

SUPERVISORY COMPETENCIES

Preparation for Adulthood: Supervising for Success

Develop and maintain positive permanent connections between youth and caring adults.

Supervisory Competencies:

- Appreciates that developing and maintaining positive permanent connections for youth is critical to preparing them for productive and successful adulthood.
- Knows and understands the definition of permanency and corresponding practices for achieving permanence for youth.
- Knows and understands the policies and procedures set forth by the Department that govern the range of permanency options available to youth in foster care.
- Knows how to support the development of youth and adult partnerships and their maximize their potential for achieving permanency for youth.
- Knows how (to support staff) in providing opportunities and experiences that build relationships between youth and adults.
- Can and is able to (support staff in) working with youth and their birth, fictive, foster and adoptive families to create, maintain and sustain relationships.
- Can and is able to utilize a range of techniques, including family finding, to support the intentional development of relationships that result in positive permanent connections for youth.

Guiding Principles:

- The development of positive, meaningful relationships that foster a sense of belonging and connectedness over time is encouraged and supported.
- Adults and youth are consistently and actively engaged together in activities and experiences.
- Cooperative experiences that build trust and foster honest and open communication are developed and supported.

Practices:

- Provide youth with opportunities to create, maintain and strengthen supportive and sustaining relationships with birth families including siblings, fictive kin, foster and adoptive families and significant others.
- Provide opportunities for youth to develop connections to peers and mentors.
- Provide opportunities for youth to be engaged in youth/adult partnerships.
- Provide intentional recruitment for permanent adult connections.
- Utilize family finding techniques to locate family members.

Actively engage youth in developing life skills that will prepare them for successful adulthood.

Supervisory Competencies:

- Appreciates that the development of life skills is ongoing and occurs throughout the lifespan.
- Knows and understands how to meaningfully engage young people in the acquisition of skills that will prepare them for successful and productive adulthood.
- Knows and understands that young people must play a central role in the development of their life skills goals.
- Knows how to provide both formal and informal learning opportunities for young people.
- Knows how to support life skills preparation through the provision of opportunities like mentoring and service learning.
- Can and is able to utilize a competency-based approach to life skills preparation.
- Can and is able to document skill acquisition through ongoing life skills assessment and the development of life skills portfolios.

Guiding Principles:

- Youth identify, develop, and practice life skills through “real world” experiences.
- Development of a holistic approach to life skill assessment.
- Youth have opportunities to make decisions and take responsibility for their choices.
- Youth receive support from caring adults throughout the skill-building process.
- Youth set challenging yet realistic goals.
- Youth recognize and celebrate their skills and accomplishments within their own definition of success and mastery.

Practices:

- Create experiences with youth that apply knowledge and skills learned in “real world” situations.
- Provide both formal and informal learning opportunities for young people using a competency-based approach to life skills preparation.
- Allow youth adequate time to talk about and reflect on the experience.
- Provide mentoring programs and service learning opportunities.
- Develop life skill portfolios that have evidence of skill acquisition as part of the transition plan

Relate to youth as resources rather than just recipients of services in the child welfare system.

Supervisory Competencies:

- Appreciates the differences between relating to young people as objects or recipients of service versus as resources.
- Knows and understands that a strength-based approach to working with youth is a key strategy for ensuring their successful preparation for adulthood.
- Knows and understands that training for both youth and adults is critical to the development of effective youth and adult partnerships.
- Knows how to support young people in creating their personal goal and transition plans.
- Knows how to plan for youth involvement in their program and agency
- Can and is able to create meaningful opportunities for young people and adults to build relationships and work together.
- Can and is able to work with diverse groups of youth and adults.

Guiding Principles:

- Meaningful opportunities for shared decision-making, planning and program implementation are provided for youth.
- Youth are taught to drive discussions and weigh options in creating personal goal plans as well as transition plans with support from agency staff and families.
- Promotion of intentional youth/adult partnerships.

Practices:

- Involve youth fully in the service planning and transition planning process.
- Plan for how youth will be involved in your program. Don't just add a representative youth or two to the adult planning group.
- Encourage diversity of membership without regard to race, ethnicity, age, disability, or sexual orientation.
- Provide training to youth and adults around working in partnership.
- Facilitate meaningful opportunities for youth and adults to work in partnership.

Create and maintain environments that promote physical and emotional safety and well being.

