

SUPERVISOR MANUAL FOR THE

FIELD GUIDE TO FAMILY ADVOCACY







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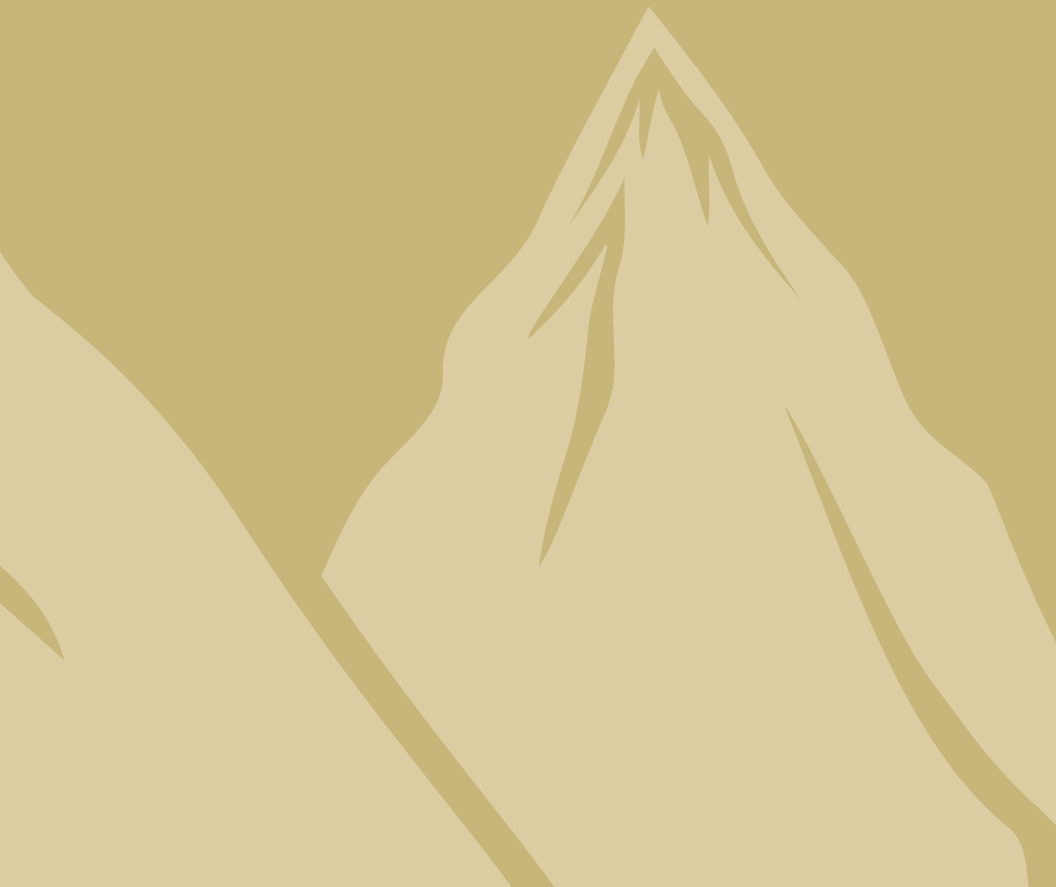


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INTRODUCTION

The Field Guide to Family Advocacy is a resource developed for family advocates at Children’s Advocacy Centers to help build a knowledge foundation for the advocacy component of the multidisciplinary team response, promote reflections on practical applications of that knowledge and serve as a vehicle for supervisory or peer conversations about the essential elements of advocacy. As a supervisor of a family advocate, this companion resource is intended to help you effectively utilize the Field Guide with the advocates you supervise. The first section covers the basics of supervision, which will help you establish a solid foundation in your supervisory practice. The second section is modeled after the Field Guide and takes you section by section with additional resources you can use to help orient family advocates to their important work at Children’s Advocacy Centers (CACs).

In preparation for the development of this supervisory guide, CAC family advocates were asked, “What do you want from a supervisor?” and “How would you want your supervisor to use this guide with you?” The results of those conversations are included throughout this supervisor’s guide. The Field Guide is intended to be an orientation tool for family advocates which, along with formal foundational training and good supervision, will provide the base knowledge to help advocates in their important work with children and families.

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of stylized, light green tents. Each tent is a simple silhouette with a pointed top and a small opening at the base. They are arranged in a grid-like fashion across the entire page.

PART 1

BASICS OF SUPERVISION

SUPERVISION

Kadushin (1992) defines a social work supervisor as:

“... an agency administrative staff member to whom authority is delegated to direct, coordinate, enhance and evaluate on-the-job performance of the supervisees for whose work he/she is held accountable.” (p. 21)

This definition can also be used for a family advocate supervisor.

Kadushin determined that in implementing this responsibility, “the supervisor performs administrative, educational, and supportive functions with the supervisee in the context of a positive relationship” (p. 21). The balance between administrative, educational and supportive roles is ever changing according to the needs of advocates and other demands. Different levels of skills, knowledge and experience of advocates require the supervisor to adjust his or her own behaviors and activities. The needs of a new advocate are not the same as those of the advocate who has been doing this work for years.

