



FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY (FSS)

Holistic Approach to Client Engagement

PARTICIPANT GUIDE



Professional
Development

Holistic Approach to Client Engagement

FSS Program Overview

- **Goals**

- **Objectives**

- **Action Plan**

- **Program Coordinating Committee (PCC)**

Recruitment

- **Providing Information at Initial Occupancy**

Briefings and orientations

Marketing in new resident's welcome packet

Speak about FSS at orientation meetings

- **Annual reexamination meetings & other individual meetings with residents**

Discuss benefits of the FSS program in terms of building escrow

Residents who are receiving welfare assistance

Full-time students are potential candidates

Individuals on Unemployment

- **Peer Representatives**

Introducing potential FSS enrollees to current program participants or successful graduates

Current or graduated FSS participants can speak at group meetings, be listed as a resource on promotional materials, or be matched one-on-one with potential enrollees.

Some FSS programs have successfully employed FSS program graduates as FSS program coordinator staff.

- **Mass Communication**

Printed Brochures, Newsletters, Mass Mailings, Post Cards

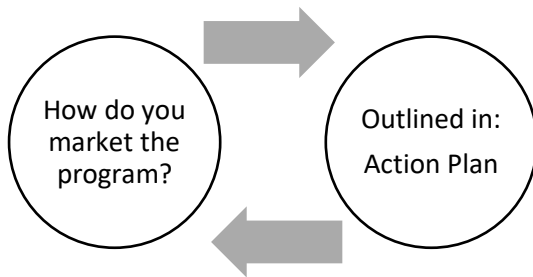
Social Media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter

Stories of success using newsletters or videos, on PHA or owner websites, or even published in the local press.

Email blasts & Text Messages

Informational Materials Content Ideas:

- **A description of the FSS program:**
 - Voluntary 5 year program, participants can complete their goals and graduate from the program sooner
- **The FSS Process:**
 - Participant assessments,
 - Development of Individual Training and Services Plans,
 - Pursuit of suitable employment
- **Benefits of the FSS program**
 - Automatic savings through an escrow account.
 - Sample escrow calculation highlighting growth in earnings leading to escrow.
 - Support and guidance, Resource linkages, List of services and supports
- **Successful FSS program graduates**
 - Illustrate in an accessible story form the potential of the program.
 - Remember! Get permission and include first names or initials or use a pseudonym.



Tools:

QR Codes

Scheduling Apps

Naming your Program:

Some FSS programs establish their own program names, images, or slogans to advertise their unique local programs.

You have the option of naming your program. Sometimes Family Self Sufficiency can be a scary word.

- GOALS: Home Forward in Portland, Oregon
- Section 8 Advantage: Oceanside PHA California
- AYBL (Achieving Your Best Life), District of Columbia Housing Authority
- Assistance Plus Program, Arlington TX
- PATHWorks (Personal Achievement Through Housing Works) at Central Oregon Regional Housing Authority

Client Briefing:

- Program Purpose
- Vision
- Roles & Responsibilities
- Invite to PCC
- ITSP/Contract
- Interim withdrawal policy

- Goals/Changing/Interim & Final Goals
 - Graduation
 - Escrow/Interim Withdrawals & Policy
 - Documentation: Verifying goal completion & more
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Client Education:

Escrow Education

Program Myths and Misconceptions

Client Communication Strategies:

- Meet clients where they are comfortable, offer multiple methods to communicate, engage and receive information.
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Participant Assessment:

Screening

A PHA may screen families for interest, and motivation to participate in the FSS program, provided that the factors utilized by the PHA are those which solely measure the family's interest and motivation to participate in the FSS program.

Examples include:

- Requiring attendance at FSS orientation sessions or interviews;
 - Assigning tasks which indicate willingness to undertake FSS obligations
 - Contacting job training
 - Following up on referrals
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Reasonable accommodations and modifications must be made for individuals with disabilities, including, *e.g.*, mobility, manual, sensory, speech, mental, intellectual, or developmental disabilities, consistent with applicable Federal civil rights and nondiscrimination laws.

