

Handout: Motivational Tasks for Child Welfare Workers

The table below describes the stages of change and identifies motivational tasks for the child welfare worker to address with the substance-abusing parent. The child welfare professional should work in partnership and collaboration with the substance abuse counselor.

Parent's Stage of Change and Motivational Tasks for Child Welfare Workers		
Parent's Stages of Change		Motivational Tasks for Child Welfare Worker
Precontemplation	No perception of having a problem or need to change	Increase parent's perception of the risks and problems with their current behavior; raise parent's awareness about behavior
Contemplation	Initial recognition that behavior may be a problem and ambivalence about change	Foster and evoke reasons to change and the risks of not changing; help parents see that change is possible and achievable
Decision to Change	Makes a conscious determination to change; some motivation for change identified	Help parent identify best actions to take for change; support motivations for change
Action	Takes steps to change	Help parent implement strategy and take steps
Maintenance	Actively works on sustaining change strategies and maintaining long-term change	Help parent to identify triggers and use strategies to prevent relapse
Lapse or Relapse	Slips (lapses) from a change strategy or returns to previous problem behavior patterns (relapse)	Help parent re-engage in the contemplation, decision, and action stages
Adapted from SAMHSA (2004).		