

The Team Decision Making™ Model

What Is the TDM Model?

The Team Decision Making (TDM) model is an evidence-supported approach to quickly bringing together the important people in a child's life when a safety threat suggests a child may need to be separated from parents. The TDM model has proven, tangible benefits for children when implemented.

- Children with a timely TDM meeting are **40% less likely to experience repeat maltreatment** within six months.
- High-quality TDM meetings **increase the chance of reunification** within one year for **children of all races**.
- Use of quality TDM meetings is associated with **increased placement stability** for children in out-of-home care.
- A child who enters care is **more likely to live with relatives or foster parents** from the start.

How Does It Work?

A TDM meeting is held in all situations before the child moves from their home or current placement. In an emergency, the meeting is held as quickly as possible after the child's immediate safety needs are met.

Families participate with agency staff in a TDM meeting to join in making the best possible decisions about where a child can safely live. TDM meetings may also include:

- Extended family, friends, spiritual leaders, and other supporters
- Current or past service providers, such as therapists, counselors, and teachers
- Other formal and informal community members

An experienced, independent facilitator guides the group using a structured, six-stage TDM meeting model.





Information from each meeting is collected and linked to data on child and family outcomes. These data are monitored regularly for continuous quality improvement.

The TDM Model at the NCCD Children's Research Center

The TDM model began at the Annie E. Casey Foundation more than 20 years ago as a way to ensure consistent, quality decisions and to bring families and others into determinations about where a child can safely live. The Foundation developed and enhanced the approach, bringing it to dozens of jurisdictions across the country.

In 2020, the NCCD Children's Research Center became the sole organization supporting implementation of the TDM model. With our extensive relationships in the field, technological know-how, and portfolio of well-regarded tools and resources, we are well positioned to help you initiate or refresh the TDM model in your jurisdiction. Talk to us about implementing and supporting the most up-to-date, evidence-based version of the TDM model; exploring opportunities to integrate the TDM approach with the Structured Decision Making® model and SafeMeasures®; and adding technological features such as an enhanced TDM data application.

Learn More

To learn more about the Team Decision Making model, contact Heather Meitner, Child Welfare Practice and Team Decision Making Manager, at (800) 306-6223 or hmeitner@nccdglobal.org.