

Korina Barry ([00:26](#)):

Boozhoo/Hello everyone. Thank you for tuning into the CASCW podcast. We are hanging in there and we hope you are too. We're continuing our series that takes a village, child welfare and a pandemic and in today's episode I chat with Mary Doyle and Carly Cantu, two of the Family Group Decision Making team at Hennepin County, which is our largest County in Minnesota. During our conversation, Mary and Carly share more about the Family Group Decision Making approach and how the pandemic has shifted this process over the past couple of months. They also share some stories of how virtual connection has allowed them to connect with youth and families in meaningful ways during this time. I hope you enjoy our conversation.

Korina Barry ([01:12](#)):

How are you doing?

Mary Doyle ([01:13](#)):

We're good, thank you. How are you, Korina?

Korina Barry ([01:16](#)):

You know, I'm hanging in there sometimes these days blend in with the nights, but we're surviving. Um, could you both introduce yourself and share a little bit more about your work and your roles?

Mary Doyle ([01:28](#)):

Uh, my name is Mary Doyle. I work for Hennepin County Children and Family Services. I'm a supervisor, social work unit supervisor and I supervise the family group decision making team and have worked in child welfare for many, many years, um, back into the previous century if you want to know the truth. Um, and I worked in the adoption area and child services, just a brief little time in child protection a long time ago. And from, for the last several years I've been in family group decision making.

Carly Cantu ([02:01](#)):

Great. And uh, my name is Carly Cantu and I am a social worker. Mary is my supervisor and I am in family group decision making. Um, my current role is that I facilitate family group meetings. Um, I worked at Hennepin County now for almost 18 years and I've been in child services, I've been in adoptions, I did parent support outreach for awhile. I did recruitment and then I was a child protection worker for a number of years.

Korina Barry ([02:28](#)):

Wow. We've got to, we're lucky to have the both of you. It just, and knowing, you know, someone who's been in direct practice and just the commitment. And so thank you for all that you both do. Um, so how, I wanted to start with just asking, like, how are you, how are you both doing and how are you adjusting with all of the changes in life during a pandemic?

Mary Doyle ([02:54](#)):

You know, for me, honestly, it has not been too bad. I, um, I have children but they're adult children and my heart goes out to people that have school aged children right now. Cause I feel like that is probably the biggest change and challenge for people. Um, but you know, the pace is a bit slower and, and, uh, you know, the seriousness of the state of the world kind of causes you to slow down and be a little more

reflective about things and appreciate things, you know, that we've taken for granted for so long. Um, you know, and I miss the stimulation and the sporting events and gatherings and things like that. But, um, I don't know. The spring weather and the longer days are just immensely helpful I think.

Carly Cantu ([03:38](#)):

And I think for me, um, it, it took a few minutes to adjust and I feel like thankfully I have gotten to that point. Um, but, but it's tough. I'm doing the role, you know, juggling work, which thankfully it's a flexible job and I'm very grateful for that and being able to work at home. Um, but I also have two school aged children. Um, I have a husband who's home and we, um, it's, it's a lot of together time and it's a lot of juggling and take teaming to get the schooling done and do what we need to do. Um, I agree with Mary that being outside in the spring weather is a huge help and I think the days that I'm really struggling or I'm feeling like, you know, life is never going to be normal again, I start realizing though how much I have to be lucky for. And I think about the families that we work with every day and the struggles that they have and me feeling stuck at home is nothing in comparison to what other families are going through right now. So that's really kind of helped me reframe things and try to stay positive.

Korina Barry ([04:39](#)):

Are there any other like coping techniques or ways you're taking care of yourself in addition to kind of fresh air, getting outside?

Mary Doyle ([04:50](#)):

Um, yeah, a lot of, for me, Mary, a lot of walking. Um, I'm doing yoga more than I've done before. Yoga with Adrian on the YouTube channel. Right. Um, which has been, yeah, no, that's been really helpful cause they're just kind of short, you know, you can kind of do this, a daily yoga at home and you know, reading and playing a lot of board games like Tripoli and Farkle and things like that. And um, Saturday nights are for takeout - take out Saturdays. So that's kind of the highlight of the week to try new restaurant every week. But that's kinda it for us, I guess. Yeah.

