

DHS Co-Case Management Between the SPD-DD System and Department of Human Services (DHS)/Child Welfare

When children are in the custody of DHS/Child Welfare through a juvenile court dependency order, DHS/Child Welfare is almost always the legal guardian. Some children in DHS/Child Welfare custody may, by court order, be placed in Permanent Foster Care or may be awaiting adoption. Achieving guardianship may also be a permanency plan for the child. For Permanent Foster Care, the foster provider has additional rights and responsibilities approved by court order. Some rights and responsibilities are those of a guardian but guardianship is not transferred by this agreement. Sometimes children/youth are also involved with the juvenile court due to law violations. Some law violations may result in youth (over age 12) being committed to OYA. OYA then becomes legal guardian. Ask the child welfare caseworker or the OYA staff for a copy of the court order, the Permanent Foster Care order, and/or any visit restrictions or rules of probation. These documents must be filed in the child's CDDP record and the child's provider needs a copy. Be sure the child's ISP reflects the court requirements. Discuss and decide which caseworker/service coordinator will take "lead" in specific aspects of the child's services whenever there is a question.

The DD system has lead in DD service delivery and planning which includes development of the ISP, BSP and the daily care, supports and funding directly related to the child's disability needs. The CDDP service coordinator must update the child welfare caseworker regarding the child's status and service progress, including medical and mental health services, so this information can be included in Child Welfare reports to the court and the CRB. The DD system must also share service information with the child's court appointed special advocate (CASA). The CDDP service coordinator is responsible to participate in juvenile court hearings and CRB reviews when the child's DD related service is contested or is the subject of controversy or confusion.

The Child Welfare system has lead in the family plan, which may include services to enhance family safety and achieve permanency for all the children in the family. Child Welfare always has primary responsibility for court reporting and for permanency planning, adoption and child protective services within the family setting, which includes family foster care. Child Welfare may request consultation from the DD system in specific protective service situations. The DD system may be directly involved in implementing specific protective service recommendations in SPD or child welfare foster homes.