- **Prohibited motivational screening factors.**
 - educational level
 - educational or standardized motivational test results
 - previous job history or job performance
 - credit rating
 - marital status, number of children
 - other factors, such as sensory or manual skills

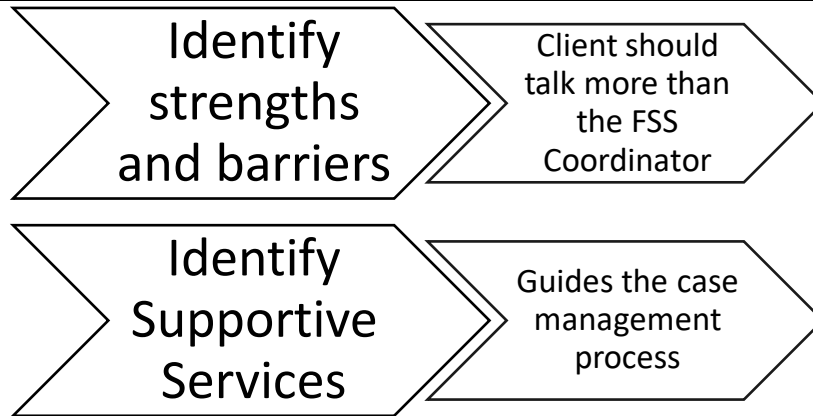
Any factors which may result in the exclusion, application of different eligibility requirements, or other discriminatory treatment or effect on the basis of: Race, color, national original, sex (including actual or perceived gender identity and sexual orientation), religion, familial status, or disability.

Client Assessment

- Identification of Barriers

- Needed Supportive Services

- Guides the case management process



Who should be included?

FSS Head of Household:

- Any adult member of the FSS family may execute the FSS contract
- Does not need to be head of household for rental assistant purposes

Assessment:

At minimum you should assess for the items listed on the 50058 section 17, page 13.

Assessing your assessment tool:

Needs Assessment: Written? Verbal?	Are you using a standard tool or did you create one? Pro's and Cons?
Does it ask the "right" questions for your population?	Have you tweaked it since you started using it?
Does it ask duplicative questions?	Have you tried filling it out yourself?

Focus on Strengths!

- What's good?
- What's working?
- What survival skills and informal systems have gotten them this far?

Your clients' strengths are like a force of nature.

Help them free up and focus the forces that are already there.

• **Potential Client Strengths**

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Employment | • Past experiences | • _____ |
| Personality Traits | • Skills | • _____ |
| Support Network | • _____ | • _____ |

Self-Assessment:

- Have you done a “strengths assessment” on yourself?
- Mapping your own assets may increase your confidence as a counselor, and help you help your clients identify their strengths.

Active Listening:

“The practice of engaging closely with what a speaker is saying and indicating understanding, typically by asking relevant questions, using gestures, and summarizing.” Dictionary.com

Verbal:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Reinforcement • Remembering • Reflection • Clarification • Summarization

Non-Verbal:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye Contact • Posture • Mirroring • Distraction

Motivational Interviewing:

- Motivational interviewing (MI) is a collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change.
- Encourages you to help people by discovering their interest in making a change in their lives.

How to address issues with clients:

Timing is everything

Be genuine and honest

Start with strengths

Normalize the challenge

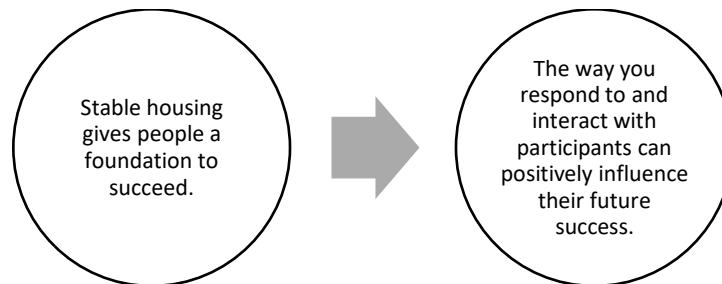
Expect resistance

Provide options

Low pressure

Respect their autonomy

Reassure and uplift



Goal Setting

Individual Training and Services Plan: ITSP

- Lists services and activities
- Interim & final goals
- Pages 4-5 of HUD form 52650

The image shows a thumbnail of a HUD form titled "Family Self-Sufficiency Program Individual Training and Services Plan". The form is divided into several sections: "Personal Information" at the top, followed by "Goals" and "Services" sections. At the bottom, there are signature lines for the "Participant" and "Case Manager". The form is mostly blank, with some faint text and lines visible.

