

Silberman School of Social Work



Child Welfare Practice I

Session Seven

Agenda for Today's Class

CLASS/WEEK 7 UNIT 2: FAMILY-CENTERED CPS INVESTIGATIONS

Continuation of CPS Discussion & Court Procedures

1. Demonstrate understanding of the laws and regulations that govern child protection;
2. Critically choose and implement interventions that achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies
3. Use inter-professional collaboration to achieve beneficial practice outcomes

To Do:

Read Lukeas – Chapter Five

Find a recent (within the last year) article on social media having to do with a child protection case; in your groups discuss the description of the case, identify missing information about child protection procedures; identify any stereotypes. In class we will take a look at your findings and compare them to what the actual rules and regulations are regarding family intervention via the child protection system.

Watch: Custody (2016): <https://tribecafilm.com/films/custody-2016>

Lukas Chapter 5- How to Conduct the First Interview with a Family

Seeing families is not the same as Family Therapy

The whole family in this case is the client, not just an individual.

Issues can arise in one or more of five areas:

- ❖ With one of the parents
- ❖ Between the parents
- ❖ Between parent and child
- ❖ Between children
- ❖ With one of the children

Lukas Chapter 4- How to Conduct the First Interview with a Family

Ask yourself:

How might the issues, even if it seems to only be with one of the family members, be serving the entire family?

What would be going on in this family if, this issue did not arise?

The symptom is often the solution.

Who is resisting the first meeting, you will meet with resistance.

Lukas Chapter 4- How to Conduct the First Interview with a Family

Introductions:

You want each family member to understand that you value his or her participation.

- ❖ Greet each person individually, by name.
- ❖ Be alert to the choices they make: where do they sit; who sits next to whom; who, if anyone is an outsider.
- ❖ What brings you here today? How can we be of help to you?
- ❖ If someone initiates the story telling, that person is very likely to be the spokesperson for the family

Lukas Chapter 4- How to Conduct the First Interview with a Family

Engaging:

Ask each family member to tell you what they think the issue is – you are information gathering, not allying with one person.

Listen for key phrases, be aware of gender, culture, communication style

Listen for strengths, problem solving capacities, clues as to why this was an issue in the first place.

The work is done in the here and now, you are concerned with the interactions occurring in front of you

Lukas Chapter 4- How to Conduct the First Interview with a Family

Assess:

What is the context for this issue?

What is the communication system in this family?

Getting them to tell one another what the issues are, is your next step.

Are there family secrets?

Who seems to be in charge of the family?

Lukas Chapter 4- How to Conduct the First Interview with a Family

Reframe:

Reframe the issue so no one is to blame and each person can see how it affects their lives.

Set up for next meeting and future work.

Are there exceptions to be made – do you need to see one family member because of safety issues?

Do they agree to come again to see you? If not, what can you do?

Steps in the CPS Process

The purposes, key decisions, and practice issues for the following stages of the CPS process:

Intake

Initial assessment or investigation

Comprehensive family assessment

Case Planning

Service provisions

Evaluation of family progress

Case closure

Read: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubpdfs/cps.pdf>

Abuse/Maltreatment/Protection

What is child abuse?

What is child maltreatment?

What is child protection?

What is child abuse?

- "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation"; or
- "An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm."
- Federal law creates a minimum definition for child abuse and neglect but gives states the authority to define what constitutes child abuse and neglect in their jurisdictions. State laws provide much greater detail.

What is child maltreatment?

Child maltreatment includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role (e.g., clergy, coach, teacher).

There are four common types of abuse.

- **Physical abuse** is the use of intentional physical force, such as hitting, kicking, shaking, burning or other show of force against a child.
- **Sexual abuse** involves engaging a child in sexual acts. It includes fondling, rape, and exposing a child to other sexual activities.
- **Emotional abuse** refers to behaviors that harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being. Examples include name calling, shaming, rejection, withholding love, and threatening.
- **Neglect** is the failure to meet a child's basic needs. These needs include housing, food, clothing, education, and access to medical care.

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cm-factsheet--2013.pdf>

What is child protection?

Child protection means protecting a child from child abuse or neglect. Abuse or neglect need not have taken place; it is sufficient for a risk assessment to have identified a likelihood or risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect.

Equally, in instances where a child may have been abused or neglected but the risk of future abuse has not been identified, the child and their family may require support and recovery services but not a Child Protection Plan. In such cases, an investigation may still be necessary to determine whether a criminal investigation is needed and to inform an assessment that a Child Protection Plan is not required.

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

A Belief that:

- All people have a reservoir of untapped, renewable, and expandable abilities (mental, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual) that can be used to facilitate change.
- Each child has a right to a permanent family.
- Each child and family member should be empowered to work toward his or her own needs and goals.

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

Commitment to:

- Using a strength-based, child-centered, family-focused practice.
- Assuring the safety of children in the context of their family.
- Practicing complete confidentiality.
- Ensuring accountability and an end-results orientation.
- Implementing quality professional practice.
- Continuing pursuit of knowledge and skills to effectively accomplish the mission of CPS.

