



NCCD | Children's  
Research Center

# Introduction to Safety-Organized Practice

# What is safety-organized practice?



Developing good working relationships



Using critical thinking and decision-support tools



Building collaborative plans to enhance daily child safety

# Good Working Relationships

Rigorous, balanced  
assessment

Strategies for  
talking with children



# Critical Thinking



- CAP framework
- Structured Decision Making® (SDM) assessments
- Worry statements



# Building Collaborative Plans to Enhance Safety

- Goal statements
- Support networks
- Detailed, behavior-based plans



# Safety



Actions of protection,  
taken by the caregiver  
and network, that  
address the danger  
and are demonstrated  
over time.

# Operational Definitions in Safety Organized Practice

**Harm:** PAST actions by a caregiver that have hurt a child in his/her care either physically, emotionally, or developmentally.

**Danger:** Credible concerns child welfare or members of the child's community have about actions the caregiver may take in the FUTURE that will harm the child.

**Risk:** The resulting likelihood that some harm may come to that child in the future.

**Complicating Factors:** Literally anything that complicates efforts to make the child safe that are not direct harm to the child by the caregiver.

**SAFETY:** Actions of protection taken by the caregivers that directly address the danger and are demonstrated over time.

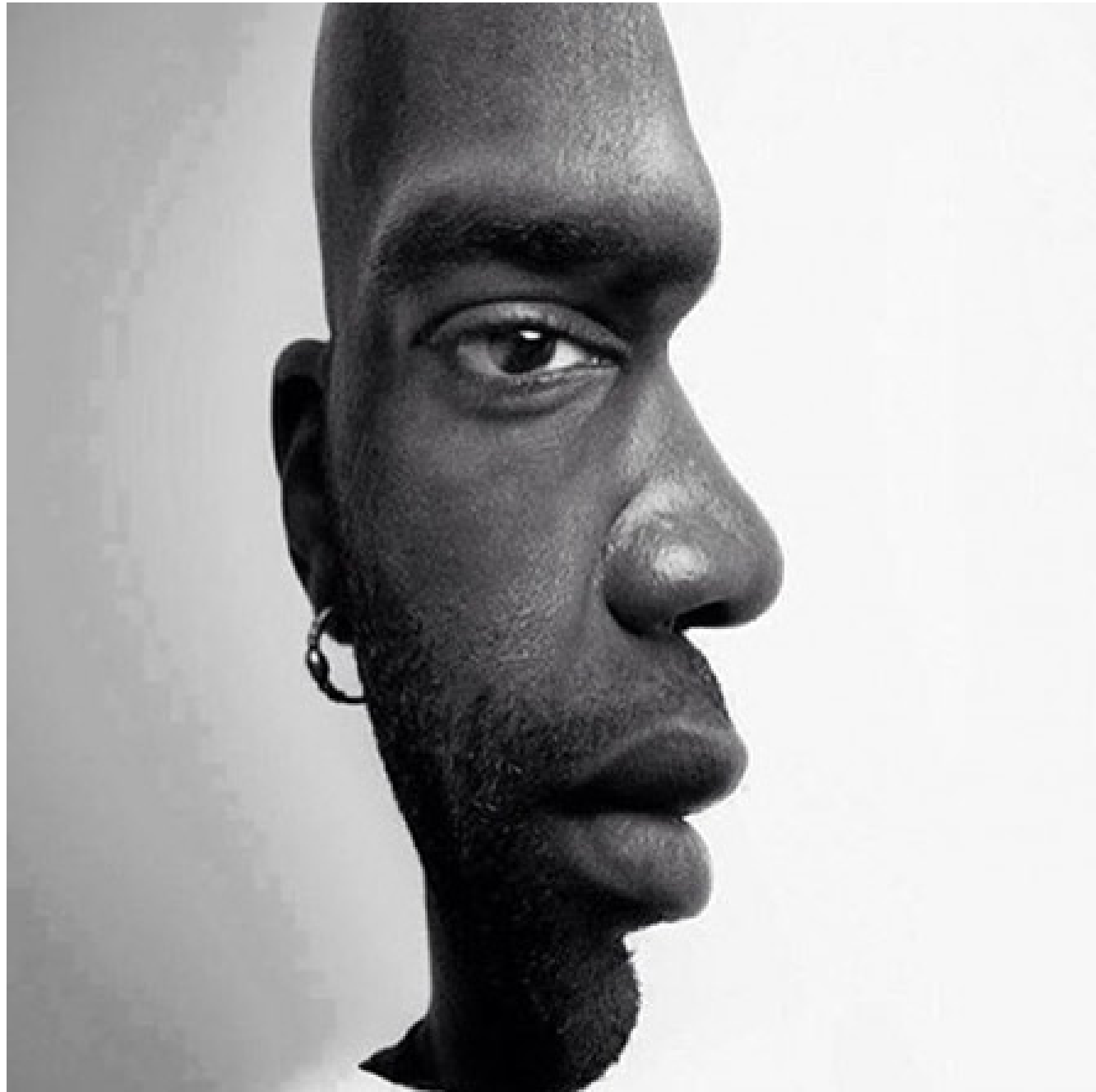




Rigorous, Balanced  
Assessment











# Three Questions for Interviewing

What are we worried about?

What is working well?

What needs to happen?



# What are we worried about?



Caregiver



Behavior



Impact on the child

# From Generalizations to Descriptions of Behavior

"She is mentally ill."





# From Generalizations to Descriptions of Behavior



“He has substance abuse issues.”

# Ask Questions That Reveal . . .



Caregiver



Behavior



Impact on the  
Child

# What is working well?

There is always a  
history of  
protection.





# What is working well?

Caregiver



Behavior



Impact on the child



# What needs to happen?

*People support what  
they have had a hand  
in creating.*

– Margaret Wheatley



# Five Types of Solution-Focused Questions



- Exception
- Scaling
- Position
- Coping
- Preferred future

# What needs to happen?



"On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being the most danger and 10 being the most safety for this child, how would you rate this particular situation?"





Three-Column Mapping		
What are we worried about?	What is working well?	What needs to happen next?

0 ←————→ 10

On a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being everyone knows that the child is safe enough to close the case and 0 being things are so bad that the child cannot be at home, where is this situation now?

