

Common Elements Approach

for the Child and Family Support System



The Common Elements approach aims to enrich the workforce and hone practitioner skills in forming positive and productive relationships with families in ways that support trauma responsive practice, safety and family functioning. Training and Coaching Support is enabled within a robust reflective practice model, in partnership with the Lived Experience Network, to embed evidence-based, trauma informed skills consciously and consistently into practice.

Services can register their interest to participate in **Common Elements Training and Coaching Support** which explores ten evidence-informed and contextualised practice techniques, whilst also being supported by an Implementation Science model.

CFSS Common Elements Approach

The Child and Family Support System (CFSS) recognises the need for a consistent approach to practice. The CFSS Common Elements approach was developed collaboratively with the Centre for Evidence and Implementation. The approach includes a set of 10 evidence-based practices designed to support forming positive, productive relationships with families whilst also assuring consistent practice focussed on increasing safety and family functioning.

Evidence-informed Practice

The Common Elements Approach aims to build the capability and confidence of practitioners by providing the opportunity to engage in robust and nurturing reflective practice to support individuals to embed key evidence-based skills consistently into practice.

An implementation science approach for services, alongside a coaching support model for all practitioners, will be key to embedding this process.

Implementation Science

Implementation Science is the study of methods and strategies to promote the uptake of evidence informed best practices into 'business as usual'.

It also acknowledges the 'knowledge practice gap', or the difference between what we know and what is routinely done. Implementation science helps to bridge this gap, contextualised to local factors.

Coaching Support

Coaching, mentoring, and reflecting upon Common Elements practice experiences will provide practitioners with additional tools and strategies to complement and strengthen their existing approaches. This will promote consistency in use of core, foundational practice across the service system, developing a workforce that is well supported with practitioners able to practice with integrity in difficult situations, and deliver effective service outcomes for our children and families within the CFSS.



Common Elements Training Modules and Practice Guides



Ten practice guides have been developed and are supported by a staged Training and Coaching program within three training modules. Training involves identifying change champions within each service and a combination of self-guided learning, facilitated discussions and team activities. Common Elements are designed to be used flexibly when working with families and alongside other practice techniques and skills. Some examples of when to use specific Common Elements techniques are provided below.

Module 1 Building Engagement

Open ended questions Affirmations, Reflections, and Summaries (OARS)

Supports leading difficult conversations about child safety and risks.

Assist in building engagement, and when aimed towards a change behaviour, they can build motivation for change.

Checking for Understanding

Can be used to help the family to understand the concerns for their child's safety, and the implications of not taking action.

Seeking Feedback

Feedback is a powerful way of improving practitioner skills and service delivery while maintaining or improving engagement with a client.

Benefits of a Common Elements Approach

This approach builds practitioner confidence and capacity to consistently use the techniques in day-to-day practice to gain family trust and engagement and enable families to work collaboratively with practitioners to remain safe and well. This approach also acknowledges the work environment context and values and learns from practitioners' practice wisdom.

Module 2 Preparing for Change

Collaborative Partnership.

Supports practitioners to establish a collaborative relationship and shared understanding of their role with families.

Identifying Priorities.

Can help practitioners and families to identify a shared focus, often used in combination with the 'Goal Setting' technique.

Building motivation for Change. Aids identification of a family's motivators for change and promotes the initiation of change.

Goal Setting. A useful activity when beginning work with a family, to provide clarity and direction for the collaborative work that will be undertaken by families and practitioners.

Module 3 Enhancing Family Functioning and Safety

Communication Skills. Supports practitioners to teach skills and behaviours that facilitate more positive interpersonal communication between individuals and family members.

Building Capacity for Family Led Problem Solving. Enables practitioners to build the capacity of families to identify and break down complex problems into simpler, more manageable steps.

Increasing Safety Through Conversations. Helps practitioners in their work with families to build understanding of unsafe behaviours and supports motivation to change identified behaviour.

Supported by Implementation Science

Supporting continuous evidence-based practice development, locally contextualised to enable effective translation of evidence to practice. At an individual level, it is embedded within a nurturing and supportive model of reflective practice. At a systems level it is enacted via an implementation science model delivered through Local Implementation team meetings.

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