Mandatory Goals:

1. Free of Welfare: OLD RULE:

Must establish as a final goal for each FSS participant that every member of the family become independent from welfare assistance 12 months before the expiration of the term of the CoP, including any extension.

1. Free of Welfare: NEW RULE

Must establish as a final goal for each FSS participant that every member of the family become independent from welfare assistance before the expiration of the term of the CoP, including any extension.

2. Employment obligation

Only the head of the FSS family shall be required under the CoP to seek and maintain suitable employment during the term of the contract and any extension.

Determination of suitable employment

A determination of suitable employment shall be made by the PHA or owner, with the agreement of the affected participant, based on the skills, education, job training, and receipt of other benefits of the household member, and based on the available job opportunities within the jurisdiction served by the PHA or in the community where the PBRA property is located.

Goals:

- Goal setting involves the development of an action plan designed to motivate and guide a person or group toward a goal.^[1]
- Goals are more deliberate than desires and momentary intentions.
- Setting goals means that a person has committed thought, emotion, and behavior towards attaining the goal.

Interim Goals:

- Must be specified along with the activities and services needed to achieve them.

Goal Setting:

- Should not add additional required activities that must be completed by every participant
- CoP must represent an individualized training and service plan
- PHAs can not require a certain number of hours, rate of pay, or other mandatory requirements that apply across the board

Goals for Families:

- Goals should always have a desired outcome.
- Each goal should be measurable and observable.
- In Family Self Sufficiency we work with the individual - but to create generational change working with the family is a must.

Goal Setting Models





Goal-Reality-Obstacles/Options-Way Forward

Backward Goal Setting/Planning: Reverse Engineering

Requires planning through intermediate steps and determining benchmarks to reach a final goal.

Some version of this planning is critical in determining achievable interim goals and appropriate final goals.

Barrier Identification

Employment	Education	Support	Mental Health
Addiction	Child Care	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Common Goals

- Complete a specific job skills training or obtaining a license/certificate
- Obtain a GED or high school equivalency credential
- Obtain an associate degree or bachelor’s degree
- Complete homeownership preparedness training
- Develop a budget
- Obtain a promotion/wage increase
- Complete a financial education course

Sample ITSP Goals:

What's Missing? What can we add to these goals to make them Holistic and more specific?

Exercise 1:

GOAL: Graduate From Community College with an Associate Degree	
Activities/Services	Timeline/Target Date
Contact the college's financial aid office for assistance in applying for financial aid	Six months from enrollment
Enroll in classes each term and provide class schedule	One year from enrollment
Continue enrollment at least 1/2 time (6 credit hours on a 12-credit system)	Each semester while enrolled
Maintain at least a 2.0 average in all classes and submit grades to FSS coordinator at the end of each semester	Each semester while enrolled

Goal:	
Activities/Services	Timeline/Target Date

Exercise 2:

GOAL: Complete Homeownership Preparation Activities	
Activities/Services	Timeline/Target Date
Obtain a credit report	Two months from enrollment
Pay off current debts. No late payments.	Ongoing
Complete homeownership counseling class	By end of year 2
Obtain mortgage pre-qualification	By end of year 4

Goal:	
Activities/Services	Timeline/Target Date

Motivational Interviewing (continued):

is a collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change.

The overall style of MI is one of guiding, which lies between and incorporates elements of directing and following styles.

- Ambivalence, Uncertainty, Unsureness, Doubt, Indecision

is a normal part of preparing for change and a place where a person can remain stuck for some time.

Using a directing style and arguing for change with a person who is unsure-- it naturally brings out the person's opposite arguments.



People are more likely to be persuaded by what they hear themselves say.

Ongoing Learning:

How do you continue to learn?

- Books
- Talks/Podcasts
- Classes/Training Opportunities
- Program Coordinating Committee
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-
-
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Effective Case Management

Case Study: How would you best bring up mental health services with Ms. Anne?

Ms. Anne is a 55-year-old female who lives alone on one of your properties.

After working with Ms. Anne for the past three years, you have noticed that in recent months she has been

- isolating herself more often,
- missing important appointments,
- and has stopped taking part in activities that she used to enjoy, such as speaking over the phone with friends and going for walks.
- You have an appointment to complete housing paperwork, so you show up to her apartment and notice Ms. Anne has lost a lot of weight. She then says that she has only been sleeping for about three hours per night.