# Collaborative Assessment and Planning Framework

What are we worried about?	Purpose of Consultation Hopes for this conversation	What is going well?
<b>Harm and Danger</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caretaker behavior; impact on child</li> <li>Youth behavior; impact on youth and others</li> <li>Pattern/history</li> </ul>	<b>Genogram, Ecomap, Circles of Safety and Support</b> People in the family and network who care about the child/family  <b>Cultural Considerations</b> How family identifies racially, ethnically, culturally  <b>SDM® System Guidance</b> Most recent safety and risk assessment results; current recommended decision	<b>Safety and Permanency/Belonging</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions of protection, taken by the caretaker and network, that address the danger and are demonstrated over time</li> <li>Actions of connection, taken by the caretaker and network, that promote enduring relationships to family, community, and culture and are demonstrated over time</li> </ul>
<b>Complicating Factors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conditions or behaviors that create greater barriers to safety, permanency, well-being</li> <li>Research-based risk factors</li> </ul>	<b>Gray Areas</b> Incomplete or speculative information	<b>Strengths and Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assets, resources, and capacities at the individual, family, and community levels</li> <li>Presence of research-based protective factors</li> </ul>
What needs to happen?		
<b>Worry Statements</b> What do key stakeholders worry will happen if nothing changes? Consider safety, permanency, and well-being		<b>Goal Statements</b> What needs to be demonstrated, over time, to address the concerns and ensure the child is safe; well; and connected to family, community, and culture? ( <i>Bottom lines, not services</i> )
<b>Action Steps</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What needs to happen next to work toward reaching goals?</li> <li>Who has agreed to do what, when?</li> <li>What kinds of plans are needed (safety plans, service plans, others)?</li> </ul> <p><i>Refer to any recommended SDM assessment guidance.</i></p>		

Based on: Consultation and Information Sharing Framework (Lohrbach, 2000); Signs of Safety Assessment and Planning Framework (Turnell & Edwards, 1999; Department of Child Protection, 2011); The Massachusetts Safety Map (Chin, Decter, Madsen, & Vogel, 2010); and The Partnering for Safety Assessment and Planning Framework (Parker & Decter, 2012).

# The CAP framework helps us make good decisions.



- Collaboration
- Organization
- Analysis
- Common language
- Consistency
- Clear next steps



