval</i> provides direction on the protocol for approving and reapproving family team and youth transition decision-making facilitators.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies as needed from the sample in the manual. DHS workers may also complete this form on line using the template in the public state-approved service forms folder on Outlook.
Completion	DHS workers and others interested in facilitating family team decision-making (FTDM) or youth transition decision-making (YTDM) meetings may access this form to provide guidance in the approval or re-approval process. Completion of the following sections of Comm. 439 is required in order to be approved or reapproved as a FTDM or YTDM facilitator: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Application for Approval◆ FTDM/YTDM Facilitator Evaluation Checklist◆ FTDM/YTDM Meeting Satisfaction Survey
Data	Application for Approval. The application includes information required for the approval or re-approval process. <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ FTDM or YTDM Facilitator. Check whether family team or youth transition decision-making meeting facilitator. Check initial if not a currently approved facilitator. Check re-approval if currently assigned a facilitator approval number and wish to extend approval for two additional years.◆ Demographics. Enter the name, address, phone, email, and agency name (if applicable).◆ Signature. Sign and date the form.

- ◆ **Attachments.** Include the appropriately identified attachments for the initial approval or re-approval based upon completed application request.
- ◆ **Approval.** Authorized service area contacts enter the assigned facilitator number, date, and sign the form.

FTDM/YTDM Faciliator Evaluation Checklist. This is completed by an approved individual providing feedback on the facilitator to determine recommendations for approval or denial.

FTDM/YTDM Meeting Satisfaction Survey. This survey is completed by anyone participating within the family team or youth transition decision-making meetings.



Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making (FTDM/YTDM)

Coaching and Mentoring Guidelines

Roles and Responsibilities of Coaches

Family Team/Youth Transition Decision-Making (FTDM/YTDM) Coaching is teaching advanced facilitation skills through modeling quality practice, providing one-on-one instruction, and providing respectful, strength-based evaluation and feedback. It offers opportunities for the learner to:

- Partner with a skilled practitioner in preparing for and facilitating a family team or youth transition decision-making meeting, using the skills practiced in the classroom;
- Be evaluated by a skilled practitioner;
- Receive individualized coaching and strength-based feedback;
- Analyze their own practice;
- Develop a plan for continued learning; and
- Observe the coaching and mentoring process as a participant.

FTDM/YTDM Coaching is required to be an approved facilitator in Iowa and written feedback is completed on the approved form. FTDM/YTDM Coaching is the beginning of continuous personal practice improvement, not the end of learning.

A coach must know and understand their practice skills and abilities. They must know behaviors they demonstrate that contribute to positive outcomes for families, convey their intent to demonstrate, and once demonstrated, be able to point out those skills to a learner. A coach's prerequisite skills and abilities should include:

- Advanced FTDM preparation and facilitation skills;
- Ability to instruct a learner in basic skills and processes;
- Ability to assess a learner's strengths and needs;
- Ability to modify and individualize training to meet the needs of the learner; and
- Ability to provide strength-based feedback.

During the FTDM/YTDM Coaching process the coach is required to:

- Demonstrate the preparation phase, the facilitation phase, and the planning and follow-up phase of a quality family team or youth transition decision-making meeting completing a family's or youth's plan during the meeting;
- Provide individualized instruction of basic skills;

- Support and evaluate the learner’s demonstration of skills and plan for further learning; and
- Provide respectful, strength-based feedback.

Grandfathering Clause

Experienced facilitators may request to be “grandfathered in” as a coach and mentor. Facilitators may request to be “grandfathered in” no later than January 1, 2014.

There are two different ways in which one may request to be “grandfathered in.” The first way to be “grandfathered in” requires the following to be submitted:

- Current FTDM approval number;
- Certificate of attendance for the refresher course before July 1, 2013;
- Evidence of at least six facilitated FTDMs in the past twelve months (For YTDM “grandfathered in” process, at least two of the six must be YTDM.); and
- Completed satisfaction surveys for three separate FTDMs completed by the parent or caregiver and youth. (For YTDM “grandfathered in” process, at least two of the three surveys must be YTDM.)

The second way to be “grandfathered in” requires the following to be submitted:

- Demonstrated completion of an approved coaching and mentoring class; and
- Completed satisfaction surveys for three separate FTDMs completed by the parent or caregiver and youth. (For YTDM “grandfathered in” process, at least two of the three surveys must be YTDM.)

Facilitators requesting to become coach and mentors after January 1, 2014, must comply with the following protocol.

Protocol for Approving FTDM/YTDM Coaches and Mentors

The competency of a coach and mentor is determined by demonstrated knowledge and skills. At a minimum, coaches and mentors are approved by DHS when they have:

- Completed all of the requirements to be a DHS-approved facilitator;
- Completed the required training for coaches and mentors of FTDM/YTDM facilitators;
- Completed an application to be a coach and mentor for family team or youth transition decision-making meeting facilitators; and
- Submitted two recommendations from those who have participated in at least two FTDMs or YTDMs facilitated by the applicant.

