

Family Well-Being Community Collaborative (FWCC)

Meeting Notes – January 12, 2026

FWCC Mission: Collaborate to keep families safely together and supported in their communities and to radically reduce inequities within the child welfare court system.

FWCC Workgroup Updates

Harm of Removal Workgroup – Laura Vogel (FYJP)

- Progress update: Guidance for Courts: Harms of Removal Across Stages of Child Development nearing completion.
- Next step: Seek CCFC approval to incorporate grief-informed framework into guidance.

Court Process for Cases Without Removal Workgroup – Laura Vogel (FYJP) & Michelle Hetzel (DCYF)

- Launch date: February 24, 2026.
- Leadership: Co-chaired by Laura Vogel, Michelle Hetzel, and Tarassa Froberg
 - Jurist in Residence, Judge Anne Hrisch (retired) will participate.
- Purpose: Develop a model court process for cases where:
 - No removal is requested, or
 - Child returns prior to fact-finding hearing.
- Anticipated outcomes: Potential legislative request to support implementation.

Guardianship Workgroup – Tarassa Froberg (FYJP)

- Online training series is underway:
 - Session 1: Legal Structures & Foundations – Jan 27 (352 registered).
 - Session 2: Practical Navigation & Support – Feb 19 (319 registered).
 - Session 3: Systems Collaboration & Real-Life Application – Mar 12 (registration pending).
 - Session 4: Lived Experience Panel (date TBD).
- Resources: Completed tip sheets on modification, substitution, and termination of guardianships; will be posted in court self-help portal.

Guardianship Discussion

- Guardianship legislation – Jarel Sanders (DCYF), Geene Delaplane (DCYF), Tarassa Froberg (FYJP)
 - SB 5837 – makes technical fixes to align RCW with Uniform Guardianship Act.
 - DCYF has assessed the impact as limited
 - It primarily affects Title 11 guardianships, which DCYF does not rely on like it does Title 13 guardianships.
 - DCYF does not plan to testify on this bill.
 - One change proposed in the bill that could impact DCYF is the requirement that DCYF provide the court with CPS background information for any adult housing a minor (not a full background check).
 - Hearing scheduled: Jan 13, 8–10 AM, Law & Justice Committee.
- Discussion Highlights:
 - The bill aims to address access to justice for pro se petitioners and minors.
 - Differences between Title 11 and Title 13 guardianships; complexity noted.
 - The bill could help Native families if DCYF suggests Title 11 guardianship early in the CPS process.
 - Data question raised: How many CPS cases proceed under Title 11? Does DCYF have any data on this practice?
 - It would be helpful to better understand how Title 11 guardianships are used in current practice.

Engaging Parents at Shelter Care – Workgroup Session

- Presentation: Informing Engagement Practice at Shelter Care (slide deck provided).
- Key Insights:
 - Engagement is relational—built on clarity, respect, and support—not just attendance or compliance.
 - Working definition: Parents understand what’s happening, ask questions, participate meaningfully, and stay connected beyond hearings.
 - Current challenges: Confusion, inconsistent messaging, lack of follow-up after court.
- Activity:
 - Small group brainstorming (4–5 participants per group) to identify realistic opportunities to strengthen engagement.

- Action Item:
 - Send notes and completed worksheets to Sarah Burns (sarah.burns@courts.wa.gov).
 - Reach out to Sarah with any questions regarding engagement strategies.

Adjourn

- Next meeting date: February 9, 2026 | 12:00–1:30 PM

Informing Engagement Practice at Shelter Care

FAMILY WELL-BEING COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE

January 12, 2026



Engaging Parents at
Shelter Care



WASHINGTON
COURTS
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS





PURPOSE OF TODAY'S SESSION

- Learn from parents' experiences at shelter care
- Build shared understanding across systems
- Gather input to inform what we build next

FWCC as System Consultants

- You bring system expertise
- You understand real-world constraints
- Your input helps make this work usable and realistic