Carly Cantu ([05:26](#)):

I would probably say similar for us as well. Um, I have been exercising more than I think I ever have in my life and so that's kind of one of the silver linings. I have a group going with a number of close friends where we're all challenging each other to use our Apple watches every day and close the exercise rings. Um, and I kind of started off as a joke, but now it's turned into this great thing where it's, you know, a day I don't want to work out. I'm feeling like I have to be competitive and get out there and do it. So exercising a lot. We've gone on a lot of family bike rides and it's, it's almost just kind of doing everything a little bit more basic, bringing it back. Um, I been reading a ton, I've been doing a ton of jigsaw puzzles and just hanging out, um, being kind of a family and you know, just being at home and not running around where that's also one of the things that's been nice is we're not running from activity to activity. Life is just a little bit more relaxing.

Korina Barry ([06:23](#)):

Yeah. And it's, it's funny with the jigsaw puzzles, I don't know, I didn't have any on hand and that was one of the things that were sold out everywhere when I've wanted a jigsaw puzzle so bad. So it took me a couple of weeks. I was like, Oh, when you were getting a little extra food and supplies at the beginning of this, you didn't think how much you would want to jigsaw. I think fully have a friend that I didn't know had a stock of hundreds of puzzles and I think I just borrowed my 12th or 13th puzzle. So it's getting me

through this self and this warranty and then it's um, yeah, it's been a new thing to do. Yeah, for sure. I think there's something about it. One helping you slow down and is it just like something therapeutic about it? Kind of being able to see it through and finish it. So definitely recommend puzzles.

Korina Barry ([07:12](#)):

Well thank you for sharing a little bit more of kind of how you're taking care of yourselves and managing the day to day of this kind of new different life we're in right now. Um, could you share and so getting into family group conferencing and the work that you all do for folks who are listening and maybe don't know what that is or what that looked like before. Um, and then as we'll get in and talk about how that changed, can you share what family group conferencing is and kind of what that typically, like if we were to visualize, like what is, what does the family group conference look like and you know, before pandemic?

Mary Doyle ([07:50](#)):

Yeah, I can start, help me out Carly, if I, if you want to add, um, you know. We kind of use the term family group decision making, which is, it's kind of interchangeable with family group conferencing and um, it's kind of, it's an umbrella term and it really encompasses all kinds of family and youth meetings. Um, my team is made up mostly of facilitators or coordinators and, um, it's, it's a family engagement strategy and it's, and it's used to not only build, but in my opinion to reveal capacity in families and communities. And it's through kind of collaborative planning, information, sharing, identifying resources, and just sharing in the decision making so we can work together with the family of the agency and the families to come up, kind of attend to attend to kids, uh, wellbeing and safety and permanency needs. Um, and, and so it's usually their meetings that are facilitated by someone who's neutral or impartial.

Mary Doyle ([08:47](#)):

And, um, generally we've always had our meetings in person and are, you know, are the core of our was to bring people together. You know, so this, this pandemic has really challenged that notion. Um, we try to widen the circle and um, try to really develop, you know, I try to help the families develop a better support system so they can get help with kind of whatever issues they're facing. Um, so anyways, so at Hennepin County we have nine coordinators, coordinators and facilitators and we have a case management assistant and myself, our manager has Liz Scudder. Um, and our primary work has been to organize and facilitate and document these family and youth meetings. Um, so we'd always, we'd find locations that were close to the family. We'd get interpreters there if we needed. Um, sometimes it would, they would be in the evenings if that's when the families could come and have service providers join as well. Well, Carly, do you have anything you want to add to?

