

Dear Mr. Kalisher & Ms. Morell [Willimantic Teaming Supervisor],

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to your department for a family meeting held [in December] in your office. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss and put in place support for two children and their divorced parents. It allowed all concerned parties to be together in one place, hear the same information and concerns, and allowed opportunity for us to offer individual suggestions and support where possible. There were many family members, friends, DCF workers and professional people present, and there was potential for this meeting to get very emotional. As you can imagine getting several family members from both sides together in one room, including divorced parents, can be challenging and can come with many viewpoints, emotions and tempers.

Monica Smith [Willimantic Teaming Facilitator] is to be commended for an outstanding job facilitating this meeting! She kept the meeting as positive as possible. She set the ground rules from the start, kept to time constraints, kept us all on task and did a great job of including each and every person in the room. She validated people's feelings, concerns and input and did a wonderful job supporting and reassuring **both** parents. Rosie Espejo [Willimantic Social Worker], and the supervisors present were also supportive, honest, and helpful. They offered many suggestions and supported decision being made. You have a truly amazing team.

As foster parents in [Massachusetts], we know the importance of what took place in your office yesterday. The DCF staff proved to all of us how **invested in families** you are, dispelling the notion that if you (the agency) are involved, children are removed. This meeting allowed children to remain in the care of their parents, put several services and supports in place for all involved, and began mending some broken family relationships. As a direct result of the support put in place in this meeting, our granddaughter, who has not been to school in 3 weeks because of anxiety, successfully walked into school today and remained there for the entire day! The power of people coming together for a common goal at its best!

We strongly recommend continuing this meeting format as demonstrated yesterday, for families with similar issues. Everyone present at this meeting walked away feeling better than they did when they arrived and within 24 hours there was major success experienced by this family.

We are truly grateful for the outstanding job that Monica did as well as the rest of your staff present and involved in this meeting.

Sincerely,

[Grandparents]

**From:** WALLEY, DENNIS [Norwich Social Worker]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 14, 2012 11:40 AM  
**To:** SHEEHAN, LAUREEN  
**Subject:** TDM

Laureen,

I wanted to share with you how positive my experiences have been in working with the TDM here in Norwich. I have had several cases with them since they came into being, and I have found it to be extremely helpful in all cases. We have been able to establish meaningful and appropriate discharge plans for youths who we were unable to match through traditional methods. I have long supported the idea that relatives and people familiar with our kids should be prioritized as potential resources. The creation of the TDM has helped put that approach into practice. I have always searched for potential relatives and special studies and utilized them in many cases with varying results. The TDM allows me to continue to use this approach, but in a much more planful and supported way. The TDM meetings that I have attended have all resulted in the youth and the potential match feeling much more supported and this gets the placement off on the right foot. Also, having Skye [Garofalo, Norwich Teaming Supervisor] and Jim [Gannotti, Norwich Teaming Facilitator] on board makes my job much easier as we manage this transition. They have helped out regarding referrals for services, communicating with providers and family, establishing roles for all parties involved with the youth, securing funding for furniture, and even a few transports. All of these things allow me to focus on my many other duties and ensure that small details are not overlooked during the transition. I have received many positive remarks following TDM meetings from families and providers. Many times the TDM is the first time these family members have been asked about a child. Having them included in these meetings gives them a sense of team and makes them more likely to continue to participate in the child's life going forward. In many cases it also lets the child see that there are people out there who are pulling for them and really care.

Anyway, I have 4 youths who have had positive change as a result of the support I received from the TDM and several others who are moving in a positive direction after much waiting and few options. Sorry if this was a rambling e-mail, but I wanted to voice my support for the work Skye and Jim are doing to help us here in Norwich.

Sincerely,

Dennis Walley

**From:** BURKE, BRENDAN [Middletown Intake/FAR Supervisor]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 29, 2012 12:29 PM  
**To:** SHEEHAN, LAUREEN  
**Cc:** PETERSON-ARESCO, MICHELLE [Middletown Intake Manager]  
**Subject:** TDM

Just want to pass on another positive experience that we had today with the Middletown TDM team. We got an emergency call from a grandfather who had previously agreed to a TOG, indicating that he would no longer be able to care for his grandchildren. This man, clearly in crisis, advised that his wife and child left the home, and will not be returning until his grandchildren are out. Within 15 minutes of getting the case in the regional office, Shelly [Brodsky, Middletown Teaming Facilitator] and my investigator were out the door to meet with the children's mother along with the grandfather to hopefully make arrangements so that these children will not come into care.

The benefit of having this type of resource available at a moment's notice will certainly have an impact on the initial dynamics of this case, and likely increase the likelihood of a more positive outcome, which as I write this, is yet to be determined. Not sure how the afternoon is going to play out, but I do know that we are effectively utilizing the resources that we have, which is about all we can do at this point.

Socorro [Cortijo, Middletown Teaming Supervisor] and Shelly's willingness to assist is greatly appreciated by us, and likely will also be by these children one day.