

## *Self, Family & Team:* Training Principles and Techniques for Facilitators

**Family Focused facilitators should think of themselves not as experts but as facilitators of a “change” process.** The training and organizing model is a learning experience for facilitators, as well as for participants.

**The trainings involve storytelling, conversation and sharing.** People (and especially women) learn best in dialogue and in relationships with others.

**The training is focused on the parents and should build off of those parents’ visions, values and goals.** Most people learn more if it is meaningful to them as it relates to their current situations, and if they can apply learning immediately to their own lives and families.

**Anyone who is interested can learn from the Family Focused Organizing model.** Encourage everyone in the training sessions to participate by drawing out those who are quiet and assuring the group that diverse opinions are welcome.

**By being non-judgmental and good listeners, facilitators will build trust in the group.** People who feel respected and listened to will be more willing to take risks and to try new things.

**The Family Focused Organizing model uses many one-on-ones and small groups to keep sessions participatory.** Adults learn best by actively participating, and participation often increases in small groups. The small group setting also encourages people to learn from one another.

**Playing games and doing exercises as part of the learning process increases participation and attendance.** If people are having fun and the energy level is high, participation will increase. Games should be well organized and should have a clear learning purpose.

**The training model uses many visual demonstrations on the board.** People learn best when all of their senses are stimulated—listening, seeing and feeling.

**Asking participants to do homework helps to keep them engaged once they have left the group session.** Adults learn through an action and reflection process. Trying out new behaviors outside of the training sessions is critical to change and learning.

**Ask how they are feeling about the process and set time aside to talk about these feelings.** Facilitators validate each participant’s emotional side, whether this includes good feelings or feelings of fear, anger or frustration, by showing interest in these feelings. Use the exploration of these feelings to help participants better understand themselves and others.

**Everyone is welcome at the trainings, and the Family Focused Organizing model specifically aims to recruit a diverse cross-section of the community of parents—by age, race, culture or level of involvement.** This work is about connecting people with one another, bridging the isolation that many feel and building trust. The trainings help people learn to work together toward common goals. This can only happen when diverse people really get to know and respect each other.

**In communities where more than one language is spoken, hold the session bilingually and work toward easy and clear communication.** Only if the participants really hear each other will they realize the connections among diverse people and learn to work together.