Carly Cantu ([09:46](#)):

Yeah, I, you know, I, when I explain it to families also, I typically say it's, um, it's a chance for them to be able to have their voice heard. So I think in a system where many times families feel that they have no say, they have no voice, this is a chance to bring themselves and their support network to the table to be a part of things. Um, and I think it's been pretty amazing because at times when we work with families, you know, we might think that they're just, you know, just a single mom with no supports or a single dad or a mom and dad. But then if they have the chance to bring their people to the table, you might realize that they have church supports and they have neighbors and relatives and they're not just this little single entity. So it's, it's pretty amazing. And it, I think it really empowers the family that they have some say of what's happening with their kids and how they're going to keep their children safe.

Korina Barry ([10:38](#)):

Yeah. And so for folks who maybe don't know, and correct me if I'm wrong about your process, cause I know it could be different at different agencies, but this may look like maybe there's a new case, new family, that becomes involved in child protection is one of the many examples of how you do your work and a worker supporting that family could make a referral to your team and kind of asked to host one of the family group decision making conferences or meetings. Um, and that at that point, it allows for the parents or caregivers who are involved to maybe, um, say like, who do they want to be there? Like who are, who do they identify as some of the key supports in their life, but then they have your staff and your team to kind of help dig through that a little deeper and kind of identify. Um, so I don't know if you want to say anything a little bit more about that process and how you're actually getting folks to the table and helping families kind of see that bigger circle of support.

Carly Cantu ([11:39](#)):

Yeah. Sometimes when we talk to families, you know, I'll say to our parents, you know, who would you like to invite to the meeting? And they will say, I have no one to invite. And um, you know, so it's digging deeper. You know, if you're at home and you need to call someone for this, like who are your people that you call when you need someone, let's try to bring them in. Um, you know, who at this school are you connected with and is important to your family? Sometimes parents will say, you know, I don't want anyone in my family to know what is happening. And it's really trying to work with them about that. You know, what, let's be transparent. Let's try to get things out on the table. The goal is to get as much support for you as you parent. Parenting is challenging, let's try to get as much support. So when the department is able to close the case, the case isn't going to open again. And you're able to call your people and hopefully create a safety plan where you can rely on that. And then the department doesn't get another phone call again. Um, I think that there is, you know, a lot of times, you know, if a parent relapses, it doesn't necessarily have to be a child protection issue. If they have a safety plan amongst their family, they ensure that children are safe and they can rely on their family members, um, to, to help their children. So I think that's one of the goals is that not everything has to become a child protection matter. If you have your support network and everyone is working together to keep the child safe.

Korina Barry ([13:10](#)):

What are some of, can you share some of like, cause you mentioned safety, right, and safety planning and so that may be one kind of clear goal that you're coming together as a group and a support network for a family. Are there other tools and kind of requirements for this work that you're helping workers and these families, um, kind of go through in this setting?

Carly Cantu ([13:30](#)):

Yeah, so sometimes we have meetings for exactly that, creating a safety plan. So mom and dad struggle with chemical dependency. What is going to be the plan that we're going to develop to ensure that the child always has a safe and sober caregiver. Other times we are having meetings because, um, the kids aren't with distance learning right now. The kids aren't logging on to school every day and the school has no idea if there's any learning that's happening. I had a meeting last week about that is okay, let's come together and make a plan with the school and with the family to ensure the kids are logged in every day. Um, other times we have meetings about permanency, which means, um, a termination of parental rights may have happened and the child is in need of an adaptive resource and we have multiple relatives or family members that want to be, um, an adoptive placement. So bringing together the

family it to try to figure out what is the plan going to be, what is the family hope, hopes, what, what does the family hope can happen? We do also youth ones where it's really focused on the teenager, um, kids that are 16 to 21 called, um, youth transition conferences where we're really working with the youth to identify their goals towards independent living and what needs to happen.

