

WHAT IS A TDM FACILITATOR?

You may be wondering what a team decision-making facilitator does!

We have identified some qualities and responsibilities of the position, which may help to explain the facilitator's role:

1. TDM facilitators focus the groups' energy on a common task—to reach a decision about a placement issue that protects and provides safety for the child in the least restrictive/intrusive manner possible.
2. Facilitators assure that the purpose of the TDM meeting is understood and all participants have an opportunity to be involved. With the caseworker, they lead the group discussion that determines the placement/custody recommendation for the child.
3. Facilitators protect ideas and individuals from attack or being ignored. They provide a safe, supportive environment to permit communication.
4. Facilitators are sensitive and responsive to nonverbal cues. They must manage conflict and emotions.
5. Facilitators periodically summarize, clarify, reframe and identify areas of agreement to assist the group.
6. TDM facilitators assure that the situation is thoroughly examined, risks stated, family strengths recognized, goals verbalized, ideas brainstormed, quality decisions made with safety and action plans developed.
7. Facilitators are an information resource for the group. They are knowledgeable of laws, agency policies/procedures, services, best practice, etc. and monitor compliance with standards by staff.
8. Facilitators move the group through the problem-solving/decision-making process, maintaining reasonable time frames.
9. Facilitators manage the process and structure of the meeting, recognizing that the family and caseworker are the content experts. They are responsible to ensure that a high quality decision results from the meeting, intervening if necessary, as an experienced/knowledgeable participant.
10. Facilitators strive to develop a consensus decision with all participants, but always with agency staff in attendance.
11. Facilitators accurately record information and decisions. They provide a copy of the safety/action steps at the completion of the staffing to all participants.
12. Facilitators are committed to encouraging professional development in agency staff. They model supportive, non-threatening, respectful behavior. When strengths and growth areas are observed with agency participants, they share their perceptions with the worker and supervisor.