



What to Do When a Worker is Stuck

- Explore whose goals the worker is working on. Is the worker focused on their own or another adult's goals for the youth? Is the worker focusing on the young person's own priorities?
- Remind workers to re-assess for and acknowledge the presence of a specific protective and promotive factor. Identify where youth are succeeding and how the worker can build on, reinforce, and celebrate those strengths.
- Give workers permission to stop doing what is not working and come up with new ideas and approaches based on individual youth and their family situations.
- Ask workers about their challenges dealing with "typical" adolescent testing behaviors. Explore what might be going on with youth and workers reactions. For example, trauma may be impacting the youth or the worker, and then decide how to handle the situation together.
- Encourage peer-to-peer support, giving workers opportunities to share challenging experiences and solve problems together. Pair up workers to tackle a task or activity together, such as go on a home visit with a partner or collaborate with a staff member who is having a tough time connecting with a specific young person.
- Identify and talk about other important people, places and resources to this young person and see if they are open to the worker interacting with them.

- Brainstorm ideas of what the worker can do differently. Ideas can include not only how the worker can see and describe the youth differently, but also what new activities, approaches, resources, or conversations the worker can put into action now.
- Role play scenarios with workers so they have a chance to try out conversations and responses related to protective and promotive factors; give feedback and ideas of how to move forward.
- Change it up. Identify opportunities for the worker to do things with a young person that are of interest to that youth, such as play a game, watch a favorite show or sports, go out to eat, meet in a new place.
- Go with a worker on a visit to observe interactions with youth, family, other adults, or peers in the youth's life. Provide constructive feedback about how they can address protective and promotive factors in everyday interactions and routine situations.
- Set up strategic matches between workers and community partners who can be role models and provide examples of effective practice with the protective and promotive factors framework.
- Provide additional formal training – such as professional development workshops, on-the-job shadowing, presentation by a guest speaker – to address gaps in knowledge or to enhance specific practice skills within the protective and promotive factors framework.
- Confer with other supervisors about challenges a worker is facing with a youth or family. Share coaching strategies that work for other supervisors and colleagues throughout the agency.

