

## What is a Solution Focused Meeting (SFM)?

A Solution Focused Meeting (SFM) is a way for the family to work together with DHS to make plans and decisions about how to help the family. It draws upon a family's strengths, experiences, knowledge, and resources that provides for the safety and well-being of children in the family.

There will be a meeting scheduled that involves people who care about you and want you and your family to do well.

## Who comes to the meeting?

The meeting may involve your immediate family, other relatives (kin), friends, church members, or others in the community. As a part of preparing for the SFM, you will have a discussion with the facilitator as to who you want to invite. It may be helpful to explore inviting people from the community who provide services to you and your family.

A SFM facilitator will lead the meeting.

## What happens before the meeting?

- Your SFM facilitator will contact you to schedule a time to discuss your SFM.
- Your facilitator will explain that the meeting will focus on strengths and needs.
- You and your facilitator will discuss whom you want at your meeting. Your facilitator may suggest others to consider.
- You can use this time to discuss any concerns or sensitive topics and how to handle those in the meeting so that you feel comfortable.
- Your SFM facilitator will meet with you and your family to identify the goals and expected outcomes of the meeting.

You and your SFM facilitator will:

- Start to list strengths your family has that can be used to make things better.
- Make a plan on how your story will be shared at the meeting.
- Decide if you want to tell your family story at the meeting.
- Make a list of people you want to invite to the meeting.

- Decide on a time and place where you would feel comfortable having the meeting.
- Think about creative ways to solve any problems in getting the people together. For example, arranging childcare or finding a ride to the meeting.

## What happens at the meeting?

SFM's begin with the team members being introduced to one another. Next, the facilitator explains the goal of the meeting and reviews givens, confidentiality, and ground rules.

After that, your family story will be shared so that everyone knows the same information.

You and your team will then talk about your family strengths and how to use them to make things better.

Your team may choose to brainstorm possible tasks to help you in working through your family and individual outcomes. You and your family may choose to take some private time together to discuss the team ideas.

You and your team will create a plan to address your goals and family needs.

## What happens after the meeting?

The facilitator will check in to make sure you are comfortable with the process and outcome of the meeting.

Your facilitator will provide you with a document that identifies your next steps. A formal summary of the meeting will be sent to you within five business days.

## How long will the meeting take?

The length of the meeting depends on the goal of the meeting. Your facilitator may be able to help you identify expected length of time as you prepare for the meeting.

## Will my children be at the meeting?

Children care about what happens in their family. Children are usually invited to the SFM because they have important things to say about what they would like to see happen.

You and your facilitator will decide if your children will be part of your SFM. Sometimes children do not attend or come for only part of the meeting, especially if they are younger.

## If I have questions, who do I ask?

Contact your DHS ongoing social worker if you have questions.

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