Additional Concerns:

- Stigma

- Not wanting to come off as accusing
- Don't want to damage the relationship
- Personal bias

WHAT IS STIGMA?



Stigma is when there is a negative attitude shown or an act of discrimination done to a person because of one of the person's characteristics.



"A mark of shame or discredit associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person."

Overcoming Challenges:

The strength perspective, also known as the resiliency perspective, focuses on understanding the personal and social processes that help individuals maintain a positive level of functioning (i.e, productivity and healthy lives) despite the environmental challenges they face. The strength perspective is based on the belief that human beings have the inherent capacity to grow and change, even under adverse conditions” **Kulis, Marsiglia, 2016**

Overcoming Challenges and Building Resilience

Providing Crisis Intervention, Transition Support

Essential Case Management

Communication:

- Two-way open communication, give clients multiple ways to connect
- Use different strategies to connect with clients
- Note their preferences—email, text, letter, face to face

Cultural Diversity/Competency

- Understand and interact effectively with people from different cultures, backgrounds and experiences
- Respect each other's differences
- Identify and respond to any cultural barriers
- Recognizing your own cultural beliefs, values and biases

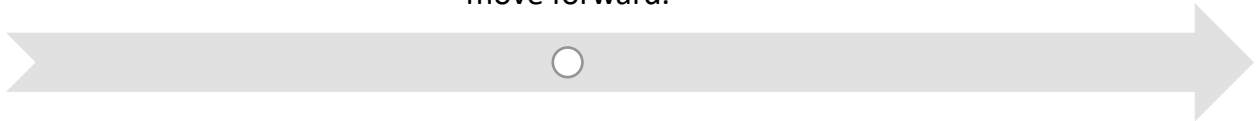
Critical Thinking

- In case management can help us Organize and analyze information
- Determine what information is relevant
- Better understand the narrative of the person we support
- Gain a better understanding of how change can happen
- Be more mindful of the complexity of people's lives.
- Find meaning in interactions, being more mindful of one's own bias in thinking

- Be more open to potential errors in thinking
- Look for structural causes that challenge the status quo and challenge inequality

Teaching Clients to Pivot

To move in a different direction when something doesn't work out and still move forward.



Trauma Informed Care

Shifting the focus from *“What’s wrong with you?”* to *“What happened to you?”*

- Trauma-informed care seeks to:

Realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand paths for recovery;

Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in patients, families, and staff;

Integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and,

Actively avoid re-traumatization.

When interacting with your agency do your clients feel physically and psychologically safe?

Decision Making:

Decisions are made with transparency, and with the goal of building and maintaining trust.

Peer Support:

Individuals with shared experiences are integrated into the organization and viewed as integral to service delivery.

Collaboration

- Power differences are leveled to support shared decision-making
- Allowing open collaboration between staff and clients and among organizational staff.

- **Empowerment Client and staff strengths are:**

recognized

built on

validated

- **Belief in resilience and the ability to heal from trauma.**

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE – Retraumatization

System: Policies, procedures, “the way things are done”

- Having to continually retell their story
 - Being treated as a number
 - Being seen as their label (ie. Homeless, disabled)
 - No choice in service
 - No opportunity to give feedback about their experience with the service delivery
-
-
-

Relationship

Power, control, subversiveness

- **Not being seen/heard**
- **Violating trust**
- **Failure to ensure emotional safety**
- **Noncollaborative**
- **Does things for rather than with**
- **Use of punitive treatment, coercive practices and oppressive language**

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs):

refer to the abuse, neglect, and traumatic experiences in childhood that directly affect long-term adolescent and adult health.

MENTAL HEALTH V. MENTAL ILLNESS

Mental health

- reflects our emotional, psychological, and social well-being, which in turn affects how we think, feel, and act.
- Mental health has a strong impact on the way we interact with others, handle problems, and make decisions.

Mental illness

- refers to conditions that affect a person's thinking, feeling, mood, or behavior.
- These can include (but aren't limited to): depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

How do you take care of yourself while you are busy taking care of others?

Next steps...

Resources:

- **READING/AUDIOBOOK:** Trauma Informed Care
 - What Happened to You?: Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing
 - By Winfrey, Oprah, Perry, Bruce D.