Supervisory Competencies:

- Appreciates that physical and emotional safety are of paramount importance to young people.
- Appreciates the significant impact of separation, loss and trauma on a youth's ability to achieve safety and well being.
- Knows and understands that rules, expectations, and consequences must be clearly articulated and applied fairly.
- Knows and understands that youth need support from caring adults to maintain safety and achieve well being.
- Knows how to incorporate goals around safety and well being into the transition plan.
- Can and is able to work with youth to address issues that threaten their safety and well being.
- Can and is able to work with youth to resolve issues related to separation, loss, and trauma.

Guiding Principles:

- Living arrangements, activities and programs are environments that maximize the safety and well-being of youth.
- Youth are encouraged to try new experiences through positive risk-taking.
- Rules, expectations and consequences are clear, consistent, developmentally appropriate and applied fairly.
- Help youth identify supportive adults to maintain personal safety and wellness.
- Provide youth opportunities to address issues of separation, loss and trauma in an effort to promote emotional health and well being.

Practices:

- Involve youth in determining and setting expectations for participation.
- Help adults appreciate the need for fair enforcement of rules.
- Develop rules and plan programs that encourage appreciation of diversity and diverse opinions.
- Develop transition plans that prioritize personal safety and emotional health.
- Provide support services that address the unresolved feelings or issues that have the potential to negatively impact the youth's preparation for adulthood.

Value the individual strengths and uniqueness of each youth.

Supervisory Competencies:

- Appreciates that young people possess a multitude of strengths, talents, hopes and dreams.

- Appreciates that youth possess a ‘culture’ that is unique to young people themselves.
- Knows and understands that exposure to a wide range of experiences and opportunities is critical to fostering a youth’s sense of self, purpose, and positive and productive future.
- Knows and understands that the accomplishments of young people MUST be recognized and celebrated.
- Knows how to apply the philosophy and practice of youth development to promoting the health and well being of youth.
- Knows how to support youth in developing an understanding of their personal history and a sense of cultural identity.
- Can and is able to utilize strengths-based practice to help youth identify their interests, goals and direction for the future.

Guiding Principles:

- A wide range of opportunities and experiences that facilitate discussion and reflection around ethical values, personal interests, strengths and accomplishments.
- Youth explore and value their diverse abilities, skills, interests and cultural background.
- Opportunities and experiences are provided to foster youths’ positive sense of purpose and view of the future.
- Youth are recognized for both their participation and achievement.

Practices:

- Use strengths-based materials that help youth discover their abilities, skills and interests.
- Create life books which help youth reflect on their placement history and cultural background.
- Create opportunities for youth to be involved in a wide range of experiences and activities that promote their positive development.
- Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of young people.

Involve a diverse array of stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive continuum of services and supports for youth transitioning out of the foster care system.

Supervisory Competencies:

- Appreciates that young people transitioning out of foster care need a range of supports and services that extend beyond the child welfare system.

- Knows and understands that collaboration and networking with multiple systems in the community is essential to creating a “safety net” for transitioning youth.
- Knows and understands that the development of comprehensive continuum of supports is the shared responsibility of the community.
- Knows how to reach out to and work with a diverse array of stakeholders to build and sustain a continuum of supports and services for young people.
- Knows how to effectively collaborate with a diverse array of both youth-serving and non-youth serving systems and stakeholders in the community.
- Can and is able to provide build awareness about challenges facing youth in foster care through public education and training.
- Can and is able to facilitate the involvement of young people in the community.
- Can and is able to create linkages to resources in the community for young people to promote their successful transitions to adulthood.

Guiding Principles:

- A comprehensive continuum of supports, services and opportunities to promote the safety and well being of young people involved with and transitioning from the foster care system.
- A diverse array of community stakeholders are involved and investing in preparing young people for adulthood.
- Effective community interactions and interagency collaboration model for youth the importance of networking and community support systems.

Practices:

- Identify existing community resources and link young people to services and supports prior to their discharge from foster care.
- Facilitate the involvement of youth with the community to promote a sense of connection and belonging.
- Provide cross system training and education about the challenges facing youth as they transition out of foster care.
- Engage both traditional and non-traditional partners in the community to broaden awareness and advocate for the need for services to prepare youth for adulthood.
- Create formalized mechanisms to facilitate collaborative efforts.

***Add Sources: CWLA Standards, NRC Permanency Framework, Promising Practices: Supporting Transition of Youth Served by the Foster Care System**