Request for Approval

- For FTDM/YTDM coach and mentor approval, send the application to:
[YOUR SERVICE AREA CONTACT]
- A statewide approval list will be maintained by the service areas that will include:
 - Coach and mentor number, name, and contact information;
 - Agency name, number, and phone (if applicable);
 - DHS or private designation;
 - Date of approval and name of the person approving; and
 - Geographic availability to coach and mentor.
- DHS local office will receive and process applications within 20 working days. If approval is not given, reasons will be provided with an opportunity to resubmit the application for approval when the reasons are ameliorated.

Application for Approval – FTDM/YTDM Coach and Mentor

Application

Last Name	First Name
Mailing Address	
Phone	Email
Name of Agency (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> DHS <input type="checkbox"/> Private
Geographic Availability to Coach and Mentor [county names]	
Signature	Date

Attach

- Training certificate or CEUs from required training.
- Two recommendation letters from someone who has participated in at least two FTDMs facilitated by the applicant.
- Evaluation form to meet the grandfathering clause.

Approval

Coach/Mentor Number	
Date Approved	Approved By

FTDM/YTDM Coaching and Mentoring

The Coach and Trainee together will:

- Visit with the family to describe and explain the process and to identify ways the family team meeting could benefit the family;
- Help the family identify their desired outcomes;
- Help the family identify their strengths and needs;
- Identify additional team members;
- Prepare the family to tell their story at the team meeting;
- Help the family identify what supports they need and what barriers they might have (transportation, day care, etc.);
- Identify the best time and location convenient to the family to hold the meeting; and
- Check with the family to determine their willingness to have other learners and trainees present during the FTDM for their development as facilitators.

Next, the Coach and Trainee together will:

- Conduct preparation interviews with identified team members;
- Gain agreement with team members regarding their role and participation as team members;
- Help the team members identify family and child strengths and needs; and
- Determine their availability for a family team decision-making meeting at the family's preferred time, date, and place.

Before the Family Team or Youth Transition Decision-Making Meeting, the Trainee will:

- Follow-up with the family and team members to remind them of the date, time, and place;
- Invite appropriate trainees to the meeting (for observation);
- Make arrangements for child care and transportation or other special needs;
- Arrange for a speaker phone, if one is needed;
- Arrange for having a flip chart, markers, tape, and tissues at the meeting; and
- Arrange for appropriate refreshments.

The Family Team Decision-Making Meeting:

- On average will last 90 minutes to 2 hours but the length of time may vary depending on individualized family needs; and
- Use the *Family Team Decision-Making Meeting Outline*.

Follow-up

- If the trainee is not the caseworker, they will have the responsibility to work with the group member who writes the plan developed in the FTDM;
- The trainee will follow-up on commitments made at the team meeting; and
- The trainee will arrange and invite members to the next meeting.

Evaluation

- The coach and mentor will initially have the trainee take on the role of co-facilitator during the family team decision-making meeting;
- The coach will provide feedback for the trainee regarding this FTDM;
- The trainee will then facilitate a FTDM with the coach taking on the role of co-facilitator;
- The coach will provide feedback to the trainee regarding their facilitation; and
- The coach will complete an evaluation form for each FTDM and make a recommendation for approval as a facilitator.

Comm. 440, Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Coaching and Mentoring Guidelines

Purpose	The <i>Family Team and Youth Transition Decision-Making Coaching and Mentoring Guidelines</i> provides direction on the protocol for approving FTDM/YTDM coaches and mentors and identifies the roles and responsibilities of coaches.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies as needed from the sample in the manual. DHS workers may also complete this form on line using the template in the public state-approved service forms folder on Outlook.
Completion	DHS workers and others interested in becoming family team decision-making (FTDM) or youth transition (YTDM) meeting coaches may access Comm. 440 to provide guidance in the approval process. Completion of the <i>Application for Approval – FTDM/YTDM Coach and Mentor</i> section of Comm. 440 is required in order to be approved as a FTDM or YTDM coach
Data	Application for Approval – FTDM/YTDM Coach and Mentor. The application includes information required for the approval process. <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Demographics. Enter the name, address, phone, email, and agency name (if applicable).◆ Signature. Sign and date the form.◆ Attachments. Include the appropriately identified attachments for the approval.◆ Approval. Authorized service area contacts enter the assigned coach or mentor number, date, and sign the form.

[RC-0003, Child Abuse Registry Report Code Card](#)

Purpose	The code card provides a list of all coded responses necessary to interpret computerized records of child abuse investigations on the Automated Child Abuse and Neglect (ACAN) system.
Source	Print or photocopy supplies of the <i>Child Abuse Registry Report Code Card</i> as needed from the sample in the manual.