

Through Conferencing and Teaming, you are involved in every step. DHS helps you to bring together those you want - your family and friends - along with professionals to assess your strengths and needs. Working together, a plan is developed to address those needs, and ultimately promote your wellness, and self-reliance, while keeping safe any children or minors who may depend on you.

Conferencing and teaming across DHS

Conferencing and Teaming is designed to be the new way of working with individuals and families across all DHS offices. It was rolled out first in the DHS Office of Children, Youth and Families and plans are to expand it to other DHS offices.

DHS is responsible for providing and administering publicly funded human services to Allegheny County residents.

DHS Principles

All services will be:

- High quality, comprehensive and accessible.
- Individualized and designed to be respectful of the unique cultural characteristics of each individual and/or community.
- Integrated and offered through a team approach that recognizes the capacity of individuals and families to identify their own strengths, needs and goals; create relationships and natural supports; and take steps necessary to accomplish these goals.



Human Services Building

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www.alleghenycounty.us/human-services/index.aspx

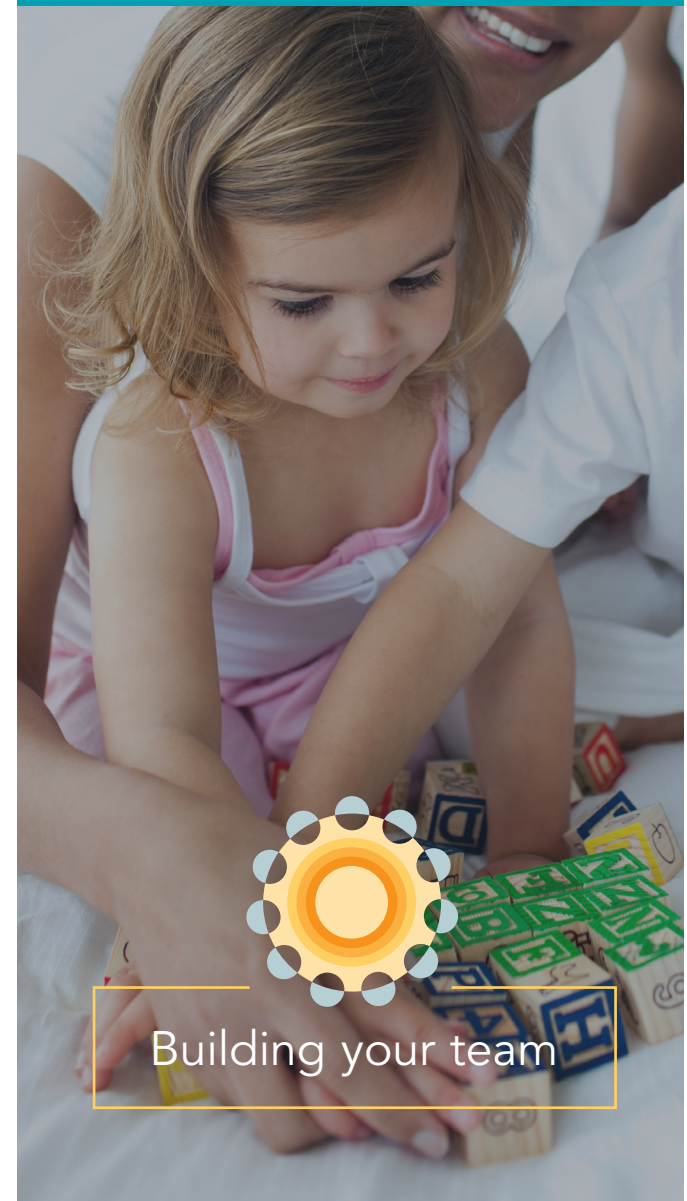
DHS funding information is available on the DHS website at www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About.aspx

DHS is an Inclusive Agency

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of a protected class including: race; color; religion; national origin; ancestry or place of birth; sex; gender identity or expression; sexual orientation; disability; marital status; familial status; age (40 and older); use of guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical disability.

DHS

Conferencing & Teaming in CYF



Building your team

When you are involved with CYF, conferencing and teaming is used

- to help your family resolve issues that affect you and your children.
- to help you reach out to other family members and your supporters - both personal and professional - and bring them together as a team so you can have the support you need.
- to help you work with your team members to come up with a family plan to reach your desired outcomes.
- to support your family the entire time you are involved with CYF.

Conferencing and teaming brings you together with

- your family and extended family.
- others whom you know who have an interest in making sure your children are safe in your care.
- human services professionals who can help you reach your desired outcomes.

How it works

- You are accepted for services by the Office of Children, Youth and Families.
- Your assigned caseworker begins to facilitate the conferencing and teaming process.

- A preparation meeting (prep) is held where you, your family and your caseworker
 - identify your family's strengths, needs and desired outcomes through a comprehensive assessment.
 - decide who - among your friends, family and service providers - could be your team members. These are people who you think would support your efforts to strengthen your family and who would be most helpful in developing your family plan.
- Your caseworker contacts your potential team members to discuss their involvement in conferencing and teaming.
- The people who agree to participate, your team, are invited to your family conference.
- At the family conference, everyone has an honest conversation about the strengths and needs in your family, the desired outcomes you need to succeed and the steps necessary to achieve those desired outcomes.
- As a result of the conference, a family plan is put in place that includes specific action steps, a timetable and a list of who will do what to help your family reach your desired outcomes.
- Subsequent team meetings are held to review and update (if necessary) the family plan and ensure family actions are integrated with professional services.

More about your team

Your caseworker will help you think about who would be good team members. These should be people who you can count on to give you emotional or social support during the conferencing and teaming process and into the future. In addition to your family and extended family, team members could be

- friends and neighbors
- co-workers
- teachers
- religious leader(s)
- service providers, if you have them

Not everyone will attend every meeting. Additional people may be added to the team as needed.

Why a team?

Making changes can be a difficult process for anyone. Your team is made up of people you choose because they care about you and your family. Your facilitator will offer ideas to you and your team so that together you can

- build a network of supportive relationships.
- strengthen your ability to cope with the changes you are going through.
- support each other over the long term, even after formal services are no longer needed.