

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 5: General Case Management Section 03: Engaging the Family	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 7

POLICY OVERVIEW

Engaging the child and family is important to build trust and understand the family’s strengths and needs. Showing empathy and cultural humility is important in creating a family-centered working relationship. When families are a part of decision making and case planning, they understand their roles and are more empowered and motivated to make lasting changes to protect the child.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Child Services (DCS) will engage the mother’s and father’s family members and kin in the case planning process. DCS will make reasonable efforts to help two-way communication between the child’s parent, guardian, or custodian and any licensed foster parent or kinship caregiver.

Note: DCS will engage the alleged father and his family and kin before paternity is established.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-10-2-1: Policy and purpose](#)
- [IC 31-34-15-4: Form; contents](#)