Mary Doyle ([14:50](#)):

You know, we're doing, um, we just started, well in the last couple of years doing a meeting called the critical family response meeting and it's a meeting that's really, um, focusing on when kids are at home, but things aren't really going that well and the agency is starting to be concerned that we may have to talk about out of home placement, you know, or we may have to go take it to court and out of home placements, a possibility. And in general, our agency doesn't, we don't want to separate kids from their families. That's a very, very drastic kind of decision that child welfare makes. And it's, it's hard on kids, you know, no matter how much, um, you know, no matter what, you know, no matter how you slice it kind of, it's the separating from your parents is hard on kids and it's very traumatic. And so we don't take that lightly.

Mary Doyle ([15:39](#)):

So ideally we'd like to have this critical family response meeting with the family. Um, just to be able to say to them very clearly, you know, we're worried and we're worried this isn't going well and kids really need their parents and we don't want to see that that relationship disrupted, you know, so bring your support people in and bring your family and let's talk about like, what do you want to do about this and what are your ideas and what resources do you have? Um, because we have to make a plan and we don't want the agency to just make that plan.

Korina Barry ([16:10](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. And we're getting into like the ways this, the pandemic is starting to change this really important work you were able to do in person and create those, you know, build rapport and like make the connections just very different. And so now it sounds like you've shifted to what everyone else says. Lots of virtual and online kind of connecting. Um, and even just thinking about, you're saying with this, I'm sorry, was it a critical response team? Critical, critical family response? The response. And we know we love acronyms in the world of social work, so I'm sure we, we especially do. Yeah, we go crazy.

Korina Barry ([16:47](#)):

Have you encountered lots of issues or with families having barriers to even be able to do that? Or do you feel like your team, your agencies, you know, supported, you know, like how are you able to, if you have encountered that where it's like, Oh, we want to have the support for this family but maybe they don't even have the equipment they need. Um, like how are you able to troubleshoot some of that? So far?

Mary Doyle ([17:12](#)):

Cary has had some great experience with this, but I just want to say, I'm just kind of amazed at, it's really been kind of breathtaking how quickly we have shifted our practice and adapted. And I think Hennepin County has always, I think been really good on technology stuff. And so I give, I give Hennepin a ton of credit, but I just commend the social workers at Hennepin, the child protection workers and then the social workers on my team for just their, their willingness to kind of just jump right in and learn this. I think for the first couple of weeks we were all kind of scrambling and trying to get us familiar and

practicing, practicing with other people, practicing. And it's just been really kind of cool to see. So, and Carly has some great examples I think of how, how that shifted, but the, but I think the family's capabilities that that's a real, that's kind of all over the map in terms of their equipment and internet and things like that. But that's what I've seen from my perspective.

Carly Cantu ([18:10](#)):

Yeah. And I think at the beginning, I know I was kind of against it like, well this is just going to be for a couple of weeks and then we'll all be in person and let's just ride this out. And then when we have obviously realized this is going to go on for a lot longer, it was like, I better embrace this or I don't have work to do. Um, so I was very apprehensive at first. Um, I remember going into my first meeting with the teams. I was so nervous and I have to say I have been very pleasantly surprised. It does not always go smooth when there is connection issues and different things like that. But you know, I think we're all just trying to do the best we can and be creative. And fortunately it's, we've been able to do that with the technology.

Carly Cantu ([18:58](#)):

Um, so for when I'm setting up meetings, I am asking families and then asking providers, are you comfortable with having the meeting via, you know, with the video on where we can see each other. And that is my hope for the meetings. Cause if we can't be in person, that is at least a connection that we can make as seen each other. Um, I would say about 95% of my meetings, the families have said, yes, we are fine with that. Um, and if they're not fine with that, then we can just do it via a conference call where we can't see each other, what we can all be on a call together. So that does work as well. Um, so I wanna make sure that we respect what the family is comfortable with. And then what we do is, you know, we get their email addresses, we send them out a calendar invite and then we walk them through the process.

