

Who are FDC Portfolio Advisors?

FDC portfolio advisors are individuals who work in family-serving agencies or supervise family development workers or those who work directly with clients. Preferably, they have previously received their Family Development Credential and are interested in helping other family workers earn their credentials. Portfolio Advisors, like FDC instructors, are also expected to practice the principles of family development and serve as a role model to family workers in their agency.

The primary responsibility of a portfolio advisor is to help workers develop their FDC portfolios. The portfolio is an organized collection of documents that workers develop to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of family development practice with families. Portfolio advisors are selected by FDC Instructors and are trained in-agency or through a Portfolio Advisor's Orientation before the start of an FDC course. It is recommended that agencies also provide an update to experienced Portfolio Advisors as part of the planning and preparation for a new FDC course.

Portfolio Advisors meet with workers taking the FDC course to support portfolio development in the following ways:

- Model a strengths-based family development relationship with workers using a healthy balance of support and challenge as workers develop their portfolio.
- Provide feedback on workers' responses to three questions from the section of the Worker Handbook entitled "Activities to Extend Learning" for each chapter.
- Review and approve workers' Skills Practice Plan for each chapter.
- Provide written strengths-based feedback for the worker on the Skills Practice Reflection for each chapter.
- Assist workers as needed in completing three Family Development Plans with one family and then preparing a concluding document entitled "Reflection on One Family's Progress using the Family Development Plan".
- Help workers assess their ongoing progress to successfully complete their portfolios to earn the FDC credential.

Portfolio Advisors offer insights, encouragement, and guidance through the course of portfolio development. This is an opportunity for workers to clarify and reflect on their attitudes, values, and experiences. *The portfolio can be a highly personal learning process.* For that reason, advisors and workers sign a Statement of Confidentiality that is included in each worker's portfolio.

To be most effective, portfolio advisors:

- Read the *Empowerment Skills for Family Workers: A Worker Handbook* and the *Portfolio Advisor's Manual*
- Attend at least one or more (depending on agency's FDC Program requirements) FDC classes to integrate into workers' learning experience
- Understand and discuss the FDC portfolio requirements with workers
- Meet with workers as scheduled for portfolio advisement and establish clear deadlines for portfolio pieces.
- Provide positive and specific feedback on portfolio work, establishing a mutually respectful relationship
- Agree not to advise for workers they directly supervise
- Have the time to commit to this process
- Attend a Portfolio Advisors' Orientation or FDC Annual Update once every two years