The supervisor will also excel at and/or like different aspects of the supervisory position. Administration, education and support are all equally important to sustain good agency and client outcomes. The supervisor may conduct self-evaluations or seek out supervisee, peer, administrative, board or other professional feedback concerning strengths and needs for improvement. The three areas of supervision that Kadushin (1992) described have differing tasks.

ADMINISTRATIVE, EDUCATIONAL AND SUPPORTIVE AREAS OF SUPERVISION

The *administrative* area of supervision includes recruitment, selection and placement of staff, work planning, assignment, coordination, monitoring, review, evaluation and communication. The supervisor may find that he or she serves as an administration buffer or a change agent. The supervisor may be the middle person that serves to communicate with direct service providers, administrators, boards, or from the top down. Administrative tasks may include maintaining communication and mediation between units or peers.

The *educational* area of supervision involves identifying what the advocate needs to know and either teaching the advocate or providing opportunities for learning. The supervisor must give the advocate time and attention to guide and instruct the advocate to become competent in his or her work. Sometimes this involves sharing experience and may include helping the advocate to learn from mistakes or to struggle to find answers instead of simply telling the advocate what to do. Kadushin (1992) also promoted the consideration of the uniqueness of the learner. The learning style of the advocate should be evaluated and the supervisor adjust accordingly. Kadushin encouraged regularly scheduling meetings to conduct the educational component of supervision.

The *supportive* area of supervision has been given much attention in the literature. Kadushin (1992) maintains that this is done to help the advocate adjust to job-related stress. The job of the supervisor is to enable the advocate to provide effective and efficient services to clients, but this is not possible if the advocate is not coping with job-related stress. The psychological well-being of an advocate is essential and is enhanced by a supervisor being encouraging, affirming, empathetic, empowering and kind (Kadushin, 1992). The advocate needs a psychological and physical environment that enables him or her to do the job in an effective and efficient manner.

Pryce, Shackelford & Pryce (2007) found throughout the literature that human service professionals leave employment most often due to lack of supportive supervision and stay in a position longer, with better outcomes, when a supervisor is supportive.

There is evidence that positive organizational culture is linked to supportive supervision. The nature of the family advocate position requires agencies to offer as much support as possible in order to retain the family advocate. It is important that victims and families have the same person to work with—from initial services, throughout the ups and downs of prosecution, and all the way through the healing process.

NEED FOR LEADERSHIP

Another important task of a supervisor is to be a leader. Leadership is entwined with the previously discussed areas of supervision but may also be viewed as a separate function of supervision. Kouzes and Posner (2017) discussed five practices of a good leader. These include:

- Inspiring a Shared Vision
- Enabling Others to Act
- Encouraging the Heart
- Modeling the Way
- Challenging the Process

Leaders are given true authority through earning respect from others. Power comes from respect and combined attributes that lead to competency. Supervisors have authority and power by the position they hold, but they are not a leader until the advocates believe that they are competent and they supervise in such a way as to earn respect. This involves being creative, inspiring, committed, visionary, motivating and loyal. A leader can develop a team of like members.

NEW ADVOCATES NEED OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN

As the supervisor begins work with a new family advocate, it is important to realize that the family advocate should not be given a caseload with no preparation. The family advocate needs time to talk with the supervisor to get a firm grasp of what the work entails, but the family advocate also needs a chance to see someone do the actual work. The new advocate needs the supervisor to be patient. Even when someone comes to a new job with experience and education, the professional does not know the preferred practice model, the specific client population and needs of the clients, the documentation requirements and general work environment of the Child Advocacy Center. It will take time to become familiar with the members of the multidisciplinary team and know how to work together with many different professionals. It is our hope that this manual will be used in conjunction with the Field Guide to Family Advocacy and that the supervisor will take time to work through each chapter with the new advocate. It is also suggested that chapters are taken one at a time with learning opportunities and assignments to coincide with reading the information. That said, one of the things family advocates frequently cited is their need for peer-to-peer support and interaction. As the family advocate's supervisor, you can support this positive practice by encouraging your advocate to take advantage of peer relationships, formal and informal.

Our intended outcome is to have well-prepared family advocates who will serve our victims and families well and stay committed to the important work that we do in our communities.



INTERACTION WITH THE SUPERVISOR

Family advocates expressed the need for an involved supervisor.

Lawrence Shulman (2010) called this “interactive supervision.” He stated, “more is ‘caught’ by staff than ‘taught’ by the supervisor”(p.15). Supervisees learn what a supervisor truly feels about helping and advocating by observing the supervisor in action. Shulman identifies this as the parallel process.

The supervisor models the expectations of professional relationships between family advocates and clients through his or her professional relationships with staff. The advocate, of course, is not the client of the supervisor nor is this a therapeutic relationship. The ability of the supervisor to communicate effectively, use one’s professional self, develop professional relationships and rapport, emit trustworthiness and integrity, and be genuine, empathetic and honest is the best method of instilling these traits in advocates.

