

## CLEARING UP COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS IN JUVENILE COURT

### General Rules

1. Reunification is the goal of all child protection cases (except in rare circumstances) – “to preserve family life whenever possible” W.S. 14-3-201. The common goal of all juvenile court stakeholders is **reunification**.
2. The parties can enter into agreements, using Rule 9 of the Juvenile Court Rules, *Inadmissibility of Certain Evidence*, to stipulate that information provided by a parent in an MDT or case planning meeting will NOT be admissible in a subsequent criminal proceeding arising from the same episode.
3. It is OK for a parent to say they do NOT want to talk to a DFS worker.
4. It is OK for a parent to say they do NOT want to talk to DFS without their attorney. It is OK for the DFS worker to contact the parent attorney.
5. It is OK for a DFS worker to talk to a parent attorney before an “adjudication.”
6. DFS should develop a case plan within 60 days from the out of home placement, regardless of whether or not there has been an admission or adjudication. DFS can develop a case plan without an admission.
7. You should always talk about the DFS case plan at the MDT and court hearings.