Carly Cantu ([19:46](#)):

If they're going to be using their phone for the meeting, they have to download the app for it. Um, Microsoft teams application, which is free. We walk them through that. If they're going to use their computer, they just have to click on the link. So we give really specific instructions for some families. Um, they've wanted to test it out before the meeting, which I think is really helpful. So then we're not kind of doing that when we do the actual meeting. Um, so testing it out has been great. And then for a lot of the people on our team, us facilitators, we are co-facilitating the meetings. So we'll work together where one person is facilitating the meeting and then another person is, we do summaries of all of our meetings. So the other person is taking notes. They are kind of dealing with if we're having some technical issues.

Carly Cantu ([20:35](#)):

Um, so in a meeting I did a couple of weeks ago, I was sort of the tech person and there was maybe 15 people that were on that meeting. So we have 15 different households and a couple people couldn't get in. So then I was calling the people. And so it just really helps working together where one person can focus on the meeting and the other person is focusing on the technology aspect of it. Um, so I've been very pleasantly surprised on how good it has worked at times. A challenge would be if someone has connectivity issues, that's hard. So yesterday we did a meeting and the parents unfortunately kept on going in and out. We did the best we could do. We still are able to have a meeting that met our goal, but

it was tough. And again, it's all about, I think being flexible with each other. And just everybody doing the best they can do.

Korina Barry ([21:24](#)):

Yeah. And from the meetings that you've held over the, you know, I don't even know what week we're on at this point or how long we've been doing this. It feels like a whole year has passed by in the matter of a couple months. I'm wondering what you are seeing, you know, in the families, I mean, and then the individuals, the youth if you're, you know, doing youth, um, youth conferences as well. Um, like what are you seeing, how are families doing and how, you know, how are these households and individuals doing, um, and kind of managing and pandemic life during some of your, the connections you're able to have with them at this time?

Mary Doyle ([22:06](#)):

On a positive note, we have had people be able to participate that maybe wouldn't have been able to participate in person. And that's been really interesting to see. Um, because I think some people, and I mean Carly has a, a great example, and I've told this story a million times, but we had a sister or a relative participate at a family meeting who works for the post office. And apparently she had the, she was actually doing her route and she had a, she had her phone on and she was delivering mail and she was, she had the teams on her phone, you know, and, and was really integral to the meeting, asked a lot of great questions, you know, and was very present, you know, while she was also working. And if we would have tried to have gotten her in person, we probably wouldn't have gotten her, you know. Um, so, so we haven't people who are either kind of more available or available in a different way, um, which has been a real plus, you know, and I think our meetings used to be, I don't know, maybe two hours. And I feel like now virtually, they're not like maybe they're an hour, but maybe we'll meet for a follow up meeting the following week, you know, so it's like, so those things I think have shifted a little bit too.

Carly Cantu ([23:20](#)):

Yeah, I would, I completely agree. I, it has been a lot easier getting more people to participate in the meetings because they're not trying to get downtown or trying to across town to get to the location more convenient for the parents. Um, I mean everyone's just having to kind of pause wherever they are and be a part of it. So the meeting where I had, um, the, the relative that was the postal delivery person doing her route while she was on the call, the same thing, the probation officer who probably kinds of participated otherwise was sitting in his car, not driving, sitting in his car to be a part of the meeting. Um, a meeting that I had where there was some school concerns. We had about 10 school people on the call, all trying to offer more support to the family and that could have never happened before.

Carly Cantu ([24:11](#)):

So there are definitely some silver linings to doing meetings this way and I think it will. Um, it just gives us a little bit more flexibility of doing a few things out of the box that we maybe kind of done before. I um, I had a meeting last week where not only did we have a lot of participants, we had a parent who lives in Africa joining the meeting via speakerphone where the child protection worker was holding the phone up so we could hear mom, she could hear all these participants on the meeting and be a part of this meeting and that possibly could have happened if we were all in person. But it's pretty amazing that right now in this pandemic we had a participant in another, you know, on another continent take part in the meeting. So it's pretty exciting and I think pretty remarkable.

