

What Should an Attorney **DO** in a Child Welfare Case?
SKILLS: INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION

A) What Does the Attorney Know?

Is the information the attorney possesses:

- True?
- Verifiable?
- Based on concrete facts?
- Influenced by bias, myth, or lore?
- One-sided or multi-faceted?
- Corroborated?
- Actually known vs. assumed?

B) How does the Attorney Know it?

Where did the attorney get their information:

- One source/perspective?
- Many sources/perspectives?
- From someone with first-hand knowledge?
- From someone with knowledge based on hearsay/rumor?

C) What does the Attorney Need to Know?

Has the attorney fully investigated the child's/family's:

- Strengths?
- Needs?
- Culture?
- Background?
- Preferences?
- Concerns?
- History?
- Abilities?
- Challenges?

D) Where Does the Attorney Get the Information?

Has the attorney spoken to:

- Child?
- Parents?
- Relatives?
- Resource parents?
- Social worker/agency staff?
- School staff?
- Health care providers?
- Service providers (therapist, counselor, psychologist)?
- Other professionals?
- Other attorneys?
- Neighbors/friends/community members?