

**Effective ways to use a case manager** (five years of learnings from Patrick & Brenda, Dependency Case Managers for Parents, Klamath Defender Services)

1. To gather information: case managers gather information from a variety of sources including: from the client, from service providers, from the client's support network, from DHS or other agencies. Case managers investigate issues and gather information by supporting the client through attendance at court and meetings.
2. To ensure DHS is making reasonable efforts and to provide information to assist the attorney with an NRE argument. Case managers identify alternative service providers and assist in development of an alternative service plan. Case managers may follow-up on statements made or information alleged by DHS regarding efforts made. It is important for case managers to understand reasonable and active efforts.
3. Support clients: Case managers attend DHS meetings, court hearings, and other meetings with clients when needed. They will support client in MH and D&A assessments when appropriate. They generally meet their clients before the court hearing as well.
4. Guide parents on appropriate visitation techniques: Parents clients are given the "Visitation Expectations" handout which was modeled after the visit tracking form used by DHS visit monitors. Case managers review visit notes with parents and coach them on how to improve. When the visit notes are generally positive, case managers communicate with the attorney and inquire regarding an expanded visitation plan.
5. Assist parents in developing a parenting plan which can be presented to the court: Case managers ask parents to complete the "Parenting Plan" form and will regularly review the form until the parent has developed a thorough plan on how to meet the child's needs.
6. Develop, in consultation with parent client, a strategy to document DHS (and other service provider) contacts. Case managers provide parent clients with a calendar and model how to document phone calls made, conversations which occurred, etc. Case managers review the documentation at client meetings.

7. Review action agreement with parent client: Case manager reviews the DHS action agreement to make sure that it comports with the jurisdictional bases and meets the needs of the client. The case manager works with DHS and/or the attorney to secure changes to the action agreement.
8. Ensure parents have the right services: Case managers assess the service needs of parent clients and make recommendations for appropriate services. For example, a client with borderline intellectual functioning will not typically be successful in a group counseling setting.
9. Guide parents towards a successful reunification: Assist parent in preparing for reunification.