Scheduling Interviews

These are a few of the pertinent stakeholders for each child to use a guide when scheduling the interviews.

⇒ Family members (parents are a must)
⇒ Other family members (grandparents/children/aunts/uncles)
⇒ Foster parents (a must if child is in out of home placement)
⇒ Teachers (especially if child is in special education/if school is in session)
⇒ Guardian Ad Litem
⇒ Case Manager (preferably as the first interviewee)
⇒ Juvenile justice personnel (probation officers, for example)
⇒ Child’s Attorney if applicable
⇒ Children (if old enough or if too young for interview, then for observation)
⇒ Service providers (mental health counselors, domestic violence counselors, substance abuse counselors, etc)
⇒ Physicians/psychiatrists
⇒ Informal supports (ministers, best friends, employers, etc.)

Tips to remember during scheduling:

► Secure family’s agreement to time, date and place of the interview. Also, it is mandatory that an Authorization for Release of Information form be signed by a parent/guardian.

► Contact all interviewees, explain purpose and arrange the schedule. Arrange the interview schedule so that the case manager is the first interview. The family members should be second on the interview schedule if their schedule permits. Order of the remaining interviewees makes no difference. Allow at least 1 hour for parents and foster parents. All others about 45-50 minutes. Allow time for lunch and for driving from interview to interview. Try, to the extent possible, to avoid doubling back for interviews.

► Try to arrange all interviews pertaining to one case in a sequence (which might cover a day and a half). Each reviewer will have two or more cases so it is important to keep the cases as separate as possible.

► The reviewer will need about two hours prior to beginning the interviews to read the record and review documents relating to the family. If appropriate, please have the CPS record available. Make a copy of the current case/permanency plan for the reviewer. The reviewer may need to copy additional documents to assist in preparing the case story.
Try to ensure access to people with the most experience (teacher from last year vs. new teacher who has had child only 1 month, for example).

It is preferable for interviews to be held in the homes/offices of family and stakeholders. However, if that is not possible, interviews in the county office and telephone interviews are acceptable. It is particularly important to interview caregivers in their homes.

Confirm interviews in writing as well as with a telephone call the day before the scheduled interview.