UNDERSTAND THE PARALLEL PROCESS

The *parallel process* is evident throughout the work environment (Shulman 2010). If the supervisor rushes through meetings, not listening, barking out orders, only giving information and not allowing or answering questions, only criticizing with no acknowledgment of strengths, and being only task oriented while displaying emotional detachment, the supervisor will have a high probability of seeing the family advocate treating clients the same. Advocates working with clients may imitate supervisors regarding the amount of attention given to verbalized needs and feelings, anticipating needs, level of empathy, time management, organization, crisis management and follow-through. Supervisory attention given to the effects of working with victims of trauma on advocates enables advocates to in turn provide attention to the trauma effects that victims and family members are experiencing. Family advocates want supervisors to model appropriate and needed skills.

One of the primary charges of an advocate is to elevate the voice of the

family in the context of the team. However, in the same way that families are at a substantial power differential with the team, advocates can also find themselves near the bottom of the team’s power hierarchy. As a supervisor, be aware of this dynamic and do what you can to promote the voice of the advocate on the MDT, so that they, in turn, can elevate the voice of the family. This is parallel process in action.

INSTILL TRUST

Trust is paramount. The ability of the advocate to be open with the supervisor, sharing mistakes as well successes, creates the type of organizational culture that is conducive to clients receiving quality services. Advocates will know, just as clients know, when efforts are not genuine. False promises, dishonesty, incompetency, lack of appropriate confidentiality, withholding needed information, and perceived harm will give advocates reason not to trust the supervisor. Supervisors can admit to not knowing all the answers and can present opportunities to learn together. Attempts to cover up inadequacies can result in resentments, as will behaviors that are not culturally responsive. Be cognizant that those you supervise may easily detect attempts to use “techniques” on them; watch for the family advocate’s response and, as a rule, try to be genuine and transparent. Authenticity will help ensure trust is built and sustained. The use of threats, fear tactics and control from a power position may achieve the completion of a task or elicit a desired behavior, but these will not instill trust and allow for a positive working relationship. Family advocates want to be a part of a team in which the supervisor is trustworthy. The modeling of trust may also help team members to be trustworthy. The work to be done in a CAC is difficult, and it is important to know that the supervisor can be trusted.

TUNE IN

The family advocate’s supervisor is more effective if able to tune in to the advocate’s feelings, thoughts, concerns and fears (Schwartz, 1976; Shulman, 2010). *There are risks when the advocate is honest with a supervisor.* Negative feedback is possible, and the advocate likely does

not want to show incompetence, inability to deal with trauma, or lack of knowledge and skills – especially coping skills. The advocate wants to maintain a professional image and maintain a supervisor’s respect. Recognition and acknowledgment of an advocate’s reluctance to honestly share, along with assurance that the advocate is not expected to know everything upon hire and will not lose respect from the supervisor for asking questions or expressing feelings and fears, will enable a professional relationship to start and grow.

Even when a supervisor is tuning in and anticipating the advocate’s need for assurance, there may be reluctance to be honest with the supervisor. This may possibly be the result of past experiences with authority. The supervisor can watch for behaviors to identify reluctance to being honest about capabilities or ability to handle the work. The advocate may be very factual, showing few feelings about the victims and situations. The advocate might change the subject when the supervisor approaches a painful subject, mistake, or ineffective or incomplete work. The advocate may be avoiding certain tasks or has been less compassionate with certain clients. There are supervisees that are known for avoiding conversations, staffing of cases, or meetings with supervisors. If the supervisor allows evasiveness, the advocate will get the message that the supervisor is reluctant to face advocate’s feelings or is not secure in the role of supervisor. If the supervisor is tuned in, understands and accepts his or her role as supervisor, is culturally responsive and willing to directly discuss the realities and requirements of the work, the interactions will lead to more positive results.

Attempting to understand situations from all points of view and not being quick to propose answers or solutions prior to knowing as much as possible will lead to better responses from advocates.

Advocates given a chance to voice their own concerns first can better hear the supervisor’s concerns. Supervisors need to take time to actively listen without interruptions and multi-tasking. This leads to advocates taking time to actively listen to supervisors and to clients. The combined efforts of the team leads to better served clients and achievement of the desired agency outcomes.

GIVE FEEDBACK – POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE – FORMAL AND INFORMAL

Advocates expressed a desire for feedback about their successes, strengths and areas for improvement. This should occur on a regular basis and also with a formal evaluation process in which written feedback is offered. The advocate should be encouraged to self-evaluate and can be given a template for this according to individual job descriptions. Job descriptions, roles and responsibilities need to be clear and presented to the advocate in written form. The roles and responsibilities need to be discussed and understood. Standards and expectations of the supervisor need to be explained when a new advocate is hired or when a team has a new supervisor. Consequences for not fulfilling job requirements should also be delineated in office policy and made available to advocates. If a supervisor is not satisfied with work performance, this should be immediately brought to the advocate’s attention. Delayed communication of dissatisfaction and accumulated infractions do not create trust or a perception of a safe work environment. Delayed communication about performance issues can also breed resentment from those in the office who are effectively doing their jobs or who are carrying the load of the advocate who is not doing his or her job. Family advocates voiced the need to be given timely feedback and, if negative, a chance to make improvements and opportunities to learn.