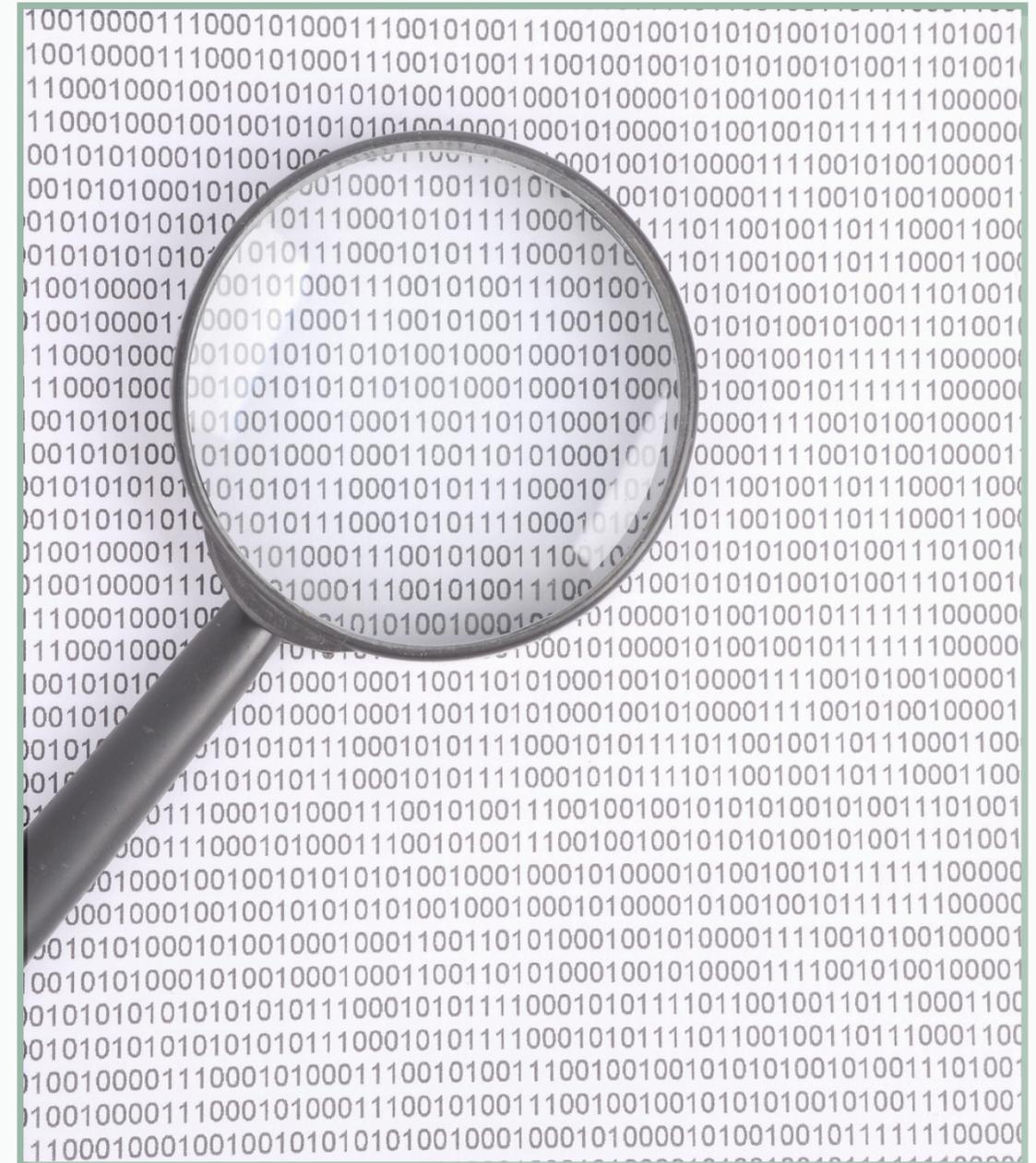
What Do We Mean by “Engagement”?

WHAT ENGAGEMENT IS NOT

- Attendance
- Compliance
- Agreement
- Motivation alone

What Research Shows

- Engagement is shaped by system actions
- Early experiences matter most
- Clarity, respect, and support increase engagement
- Engagement is a relational process, not a behavior



ENGAGEMENT IS SOMETHING SYSTEMS CREATE CONDITIONS FOR.

How Parents Define Engagement

- Understand what's happening
- Ask questions without fear
- Feel respected and human
- Be included early
- Stay connected after court

