EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUALIZED PLANNING TECHNIQUES

STORY BOARDING

Materials needed: 3X5 or larger note cards. A bulletin board or blank wall to post them on, tacks, tape or other means for posting them, so that they can be easily put up, moved and taken down again. Markers for filling out the cards. Topic cards for each life domain column, plus topic cards for a strengths and a concerns column.

The facilitator welcomes everyone, describes the basic process, presents a few team rules and posts them. Generally, rules center around topics such as participation and respect and include points such as: "any idea will be posted" & "the group cannot talk about money or funding issues while brainstorming."

The initial strengths inventory is presented to the group to help introduce the child and family and create a focus on a common mission.

The group is asked to brainstorm additional strengths of the child and family, the extended family and also informal and formal community supports.

As strengths are identified, different group members are asked to write them on note cards which are then tacked or taped to the wall in a column under the heading "strengths." Some team members, including parents will also want to express concerns at this point, hear them, put them on cards and post them in that colum, but tell the team that they will be dealt with in a later step.

Then, focusing on each life domain, the group is asked to identify potential goals for a positive outcome appropriate to the culture, values and life-context of this child and family. These goals are posted above the card with the title of each domain.

The facilitator asks the group to think of any needs which stand in the way of the family meeting its goals in each domain. Each one is written on a note card and posted in the applicable domain column. Once they are all listed, the team votes to prioritize the needs. The top few needs stay up.

Next the group brainstorms as many ways as possible of meeting each of the key needs. Each strategy is written on a card and posted by the need card. Then, as before, the team votes to select the top strategies which have the best fit with the identified goal, take the most advantage of the child and family's strengths, and address any concerns or system needs which may apply.

Cards with the top strategies are moved to a fresh space on the wall. The facilitator leads the group through a refinement process to clarify the specific actions which will be needed to implement each strategy.

Where appropriate, action cards can be sorted by sequence and a timeline created to show which steps need to be completed first. This creates the "story board" from which the process gets its name.

The process concludes by asking participants to commit to carrying out specific action steps. All of the actions have to be linked to a specific actor. Each team member leaves the meeting with a list of tasks to be completed.