SUPERVISOR LIABILITY

Reamer (2013) discusses the four essential elements of professional malpractice: 1) there was a legal duty between the practitioner and the injured party at the time of the alleged malpractice, 2) the practitioner was derelict in that duty, either through an action or inaction, 3) the client suffered harm or injury, and 4) the injury or harm was directly or proximately caused by the practitioner’s dereliction of duty. There is a latin term *Respondeat Superior, which means “let the master respond.”* This refers to the vicarious liability of a supervisor. A supervisor is responsible for the actions of his or her supervisees that were conducted during the course of employment (Reamer, 2013).

The potential liability for the supervisor is if there was a lack of necessary information provided to the supervisee, a failure to determine error(s), failure to meet regularly with the supervisee, failure to review and approve supervisee decisions, failure to provide adequate coverage in the supervisee's absence or a failure to make sure adequate records were kept (Reamer, 2013).

The family advocate might fail to report a suspected case of child abuse or neglect, inadequately assess the safety and risk in a situation and a child is harmed as a result, fail to provide parents or caregivers with their rights or fail to offer adequate or appropriate services to a victim and family. If the supervisor is unaware or is aware and does not take action to remedy the situation, the supervisor can be held liable for the actions of the family advocate.

PLAN FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development plans are helpful to advocates not only to improve knowledge and skills but to help the professional supervisor/supervisee relationship. When a supervisor takes an interest in the professional growth of an advocate, the result is usually improved morale and skills. Advocates want to work in a fair workplace in which the expectations are clear and everyone is given a chance to succeed, and professional development is a clear way to make growth possible.

A good professional development process is also a way to model planning with the client. The most important modeling comes from working with the family advocate to determine his or her strengths and needs and to allow the advocate to have input in how the goals are achieved. The advocate should give input as to what goals they will work toward and when they will know there is progress.

STEPS IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

- First determine what needs to improve
- Prioritize the improvement needs
 - » What would be a quick win/achievement?
 - » What is most important? To me? To my work? To my clients? To my agency?
 - » What is achievable with current resources?

Take one need at a time to go through the following process:

- Set your goals:
 - » Write them down and keep them in front of you
 - » SMART – specific, measurable, achievable/agreed upon, realistic/results-focused, time bound/time based
- Determine your needed resources:
 - » Education materials, time, support, money, facility, supplies
 - » Who can help with obtaining the needed resources?
 - » Who else might this be important to?
- What are your barriers/obstacles/frustrations/challenges?
 - » People, time, policy, resources, energy, status quo, opportunities, fear, resistance to change
- What are your strengths?
 - » Knowledge, experience, skills, values, ethics, personality, humor, intelligence, energy, desire
- How can you use your strengths to overcome your barriers?
 - » Determine your steps
 - What are you going to do?
 - By when?
- What will you see as a direct product of your efforts?
 - » What changes do you expect?
 - » How will you know if change is occurring?
 - » What needs to happen by when?
 - » Signs of success?

- Desired effect – possible words to use in writing goals: increase, decrease, maintain, reduce, improve, enable, me, named person, unit, agency, client population, community, the ability to, skills for, knowledge of, confidence in, likelihood of, incidence of
 - » What?
 - » By how much? (not always needed)
 - » By when?
- Determine measurable outcome(s)
 - » What is the connection between what I am doing to improve my skills and the final results that I desire?
- How will I reward myself along the way? What encouragement do I need? Who can help to encourage me in this process?
- Is this something I really want to commit to?
- What happens if I do not follow through or get the results I desire?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE SUPERVISOR

The supervisor can develop his or her own professional development plan (or if available, with the help of a director) regarding supervisory skill development and new knowledge that is needed to fulfill the supervisor role in the agency. Most supervisors learned how to be a supervisor from those who supervised them in the past. The supervisor may have developed very effective supervisory skills from the role models observed. Some past supervisors, however, may have modeled very ineffective supervisory practices. Unfortunately, even though the practices were disliked, they might be imitated. If a supervisory behavior is not eliciting the desired results, it is possible that one or more of the less than desirable practices were learned and incorporated into the current supervisor's practice. If it is not working, change the behavior. The supervisor is not immediately a strong supervisor just because he or she was a strong direct service provider or advocate. The supervisory skill set is different and at a higher skill level than direct services to clients.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Supervisors need to be aware of all the diversity in the workplace. Race, age, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, education level, academic discipline, religion, gender, socioeconomic class and other differences can lead to miscommunication or perceived or actual offensive behavior. Different values and beliefs can lead to conflict. Work behaviors and expectations of the work or beliefs concerning relationships with supervisors can differ. It is important to be cognizant of differences in order to not behave in an incompetent manner that creates division or strife in the workplace. Being aware of potential issues but also understanding how to create energy and ideas through the welcoming of diversity will enable better communication, relationships and team building.

