

Three Questions:

What are you worried about?

What is working well?

What happens next?



If I have questions, whom do I ask?

Contact your caseworker if you have questions. His or her contact information is on the back of this brochure.

Our Children,
Our Future,
Our Responsibility



To report child abuse and neglect,
Call the 24 Hour Report Line
1-800-292-9582

Contact Information

Worker Name:

Phone Number

Email Address:

Team Decision Making Meetings



State of Delaware

*The Department of Services for
Children, Youth and their
Families*

The Division of Family Services



What is Team Decision Making?

Team Decision Making meetings are called if DFS has safety concerns that are so high that we are considering obtaining custody of the children in your family and placing them in out-of-home care.

The meetings provide a place for you and those close to your family to come together to discuss the family's strengths, knowledge, experiences, and resources to create a plan that ensures the safety of the children in your family.

Who comes to the meeting?

The meeting may include your family, other relatives, friends, church members, or others in your community.

You and your DFS caseworker will decide who to invite. The meeting may also include people from the community who provide services to you and your family—like a family counselor.

What happens before the meeting?

1. Your caseworker will discuss with you the main concern, the purpose of the meeting, and the range of possible outcomes, including placing your children in out-of-home care.
2. Your caseworker will describe what the meeting will be like and ask what you would like to see happen as a result of the meeting.
3. You should make a list of people you want to invite to the meeting. You will work with the facilitator to decide on a time and a place to have the meeting.

4. Think about creative ways to solve any problems in getting people together. For example, finding rides to the meeting or making arrangements for babysitting.

What you should do to prepare for the meeting?

1. Begin to think of the strengths of your family that can be used to make things better.
2. Think of things that worry you about your family and how you can use your family's strengths to help.
3. Decide how you want to tell your family story and who you would like to take the lead.



What happens at the meeting?

The meeting is led by a trained facilitator who is not your worker and has no involvement with your family. Meetings begin with the team members being introduced to each other.

Following introductions, you and the DFS worker will talk about what brought the family to the attention of DFS and what the safety concerns are. The team will discuss worries about what will happen in the future if nothing changes as well as what the team needs to see to know that the children are safe.

Everyone on the team will have the chance to be heard. Once everyone has had a chance to share their ideas, the team will then work together to select an idea that is doable, realistic and that will provide safety for your child. At the end of the meeting, everyone will leave with a copy of the plan that the TEAM developed.



How long will the meeting last?

The meeting usually takes between one and a half to two hours. How long the meeting lasts depends on what needs to be done.

Will the children be at the meeting?

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

You and your caseworker will decide if your children will be a part of your family team meeting. Sometimes children do not attend or only come for part of the meeting - especially if they are younger.