Carly Cantu ([25:00](#)):

I think for some of our families. Also the idea of being in a family meeting with, even if they're supports of their own, their supports are hearing their personal business being in a meeting where possibly you're with your child protection worker that you are triggered by there. There's a lot of feelings that come up and you know definitely raises anxiety. Another thing that's nice about this virtual meeting is people are able to be comfortable in their own homes, in their own setting and it might, it just lessens anxiety a little bit as well for some meetings doing it virtually for some families, being in person is absolutely going to be the way to go for other families. I think this is an excellent tool that we now have just as an alternative option. If you know for whatever reason a family can't come in person, there's no reason why we can't still have a meeting. It just allows us to do so much more.

Korina Barry ([25:52](#)):

Is there any, you know, for, for, if there are other agencies and units teams who are maybe still struggling to get comfortable if that's even, you know, like if comfortable is like the right word but like are just, you know, trying to figure out how to do this and make this shift. Is there any, I don't know, advice that you might have for them and kind of making that shift to this new, this new process that we may be in for, you know, a while, you know, we don't know, but if we could be, we could be here for a bit.

Mary Doyle ([26:24](#)):

Well what's a member of my team said, Oh sorry, I think he was wise. He's, he said, you know, we may not be able to solve the moon and the stars, but we can get something done. You know that like what can we get done? What can we do? You know, maybe it's not a two hour meeting where we solve everything. Maybe it's a half hour meeting where we check in and do what we can talk about what we can about what's going on. And I think the tradeoff is like these conversations still need to happen. There's still a lot to talk about. There's still a lot going on. And, and I believe, and that's part of our values, is families, they're entitled to be at the table, you know, and they don't, they don't get excluded just because we can't figure it out, you know, or we don't feel comfortable doing it this way.

Mary Doyle ([27:10](#)):

It's like we need the families, they are partners in this, you know, we can't, we have to figure out a way to get them there. And they are, they're absolutely entitled to participate in their case plans and in decisions. And so I think we have to do our best and do what we can do and probably lower our expectations a little bit in terms of, you know, how grand it's going to be. But it's not an excuse to, to not have the families participate. You know? So I, I just think that really has to drive us, you know, and just that sense of like, this is, they're really important. And if it was your family, you would want to be there whatever way you can. You know, and I think families understand that it's not safe to get in a big group right now, but, um, but we do have other means to get that work done.

Carly Cantu ([28:00](#)):

I absolutely agree with everything. Um, for me, I'm the same that I used was I just needed a rip the bandaid off. And the more meetings I've done, the more comfortable I've become. And I've, I've been amazed that families are making this technology work and they just, they just want to be at the table. Um, they want to have their voice heard, they want to hear what the worker says, what the other people say and their families want and need to hear that also. Um, so whatever method of delivery that comes, that's okay because it's still getting to the point of what we all need. Um, I've had some meetings



that I feel have been amazing and moving even though we're doing it virtually. So it's, it's possible to still do it. I've had some meetings that haven't been great and that's okay too because we've tried and we're showing the family that we respect them and value them and value their opinions.

Carly Cantu ([29:01](#)):

So I think that that's been, I think that that's been a really good thing. I think that this is one way that we are able to be transparent and when there are really hard decisions made, if the decision has to be made to remove a child. But we've had that critical family response meeting. We've tried everything we can to prevent that placement from happening or you know, putting the ball back in the family's court. I just think that this is a way that we can continue being ethical and transparent and doing everything we can to try to keep the children safe, letting the family have say in what happens. Um, and regardless of the outcome, if a child has to be placed, if a child can stay with family, at least we are doing everything we can do for that family.

