



STAFF AND PRACTICE-LEVEL READINESS (w/Worksheet)

Once leadership in the agency has an understanding of key implementation infrastructure and resources for the CFPM and is invested in proceeding, additional readiness work and infrastructure building will be important. Early readiness work by agency and community partners to identify the problem that partners are trying to solve and to discuss the responsiveness of the Practice Model in addressing that problem is an important backdrop to building staff readiness and infrastructure for the model.

Before proceeding with the readiness work on the following pages, jurisdictions are encouraged to undertake critical readiness work in the *Assessing Need, Commitment, Readiness and Fit* resource link on the Active Involved Community Partnership tab of the CFPM website. Ensuring that the community's perspective of the Practice Model is considered as early as possible values the role of community partners in guiding practice and system change and will likely provide community partners that can be leveraged to assist with communication and readiness-building activities with staff. Sharing community perspectives has an important impact on staff, increasing receptivity to the Practice Model, reinforcing awareness of the need for change, and decreasing resistance. For example, resistance sometimes comes when staff interprets change as leadership indirectly implying that they are not doing good work.

In one implementing jurisdiction, a group of social workers who were learning about the Practice Model had a big "aha" and released some significant tension upon learning that the practice behaviors in the model were not just developed by professionals, but were created with community partners, such as parent partners, cultural leaders, foster parents, and other community representatives. The fact that the behaviors were representative of the respect, interactions, and support that families and communities wanted to experience during involvement with the child welfare system made a critical difference in staff commitment to and valuing of the Practice Model.

The Staff and Practice-Level Readiness resource on the following pages is a printout tool and process designed to assist replicating jurisdictions to incorporate staff contributions and retain valued and aligned practices as an integral part of the Practice Model. An intensive focus on building readiness at all levels of the system is likely to pay off in higher levels of commitment, greater momentum for implementation, and a stronger trajectory overall for CFPM implementation and related system changes.

STAFF & PRACTICE-LEVEL READINESS: Shared Commitment to the Practice Model

Instructions: As with other readiness and capacity-building tools and activities in this manual, involving all levels of staff will generate the broadest perspective and assist the child welfare agency to plan and build readiness strategies that engage and are meaningful to staff across the organization.

Each area of readiness on the following page has an associated readiness goal that describes what readiness looks like for that area, followed by key questions to support strategic planning about whether/how to move forward. The following group processes may be helpful in discussing the readiness goals and key questions through local facilitation, valued group agreements and processes, and creativity rule!

- **Ground Rules:** All questions, suggestions, ideas, and worries are respected as constructive to the overall goals of assessing and building readiness.
- **Discussion and Consensus:** After discussion of the key questions and anything else important that the group needs to consider, encourage the group to re-read the Readiness Goal and come to consensus on how close the agency is to achieving the goal and demonstrating readiness in that area.
- **Group Consensus and Strategic Planning:** A scale of 5 to 1 is suggested.

5 = High Readiness/Goal Reached 1 = Low Readiness or Goal Not Yet Being Worked On

- **5s and 4s** can be considered **green** lights (move forward, even if there are a few readiness-building activities that might still be in process).
- **3s** can be considered **yellow** lights (only move forward if readiness-building activities have been developed, are being put in place, and the group agrees it is sensible to proceed).
- **2s and 1s** can be considered **red** lights (develop whatever readiness-building activities are needed; ensure there are clear steps, timelines, and responsible persons/teams identified to move them forward; and consider whether other areas of readiness can be worked on concurrently or if it is better to wait until readiness in this area is further developed).

READINESS: Shared Commitment to the Practice Model

VALUING STAFF IN THE PROCESS: This area of readiness ensures that the perspectives and contributions of social workers and staff within the agency are sought out and incorporated.

Readiness Goal: *All staff have been made aware of agency data and goals to address disparate outcomes in partnership with the community; staff considers the Practice Model a good fit for their work with children and families; and processes are in place to continuously engage staff and to receive and incorporate their feedback.*

Key Questions:

- Have social workers been informed of agency data and the agency's commitment to partner with communities and Tribes to improve outcomes for their children?
- Have social workers had opportunities to review, ask questions, and openly discuss the Practice Model with leaders and others in the organization?
- Have agency supervisors, managers, and leaders communicated to staff the good work they are already doing and how the Practice Model brings that good work into a cohesive and consistent approach for the agency and system to actively support?
- Do social workers believe the Practice Model is a good fit for the work they do with the diverse families they serve? How have their suggestions, concerns, and/or support been incorporated?
- How will staff be engaged in planning, implementation, and system change work in an ongoing way? How will their feedback continue to be heard and incorporated?

ONE COHESIVE PRACTICE APPROACH: This area of readiness addresses integration of local practice priorities that align with the Practice Model to establish and support one cohesive approach to practice.

Readiness Goal: *Local practice priorities have been identified that align with the Practice Model, and partners have agreed on the specific practices to be incorporated into the model so staff are trained, coached, and supported in one framework and model of practice.*

Key Questions:

- What practices are currently working well, and what new practices have been identified that might be brought in at the same time as the Practice Model?
- Do these new and existing practices align with the Practice Model? Which ones align well and are considered priorities for integration with the Practice Model?
- Have partners agreed that the priority practices will be integrated into the Practice Model, and it will be adopted as the central framework for child welfare practice and interactions with children, families, and partners?
- Who should be involved in integrating these priority practices with the Practice Model? What is the desired timeline and plan for getting this work done?