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

Respect for:

- Persons of diverse racial, religious, ethnic, gender and sexual orientation and cultural backgrounds, and a belief that there is strength in diversity.
- Each person's dignity, individuality, and right to self-determination.

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

Understanding of:

- Family systems, the family's environment, the family in a historical context, diverse family structures, and concepts of family empowerment.
- Individual growth and development with particular attention to attachment and bonding, separation, loss, and identity development.
- Child abuse and neglect dynamics.
- Cultural diversity, the characteristics of special populations, and the implications for assessment and intervention.
- Continuum of placement services including the foster care system, the residential care system, kinship care, placement prevention, familial ties maintenance, family reunification, and adoption.
- Services including crisis intervention, parenting skills training, family counseling, conflict resolution, and individual and group counseling.

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

Command of:

- Case management issues and responsibilities.
- Child welfare and child protection programs and models.
- Principles of permanency planning for children and the role of out-of-home care.

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

Familiarity with:

- Special problems of poverty, oppression, and deprivation.
- Substance abuse issues and their effect on children and families.
- Dynamics of community and family violence, including partner abuse and the impact of trauma.
- Direct services available to children and families in the mental health, health care, substance abuse treatment, education, juvenile justice, and community systems.
- Wraparound services available for families through the economic security, housing, transportation, and job training systems.
- Legal systems related to child welfare practice.
- Political and advocacy processes and how they relate to funding and acquiring services

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

Ability to:

- Identify strengths and needs and engage the family in a strength-based assessment process.
- Take decisive and appropriate action when a child needs protection.
- Analyze complex information.
- Be persistent in approach to CPS work.
- Employ crisis intervention and early intervention services and strategies.
- Assess a family's readiness to change and employ appropriate strategies for increasing motivation and building the helping alliance.
- Function as a case manager and a team member and collaborate with other service providers.
- Assess for substance abuse, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and mental illness.
- Work with birth families to create a permanent plan for a child.

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

Aptitude for:

- Developing and maintaining professional relationships with families.
- Listening.
- Remaining flexible.
- Working with involuntary clients, including those who are hostile or resistant.
- Working with legal systems, including documentation and court testimony.
- Empowering the child and family to sustain gains and use family and community supports.

Core Beliefs of CPS Process

Expertise in:

- Assessing for abuse, neglect, and the safety of the child and others in the family setting.
- Negotiating, implementing, and evaluating the case plan with the family.
- Working with the family and key supports to accomplish the service agreement goals.
- Applying knowledge of human behavior and successful intervention methods with children and adolescents at various developmental stages.

In Class Activity

Group work focused on engagement and empathy for children, youth, and families affected by the child welfare system:

1. Read the vignette
2. Reflect on how you might engage in a professional manner;
3. Be prepared to discuss in your groups and in class

Vignette #1

Marisol is a Latina, 38 year old, single parent of two girls ages 6 years and 8 years.

Both children have been taken into custody because Marisol's live-in boyfriend has allegedly sexually abused both girls.

Marisol tells you she was sexually abused as a child and it didn't affect her.

How do you respond and how do you feel about what Marisol tells you?

Vignette #2

Priscilla is a white child, age 13 years old. She has come into custody because her father physically abused her.

Priscilla tells you, she never thought that the abuse was so bad, because it happened every day and she thought she deserved it because she was a bad girl.

How do you respond and how do you feel about what Priscilla tells you?

Vignette #3

Mr. Sanchez is a 56 year old, single, Latino man, employed full-time and caring for his niece and nephew, ages 4 and 5 years, because his sister who has been abusing substances cannot care for them.

The children have been diagnosed as ADHD and Mr. Sanchez is exhausted from caring for them. You are providing support for the family.

How do you respond and how do you feel about Mr. Sanchez's situation?

Vignette #4

Peter is a five week old baby.

He has been brought into care because he has bruises on his face and doctors have determined that he sustained these bruises due to physical abuse by his 17 year old mother, Julia.

Julia, who lives in a car, without support, says she has no idea how he got those bruises.

How do you respond and how do you feel about Julia and Peter's situation?

Next Class Session

Review of Chapter 6 in Lukas - How to Take a Developmental History
Learning About Assessment

- Demonstrate understanding of the laws and regulations that govern child protection;
- Critically choose and implement interventions that achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other theoretical construct

Read: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/assessment/family-assess/#:~:text=Comprehensive%20family%20assessment%20is%20the,%2C%20youth%2C%20and%20their%20families.&text=When%20families%20are%20presented%20with,child%20or%20other%20family%20members>

Read: “The Case of Alma and her Family – Will be Posted here on the website before next class

In-Class Activity: In your groups discuss the following:

1. What are the important aspects of cultural diversity in this case that might explain the family’s decision-making process?
2. How would you address the family’s concerns about their daughter?
3. How would you assess the safety, permanency, and well-being of Alma?