

## **Prioritizing Needs**

1. Once a list of needs has been generated, it's time to start winnowing and sifting.
2. Get easy agreements first. "This need has shown up in three domains, can we all agree to plan for it primarily in the health domain, even though we know its going to cross over into living situation and safety?" "These three needs seem pretty closely linked. Should we put them together as one need, or keep them apart?"
3. Next, make sure that the team has exhausted their list of needs. "Are there any other big needs folks think we may have missed?"
4. Now comes the voting and consensus building process. It is introduced here and used again several times as strategies and actions and commitments are developed.
5. Case managers seem to have the best results when physical movement is connected to the voting process. Having people get up to make check marks on the flip chart, or to put colored dots on story board cards, facilitates decision-making and some sharing of values.
6. Families need to get extra votes to make sure their voices are heard.
7. As key big needs emerge from the voting and consensus building process, they can be seen as challenges. The team is not there to describe what is wrong with a child and family, but to clarify what challenges must be met to help them have a better life.
8. When the voting is done and the top needs for each domain are listed, ask the team, "If we find ways to meet these needs do you think Bob and his mother are going to have a reasonable chance of making it? What do you think Mrs. Jones? How about you Bob?"