CHANGING ROLES FROM ADVOCATE TO SUPERVISOR

There are instances when a supervisor has been promoted into the position from within the agency and has previously been a co-worker to those now being supervised. Special attention to this circumstance may be required. The skills learned as a direct worker can be used, but new skills need to be developed. The supervisor needs to be aware that it is easy to slip into doing the "work" with clients, as this is more familiar than the tasks and role of supervisor. Professional boundaries are different between a supervisor and an advocate than a peer-to-peer relationship. Boundaries will need to be clear and defined.

SUPERVISORY BOUNDARIES

Dual relationships may exist between the supervisor and the family advocate. This is when two or more roles exist with the same person. When they exist it is important to take precautions to make sure that judgment is not impaired, favoritism does not exist, persecution does not happen and no exploitation occurs. A self-evaluation is needed on a regular basis to prevent this from occurring.

Boundaries function to support and protect the supervisor and the family advocate. They protect the private world from the work world and vice versa. Supervisors can lose perspective and a lack of professionalism might occur if boundaries are blurred and not maintained. If an advocate is in the midst of personal problems or is having a difficult time with the work, supervisors, especially in this type of work, might tend to fall into a boundary-blurred relationship of trying to help. This can result in confusing agendas, inappropriateness and both being put in vulnerable relationships. Family advocates or supervisors might disclose too much personal information and a “friendship” or intimate relationship might develop. This may have previously started when a supervisor was a co-worker to those now supervised.

A series of small actions may form a pattern of behavior and the supervisor could find that this is a slippery slope. Behaviors to avoid are lengthy discussions in private (behind closed doors), allowing the supervision session to be an arena for disclosure of personal problems and not one for discussing the work, and engaging in gossip or disparaging remarks about other staff members. If role reversal, secrecy or abuse of personal privilege occurs, the supervisor will probably need help in rectifying the situation of blurred boundaries. Not stopping the fall down the slippery slope can result in an impact on significant others, the organizational culture and the others who are supervised. The reputation of the supervisor and/or the family advocate may be damaged, a career may be ruined or ended or the agency reputation may be damaged.

Questions A Supervisor Might Ask Him/Herself

- “When something happens – good or bad – with whom do I share this event?”
- “Do I have a peer group at work with whom I can discuss supervisory issues?”
- “When I have a personal problem, with whom do I discuss?”
- “Do I engage in inappropriate discussions with a family advocate whom I supervise?”
- “With whom do I spend my leisure time?”

- “Do I respect professional boundaries and privacy of those I supervise?”
- “Am I equally accessible to all of my supervisees?”
- “Do I have secret or special relationships at work?”
- “Does my workplace have cliques or groups and do I align myself with one group?”
- “Is any self-disclosure that I do in supervisory sessions relevant to the work and appropriate for the circumstance?”

Supervision requires a mechanism being in place for family advocates to address a perceived blurred boundary or any misuse of power. Even if the supervisor does not exert a misuse of power and control, the differential in positions exists. It is important to give boundaries a regular checkup.





PART 2

USING THE FIELD GUIDE TO FAMILY ADVOCACY

USING THE FIELD GUIDE TO FAMILY ADVOCACY

The Field Guide to Family Advocacy is broken into 10 Sections, with the intent that each section would help create a framework for a supervisory session. It is intended that these sessions be an hour weekly, at a minimum. The Field Guide includes two types of questions:

- **CASE STUDY QUESTIONS:** these questions occur before every chapter and should be considered before and after reading each section.
- **Reflections:** these questions are at the end of each section and encourage personal reflection. They can provide ideas for meaningful conversations during supervision.

INTRODUCTION & CASE STUDY

Direct the family advocate to read the scenario. Meet with the advocate to talk about the scenario. The advocate will want to know, “What would we normally do in a situation like this?” Use this as a start for discussing the general work of a family advocate and your overall expectations of the advocate. Listen to the family advocate’s concerns and answer questions.

Arrange for the advocate to monitor an initial phone call, intake and assessment and then discuss what was learned after this assignment. Allow the family advocate to view several interactions with clients. Assess the skill level and knowledge of the advocate through discussion of what he or she observed while shadowing, and assign the first client as appropriate. Ask another advocate to be in the room during the first interviews to aid the new advocate. If no one else is available to do this, the supervisor would need to be in the room to help the new family advocate in the first few interviews. It would be best for new staff to work through at least the first five sections of this guide with the supervisor prior to advancing to work with the first family.

As knowledge and skills are determined to be in need of improvement, the supervisor should assess the preferred learning style of the advocate and create learning opportunities to improve as necessary. Remember to *include* the advocate in any discussion concerning training needs and to work *with* the advocate on a professional development plan.