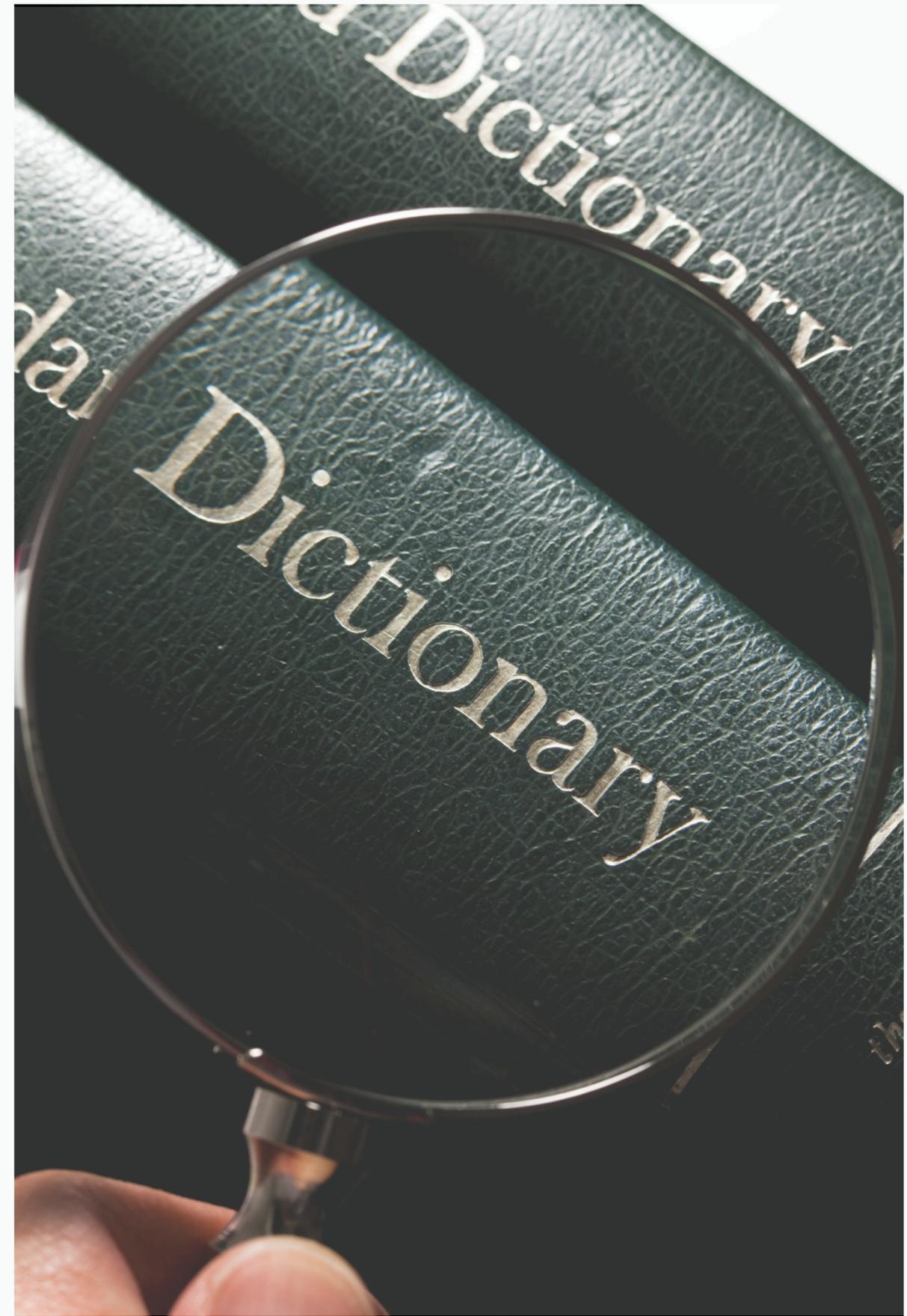


ENGAGEMENT IS SOMETHING SYSTEMS CREATE CONDITIONS FOR.

Working Definition for Today

ENGAGEMENT MEANS PARENTS CAN:

- Understand what's happening
- Ask questions
- Participate meaningfully
- Stay connected to their case



Across the shelter care phase, parents described:

- Confusion about what's happening
- Feeling overwhelmed and scared
- Not knowing who to ask
- Inconsistent messages
- Lack of follow-up after court



Today's Work Together

WHAT WE'RE ASKING YOU TO HELP WITH

- What's already working?
- Where are realistic opportunities to strengthen engagement?
- What challenges or constraints should the workgroup plan for?