Mary Doyle ([29:47](#)):

And, and I would just add, I think that's very well said. Um, you know, I think when we approach families, like they really do have answers. They really do with, with informed, with the information. They really do make good plans. We do believe they love their children. You know, we all love our kids. And so I think it's great when the families come up with, with plans and ideas that the agency by itself would have never thought of. You know, we'd never would have come up with that. And it's like when we can be, when we can be kind of pleasantly surprised and be open enough and curious enough to, to see where the families are and what they come up with, it's just wonderful. You know? And I think the child protection worker feels less stress on their shoulders, you know, like they don't have to be the experts, they don't have to solve everything. You know, families have resources that we don't know about. And it behooves us to ask, you know, and, and to try to, to find out what they're thinking and how they want to solve stuff. And I think, I think many times, and I think that's why people in my unit tend to stay in this work, is they've seen so many of those instances happen. You know, where the family really steps up in a huge way and um, comes up with some pretty, pretty great ideas.

Korina Barry ([30:57](#)):

I love that and I appreciate that. I think I've seen exactly, you know, how, how it truly, this model, this approach does allow individuals and families to, to feel that, to feel empowered, to feel that they truly have a safe space, to use their voice and to be able to show that they are the best resource we have in knowing and that they know their family better than anyone and that they know what their needs are and what doesn't work well and that this, this process and the way you all are able to engage with whole networks really pulls that out and really brings it to the forefront. And so I appreciate those nuggets of, you know, important things for us to remember as we continue this work in different ways. And, um, my last, the last thing I have is wondering, you know, and I know there's lots of training and there's lots that goes into this and being able to do this work, but for folks who are maybe at agencies, um, that have not adopted and have not taken on this model and this approach, um, or who are listening and are like, Oh, this sounds really great, how can I start? Maybe even just bringing some small piece of pieces of this in my practice until we're able to maybe do more agency-wide implementation. Do you have suggestions for resources where folks can go learn more or um, just resources to kind of, you know, dig into this a little bit more and what this could look like for their work?

Mary Doyle ([32:31](#)):

Well, the, um, the organization that kind of oversees family group decision making for, for the country maybe for the world, I don't know, is the Kempe center. Um, uh, um, so they have a lot of resources on their website. Um, they've been hosting, they also, they've, they've hosted I think a couple of like zoom kinds of, sort of interactive. It's kind of hard to, I mean, I think I was on one with like 250 people on it from all over the country, you know, saying like, what are you guys doing? What are you doing, how's it going? What are your questions? So there are kind of those types of conversations going on. Um, and camp has just a lot of stuff online. Um, but so that's been kind of interesting to hear from just other counties and other States. Um, you know, obviously DHS overseas family group for the state of Minnesota, so they have resources there. Um, Serena Mara, Lars, the contact person at DHS for family group decision making, and she's a resource,

Carly Cantu ([33:31](#)):

You know, I would say obviously I don't know the specific resources, but what I would say was, if your agency isn't doing this work and has the opportunity to engage in it and try it, I'm just such a believer in it. I think it is so amazing when you can bring families together and bring together the providers to the table, whatever that table looks like. Um, but it's pretty amazing. So I would say if you're able to give it a try and do the work, try to get it done.

Korina Barry ([34:00](#)):

Well, thank you so much Mary and Carly for taking time out of your busy schedules and talking with me today and sharing a little bit more about how your work has been shifting, shifting and impacted and how you're both doing and kind of pushing forward and in staying connected with your own families as well as the ones you are supporting through your work. So I just really appreciate your time and thank you for joining me,

Mary Doyle ([34:24](#)):

Korina, thank you. Thanks for having us. I appreciate your interest in our work. Thank you for CASCW and all the work you guys are doing to keep us all informed and with the training. Well we appreciate that.

Carly Cantu ([34:37](#)):

Thank you very much. Thank you, Korina

Korina Barry ([34:44](#)):

This podcast was brought to you by the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare. This podcast was produced by Korina Barry. Our series editors were Denise Cooper and Cliff Dahlberg. Music was composed by Big Cats, and this podcast was supported in part by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Children and Family Services division. For more information, please visit the cashew website at [cascw.umn.edu](http://cascw.umn.edu) thank you for listening and stay well, everyone.