This is an opportune time to talk with the new advocate about the *professional use of self*. The family advocate will bring his or her own style into the professional relationship. There is no cookie cutter approach, and the advocate does not need to be an exact copy of the other family advocates, those he or she shadows, or the supervisors in how they work with clients. The new family advocate will need to become comfortable with CAC’s process, policy, procedures and practice before he or she will relax enough to allow his or her own traits and characteristics to be used. The family advocate needs assurance during the first weeks on the job. There is a lot to learn, and new advocates will vary in skills, knowledge and education. The supervisor needs to adjust accordingly, to be available for questions and to spend needed time on the educational and supportive roles of a supervisor.

This is a good time to discuss terminology used by the agency, the mission of the agency and the different roles and responsibilities of staff members.

Section 1 – History of the Victims’ Rights Movement: Guiding Our Victim Advocacy Efforts (Field Guide, pg 9)

Direct the family advocate to answer the questions before the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a time for supervision. Every effort should be made to keep appointments for supervisory sessions. The family advocate needs to keep these appointments, as well. Some supervisors and advocates are wise to determine a set time every week or twice a week at the beginning of their work together. Supervisors do need to have a set time each week for every person supervised during which case staffings and other discussions can occur. There may also be need for group case staffings and staff meetings in addition to the weekly supervision.

The intent of this section is to ground the advocate in the history and context of the advocacy movement. This is a good time to talk with the advocate concerning his or her attitudes and beliefs about victims' rights, which may be grounded in the advocate's cultural background. Discuss the agency values and beliefs concerning victims' rights. New advocates may take it for granted that everyone believes in human rights and that it has always been this way. Many new family advocates could be too young to remember times prior to women's rights, child sexual abuse being recognized and prosecuted, or victims of domestic violence situations being protected. The new advocate might be from a country in which victims were not given rights or domestic violence and child abuse were not prosecuted.

Discuss the underserved areas that exist and lack of services that are needed by clients. Spend time on the advocate's role in the community.

Discuss the questions for reflection. (Field Guide, pg 11)

Section 2 – Overview of CAC and MDT Operations (Field Guide, pg 13)

Direct the family advocate to answer the questions before the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a time for a supervisory session to discuss. Thoroughly discuss the answers to the questions. Not all MDT members will have the same attitude about Sophia and her mom being allowed to live in the U.S. Use this discussion to talk about how the team works and what happens when there are disagreements. Thoroughly discuss the roles of each member of the MDT and how the CAC model works. Talk about the development of MDTs and the relationship to CACs. Give the history of improving services to victims.

It is important for the family advocate to attend an MDT case review meeting prior to presenting information at an MDT meeting. If the agency serves more than one MDT, the advocate should have the opportunity to visit each team and meet the members. If team members were absent, it would be recommended that the family advocate be accompanied to meet the MDT members and be given the opportunity to initiate professional

relationships. You may want to use the graphics on pages 15 and 16 to talk through your local process.

After the family advocate attends various meetings, meet to discuss what was viewed and answer questions that the advocate has concerning procedures, occurrences or outcomes. The reflection questions will stimulate discussion regarding the functioning of the teams and if services are being provided respectfully and uniquely. The supervisor could share system improvements that are goals of the agency and ask for the family advocate's initial assessment on possible system improvement. The family advocate is viewed as an integral part of system improvement. Remember that in many communities, advocates do not yet have the same perception of equal power as other members of the team. As a supervisor, you can play a role in promoting the advocate's voice at the table.

If a resource guide exists, make this available to the family advocate as well as names, positions, agencies and contact information for members of the MDT.

Section 3 – Basics of Family Advocacy (Field Guide, pg 23)

Direct the advocate to answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a supervisory session to discuss the answers to the questions. This will enable the supervisor to assess the grasp the family advocate has on the role and responsibilities of the family advocate.

Break the duties and activities down into sections as appropriate and assign the advocate each activity to shadow and then discuss with the supervisor. Use the reflection questions to focus the discussion. There is a lot of information about the nuts and bolts of the work in this section. Spending time on this now will enable the family advocate to not miss pieces of the process and to be successful.

Use this time to emphasize the importance of building rapport and developing relationships with the alleged victim and non-offending

caregiver. Ask the family advocate how they think they will approach relationship building with families. The family advocate should be able to give examples of what they have seen work thus far and what strengths they have that will help them succeed in this process.

Role-playing with the family advocate as Sophia or her mother might be helpful during the supervisor session.

Section 4 – Understanding Crisis, Trauma and Grief (Field Guide, pg 35)

Direct the advocate to answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a supervisory session to discuss the answers to the questions. Do not assume the family advocate has been educated regarding crisis, the grief process or trauma. The advocate may or may not have the knowledge and skills necessary to educate the victim and family members. In addition, for a new advocate this can be one of the most intimidating parts of the job, as emotions can run high. Explore the advocate's level of comfort with families experiencing crisis.