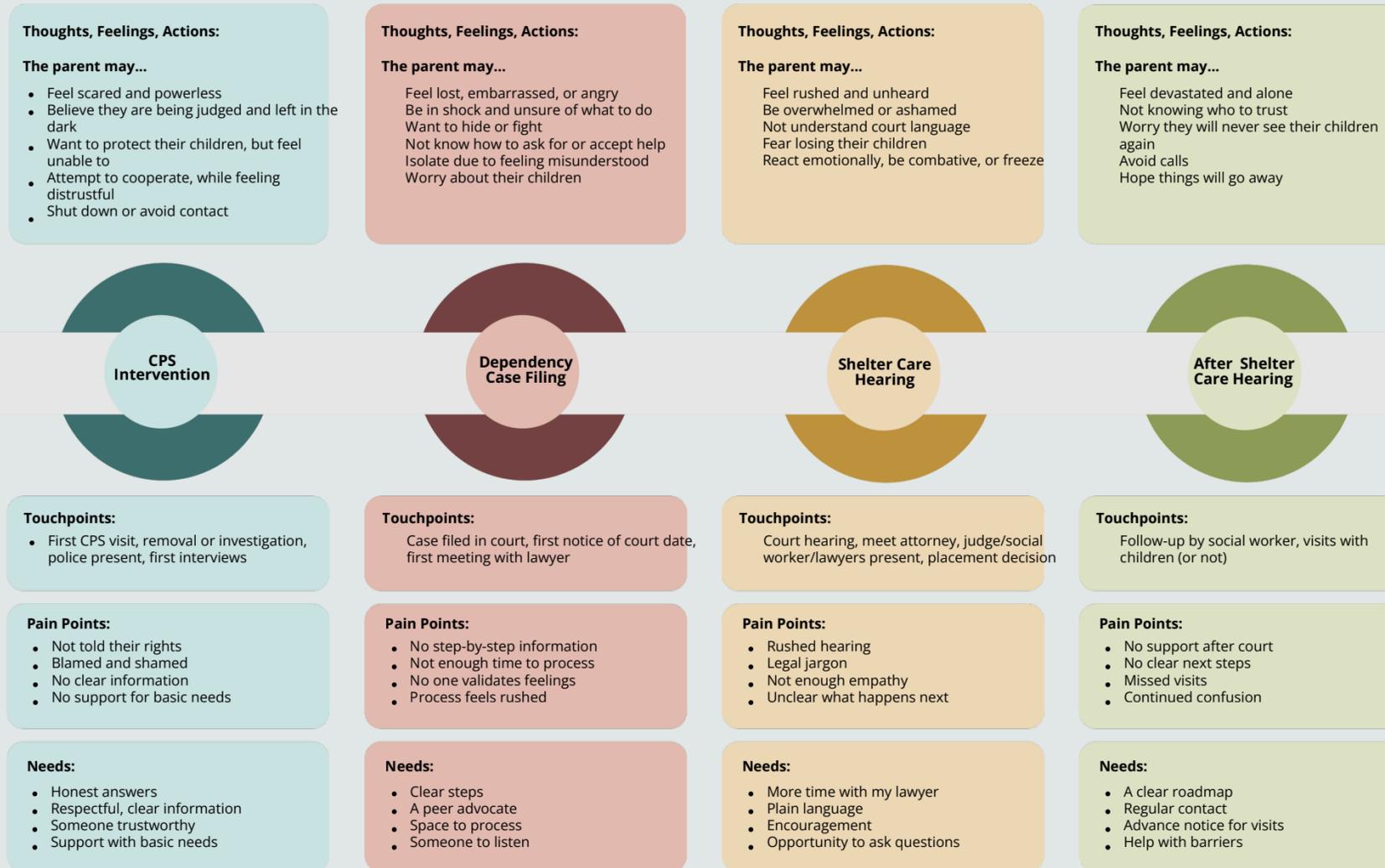
How Breakout Rooms Will Work

- You'll stay with the same small group
- 4–5 people per group
- Each group focuses on one stage of shelter care
- Choose:
 - One note-taker
 - One person to share out



Parent Journey Map: Shelter Care Phase

This journey map centers the perspectives of youth, parents, and families at each stage of the shelter care phase. Every journey is different. These examples are meant to help professionals and system partners build court processes that help youth and families feel safe, included, and understood, while also supporting parent engagement and family well-being. This map was created with help from over 20 parents and former youth who have lived experience in the child welfare court system, also called Lived Experts. They shared their perspectives based on their experiences in many sessions to help us understand what families go through during the shelter care phase. While this map shows many common experiences, it does not include everything we heard. At FYJP, we promise to use all feedback to guide system change and to make our training and support better for families and professionals. We are thankful for the honesty, time, and care each Lived Expert gave. We deeply value their role in making the system better for everyone and will keep working together as we move forward.



YOUR BREAKOUT GROUPS WILL FOCUS ON:

- CPS Intervention
- Dependency Case Filing
- Shelter Care Hearing
- After the Shelter Care Hearing

Harvest

WHEN WE COME BACK TOGETHER:

- We'll hear from a few groups
- Share one key insight
- Focus on patterns, not details





CPS Intervention

1 WHAT'S ALREADY HAPPENING WELL AT THIS STAGE?

2 WHERE ARE REALISTIC OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT?

FIRST HALF: WHAT'S WORKING | SECOND HALF: OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT



Dependency Case Filing

1 WHAT'S ALREADY HAPPENING WELL AT THIS STAGE?

2 WHERE ARE REALISTIC OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT?

FIRST HALF: WHAT'S WORKING | SECOND HALF: OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT



Shelter Care Hearing

1 WHAT'S ALREADY HAPPENING WELL AT THIS STAGE?

2 WHERE ARE REALISTIC OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT?

FIRST HALF: WHAT'S WORKING | SECOND HALF: OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT



After the Shelter Care Hearing

1 WHAT'S ALREADY HAPPENING
WELL AT THIS STAGE?

2 WHERE ARE REALISTIC OPPORTUNITIES
TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT?

FIRST HALF: WHAT'S WORKING | SECOND HALF: OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT



WHAT'S NEXT?

Next steps

- Combine lived-expert input + FWCC input
- EPSC workgroup defines engagement
- Workgroup identifies what to build in
- Drafts come back to lived experts and FWCC