

WHAT CAN I DO AT HOME WITH MY CHILD?

Trauma is when bad things happen. It causes intense feelings of fear, helplessness and shock. You cannot think straight and your feelings are jumbled. Not everyone responds the same way to a traumatic event.

Trauma creates too much stress, and everyone has built-in ways of responding to stress. The three main ways we respond to stress (and how our brains are set up to protect us when there is danger) are identified as Fight/Flight/Freeze. When something dangerous happens, our body has an automatic alarm system that goes off and gets us ready to fight the danger, run away from the danger, or simply be unable to do anything at all.

Some things you can do are:

- Adopt the seven commitments of the Sanctuary® model in your own home and daily routine.
- Ask the three basic community meeting questions to establish a connection.
- Make safety plans.
- Value your child's physical, psychological, social and moral safety.
- Create a safe, nonviolent atmosphere for children.
- Use various art forms such as music, artwork and appropriate videos.
- Remember what has happened to your child, not what is "wrong" with him/her.
- Teach boundaries: when to say no, yes, ouch, uh-oh or oops.
- Resolve conflict as individuals and as a team.

New York State Office of Children and Family Services

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placed with OCFS
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INTAKE WORKER:

COMMUNITY SERVICES TEAM:

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"... promoting the safety, permanency and well-being of our children, families and communities ..."



The Sanctuary Model® Building Positive Futures for Our Youth



OUR SANCTUARY COMMITMENT

At the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), we have adopted the Sanctuary® Model. Sanctuary® is a treatment model that guides leaders, staff, children, and families, allowing them to share the same values and language. The Sanctuary® Model is the way we organize our treatment and the way we work. We welcome and encourage you, as a parent or legal guardian of a young person receiving services from OCFS, to adopt these principles as a guide for creating a safe and nonviolent environment.

WHY DID OCFS ADOPT THE SANCTUARY MODEL?

OCFS adopted this model because we recognize and understand the connection of trauma and its effects on behavior. Sanctuary[®] has proven to reduce physical aggression, as well as promote a safe, nonviolent atmosphere for everyone.

Because the Sanctuary[®] Model is a cultural model rather than a treatment intervention, OCFS maintains its structures and guidelines for our youth, as well as consequences, incentives, and individual services.

WHO IS REQUIRED TO FOLLOW THIS MODEL?

Everyone in every part of the facility is expected to practice these seven commitments in his/her daily work.

1. **Nonviolence** - being safe outside (physically), inside (emotionally), and with others (social), and doing the right thing (moral).
2. **Emotional intelligence** - managing our feelings so that we do not hurt ourselves or others.
3. **Social learning** - respecting and sharing the ideas of our teams.
4. **Shared governance** - shared decision making.
5. **Open communication** - saying what we mean and not being mean when we say it.
6. **Social responsibility** - together we accomplish more; everyone makes a contribution to the organizational culture.
7. **Growth and change** - creating hope for our youth and ourselves.

WHAT IS THE SANCTUARY LANGUAGE?

We have four steps, called **S.E.L.F.**, that guide the way we work and the way the residents heal and make progress in their lives.

S=Safety is where we start and end. It is the foundation of healing.

E=Emotions identify what we are feeling and how to handle those feelings.

L=Loss to acknowledge and grieve painful things that have happened.

F=Future to make positive choices to create a better future for ourselves and the world.

I HAVE HEARD ABOUT SAFETY PLANS. WHAT ARE THEY?

Safety Plans are small cards used by youth and staff that list suggestions for ways to keep us internally safe by helping us to manage our emotions. We wear our Safety Plans so that they are available for use whenever we may be feeling overwhelmed. Safety Plans serve as yet another tool in the trauma-informed process and are a simple way of keeping alive the message that our goal is to keep everyone safe.

MY CHILD TAKES PART IN COMMUNITY MEETINGS. WHAT ARE THEY?

Community Meetings allow residents and staff to make emotional connections and to share everyday struggles.



It is the first phase of trauma recovery for creating safety in a group. They are healthy rituals that promote and serve as a feelings check-in to establish a connection. Thinking and being able to verbalize feelings is important. Three questions are asked during Community Meetings:

How are you feeling today?
What is your goal for today?
Whom will you ask for help?

How are you feeling today? This question encourages emotional identification and teaches children to use words rather than actions to share their feelings.

What is your goal for today? This question promotes self-recovery. Individual goals create structure and relate to the process of using reasoning or perception. It provides staff insight into what residents are feeling and is important for everyone.

Whom will you ask for help? Our youth forget that they can rely on other people. Asking for help allows children to regain faith that people will be there for them and support them. It also helps foster a sense of community between residents and staff when they publicly ask each other for help. A response, "I will help you," is important for reinforcement of the staff's commitment to be there for the youth.

The meeting concludes with a thought for the day, such as:

*"To the world you might be one person,
but to one person you might be the world."*

Anonymous