Go over the information in the guide and assess the advocate's understanding and ability to explain the grief process. Discuss what the family and victim are losing during the crisis in the scenario. By now the family advocate has shadowed family interviews, and different family scenarios from the actual workplace could be discussed in relation to how an advocate can help a family through this process.

Assess the family advocate's ability to empathize with the victim and family members. Discuss the uniqueness of how each person deals with grief, loss and crisis. Make sure the advocate has the ability to assess if someone is a danger to him/herself or others. The advocate needs to know the appropriate referral sources for depression assessment and the correct steps to take if a client expresses thoughts of harm to self or others.

Section 5 – The Importance of Understanding Cultural Differences (Field Guide, pg 43)

Direct the advocate to answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a supervisory session to discuss the answers to the questions.

The discussion for the MDT and the reflection questions will be very useful in determining the potential for unfair treatment or biases that exist. Talk about the advocate's known biases and stereotypes from a self-assessment. Give attention to what is believed about serving children and teens with behavior issues, impairments or developmental delays. Are there stereotypes that the advocate might have about any group that have been noticed in any MDT case review meeting or when watching a forensic interview? Spend time talking about biases of professionals regarding custody battles and child abuse reports. Also spend time discussing biases and stereotypes concerning various disciplines and professionals who are members of the MDT.

Does the community currently have any groups that are facing discrimination? Is there any current event that has led to disparaging remarks in the media or the community about certain agencies or service professionals who are on the MDT? Discuss the state of discrimination and prejudices in the community and views regarding perception, whether gossip or factual. Is there a history of discrimination and prejudice in the area? Who are the minority groups? Who are the dominant groups? Does this entail numbers or power positions? If these issues are present, how will the family advocate work with families to ensure fair treatment?

Also discuss the possible biases and stereotypes that the client may have about the family advocate and family services in general. Ask the advocate about the possible biases against law enforcement, attorneys and court personnel. Ask the advocate if it is important to know about the clients past encounters with those who are members of the MDT. Discuss the possible stereotypes and biases of a parent who was raised in foster care being told to bring a child to the CAC. Sex trafficked teens might

come with a lack of trust toward law enforcement and service providers if these services were not accessible or helpful in the past. The advocate should be aware that client biases and stereotypes could block the development of a working relationship.

Discuss the use of interpreters and proper protocol. Give the family advocate a list of contacts to obtain interpreters.

Section 6 – Building Relationships: Communication Skills (Field Guide, pg 49)

Direct the advocate to answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a supervisory session to discuss the answers to the questions. The family advocate's ability to listen should be assessed. Work with the advocate to improve any area of communication needed. One possible issue might be whether or not the family advocate is capable of wiping away any interference from the mind or the environment and totally focusing on the client. Model active listening for the advocate by effectively listening to the concerns that the advocate expresses during the supervisory sessions.

One of the reflection questions asks the advocate about challenges the advocate has in hearing and understanding the issues and experiences of the families and victims. Explore this with the family advocate and use the techniques mentioned in the Field Guide.

Determine if role-play would be appropriate to teach effective listening and communication. The original scenario might be used or a situation in which the advocate is facing challenges.

Section 7 – Family Assessments, Referral and Follow-Up (Field Guide, pg 55)

Direct the advocate to answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a supervisory session to discuss

the answers to the questions. Spend time discussing Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Help the family advocate to really walk in the family's shoes and figure out what it would be like to not know how you were going to feed your children or if they would have shelter, all the while an advocate is telling you that you and your child need therapy. Discuss with the advocate that the needs of a family need to be met, and not meeting basic needs or giving them the attention needed can be a barrier to protecting the child from further victimization.

One possible exercise to help the family advocate understand and empathize is to direct the family advocate to use the income of a single parent making minimum wage at a full-time hourly job and do a budget for the family in the community that surrounds the CAC. Discuss what happens to the budget when the single parent takes off work to come to the CAC, therapy, medical appointments or court. What services are needed to make sure the basic needs of the family are met?

Discuss with the advocate that there are barriers to clients following through with referrals to services beyond budgetary or transportation constraints. The client may not have had a good experience in school and is afraid of going to a "class." Attending a group session of any type might be an activity that creates anxiety for the client. Therapy may be very frightening, as clients are often fearful of opening up old wounds that seem to be put away and forgotten. Discuss with the advocate that not following through might have any unknown reason and explore how to work through the anxiety and fears of the client.

The family advocate needs to also be aware that sometimes the referral was not the right "fit," or the service is not meeting the need of the client. The refusal to return to therapy or for medical follow-up should be explored with the client, and it is possible that the client might need a different referral.

