



## COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK LOOPS WITH PARTNERS

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Another important part of creating and sustaining active involved community partnerships is embedding meetings, activities, and feedback loops in agency infrastructure and teaming processes. While the purpose of agency/community partner feedback loops is to keep partners continuously connected to and guiding practice change (including CFPM implementation) and system changes (including continuously assessing and addressing barriers), the partnership structures and processes that can best accomplish this are locally driven by the agency context and the communities involved.

Rather than identifying an existing forum and adding in community partners, implementing jurisdictions recognized the need to develop new partnership forums and processes. If existing forums were leveraged, they usually involved an agency representative traveling to and participating in an existing regional community or Tribal meeting. This was often a supplemental activity to strengthen partnership, communication, and feedback loops, while a monthly partnership meeting, at a location accessible to community partners, was established to support ongoing partnership activities.

Replicating jurisdictions are encouraged to brainstorm with community partners about which meeting locations, structures, and processes will be effective locally. In large urban areas, meetings may be held at the agency or a centralized community location. In rural areas, it may work better to have community or Tribal partners host the meeting and rotate the meeting venue to various outlying areas. Community partners should help plan the agenda for the meeting and receive meeting notes within a week or so of the meeting. Using partners' words in notes rather than reframing from a system perspective will honor partner perspectives.

Whatever form ongoing meetings and agency/community partner communication take, there is a need to develop linkages between community partners and the agency's implementation and leadership teams, so everyone is communicating successes and challenges and coordinating efforts and perspectives to achieve shared goals and outcomes. More information about establishing communication and feedback loops to support implementation of the Practice Model can be found in the Resources section of the *Shared Commitment* tab of the CFPM website.

### ***Example of Partnership Meeting Structure and Linkages***

While a number of jurisdictions engage community partners in monthly advisory group meetings with agency leadership and various levels of staff, one implementing jurisdiction has a broad community action team that does not regularly meet with agency leadership. Instead the agency's contracted community engagement liaison (who is also a member of the community) participates in and helps support this community team, arranging for agency implementation team members to attend when needed to provide information or to discuss issues or recommendations the team has.

The community action team is linked with the child welfare agency and its Practice Model implementation and leadership teams in another important way. The community action team has several members designated to sit on the agency's Practice Model leadership team to bring community partner perspectives to the leadership team's work of designing and supporting practice model implementation and needed system changes.