Section 8 – Caring for Caregivers: Ensuring a Trauma-Informed, Family-Focused Approach (Field Guide, pg 65)

Direct the advocate to answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a supervisory session to discuss the answers to the questions. The determination of whether or not the non-offending caregiver is truly non-offending is difficult for family advocates. It is hard for them to understand how a caregiver would not be able to protect a child. At the root of this discomfort for many is an unwillingness or inability to think this could happen to his or her own child. It is also hard to determine if a caregiver is telling the truth. The supervisor needs to explore the difficulties in these determinations on a case-by-case basis with the advocate. Explore the reasons for the advocate's thoughts and beliefs about the caregiver.

If the caregiver is non-offending, the grief, shame and guilt can be tremendous. The advocate will need supervisory time and attention in learning how to help the caregiver when these emotions are verbalized and there is an accompanying show of feelings. Review the tips for caregivers found in the Field Guide.

The advocate will have feelings, thoughts and questions about perpetrators. The supervisor will need to be available for the advocate to ask questions and learn about perpetrator behaviors. The family advocate may have watched several forensic interviews by this time and have strong feelings about the alleged perpetrators. They may be preparing to go to court or they may have already watched a child testify about being abused. Give the advocate time to share thoughts and feelings about the crimes committed. If the family advocate is new to this work, they need time to sort through the horrific acts toward children that they are learning about through this work.

The dynamics of domestic violence need to be discussed. Assess the advocate's knowledge of the domestic violence cycle and the dangerous situations of families living with this in the family home. The advocate's

skills need to include working with a non-offending parent who is afraid of the alleged perpetrator due to past domestic violence.

The topic of child-on-child sexual abuse and violence needs to be discussed. The advocate will need to be aware of the difficult situation of a mother of two children – one who is a victim and another who is an alleged perpetrator.

Talk about ability and willingness as two different qualities to look for in the non-offending parent's protective capacities. The discussion should also determine the advocate's differentiation between safety of and risk to the child. Talk to the family advocate about the need to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the local child protective services agency and the protocol for when these issues are discovered during the advocate's work with the parent, victim or family members. Help the advocate to determine which factors need to be shared with the local child protection agency or law enforcement and/or at the MDT case review meeting.

Section 9 – Investigation Process and Court Preparation (Field Guide, pg 73)

Direct the advocate to answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a supervisory session to discuss the answers to the questions. Ensure the advocate understands the role of the family advocate during these procedures. If the advocate has not been a part of the regular advocacy case coordination/management meetings, introduce the advocate to other advocates outside the agency and ensure that the advocate attends the case coordination/management meetings. The advocate should be involved in a court preparation for a victim and family prior to being required to prepare a child and family for court. The first time an advocate works with a victim and family on court preparation, it would be beneficial to have someone who has done this before to partner with the family advocate.

Review the types of court in which the child might be involved. This might be a youth or family court, custody hearing or criminal proceedings. The

supervisor should review the need for the advocate to acknowledge, honor and celebrate the child's courage at all times and all parts of the court processes. Emphasize the advocate's responsibility to accompany and support the victim, caregivers and family throughout the court proceeding. Talk about follow-up and anticipating the needs of the clients.

Section 10 – Addressing the Impact of the Work: Self-Care for Advocates

(Field Guide, pg 81)

Direct the advocate to answer the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to read the chapter. Schedule a supervisory session to discuss the answers to the questions. This section may need to be reviewed every few months with the new advocate. Experienced supervisors will pick up on symptoms of vicarious trauma. If this is not something that the supervisor has had modeled for them or the knowledge and skills are not present, it would be wise to add this to a professional development plan. Advocates need to acquire knowledge and skills regarding their own self-care, including early identification of warning signs. Review the warning signs that the advocate may experience when he or she has difficulty with a child's traumatic situation. Discuss the triggers that the advocate has determined might give them problems. The advocate may have had some of the symptoms prior to the discussion or may be having symptoms at the time of the discussion.

Talk about what the family advocate does for self-care and help him or her develop a proactive plan related to identifying and coping with their vicarious trauma. Ask the advocate what the supervisor should pay attention to when working with the advocate in order to help the advocate identify that trauma responses are occurring. Monitor amount of overtime hours and the lack of taking breaks during the day or vacation days. Monitor for other warning signs and model appropriate self-care. Identify counselors and therapists that are trauma-informed and can be available to the family advocate, if needed.

The supervisor can be a good role model for appropriate self-care and positive coping mechanisms. This discussion can occur in staff meetings, as well. The more it is identified and openly discussed, the healthier the advocate and the entire staff will be, and the better services to the clients will be.



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PART 3

CONCLUSION

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In their role at the CAC, family advocates have potential to partner, for positive change, with families impacted by abuse. While professional growth should be a journey grounded in foundational and ongoing training, good supervision and work like the work you've done with your family advocate using the Field Guide to Family Advocacy lays a foundation for integrating learning into good practice.

CACs are built on the team model with the recognition that families have better outcomes when we all work together. The potential of a strong supervisor-supervisee relationship can model the teamwork we want threaded throughout all our work at CACs. Thank you for the professionalism, devotion and care you bring to your work as a supervisor—your CAC team and community are strengthened by your commitment.

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