

The Family Think Tank: Meeting 2 Report

The Centre for Family Studies hosted a moderated discussion on

Pro-family policy and integrated services: What does this mean for practitioners?

Where: Online
When: **Monday 28 March 2022**
Moderator: Mr Hubertus von Lindeiner
(Dr Oreeditse Masuelele was absent due to a family bereavement)

<i>What are we proud of?</i>	<i>What can we do better?</i>	<i>What opportunities exist?</i>	<i>What are the threats ?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2nd Family Think Tank hosted • Improved logistics and technology supported by our intern Ms K Podile • The depth of the discussion, substantive issues and clear recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve a database of individuals & organisations for networking • The participation of more attendees • Follow through on recommendations regarding a model of assessing the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be strong voices that impact on all aspects of family lives – economics, education, health, social, security, work, vulnerable groups. • Sharing information and grow the sector • Forming partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMPLACENCY – waiting for everyone else to take forward the issue of family • Forgetting that we are family! • Not wanting to WORK TOGETHER in the interests of the critical mass who support a FAMILY VOICE!

The CFS is a platform that provides opportunity for family practitioners and decision makers to access and contribute to knowledge and action on South African families and constituent family members through; information sharing webinars, workshops, seminars and conferences, media e.g. radio, articles, social media, etc, discussion papers and documents representing family issues, research and studies on family related matters

The one hour moderated discussion raised the following:

- Pro-family support is about understanding the full life-cycle of a family and addressing the needs not only of one group or person, but rather the family in a more holistic way. Whole family development.
- People who work with the individual vulnerable groups, need to gain a better understanding of how families are related and how the needs of problems of one person cannot be separated from the needs of the entire family group.
- Integrated planning requires service providers (private and public sector) to work in a more integrated way e.g. social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors, therapists, counsellors, teachers, etc
- Professionals also need to stop protecting their own space and become more cognisant that people in communities also have solutions to support to families e.g. parents, the extended family, faith leaders, community members, NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, individual lobbyists, etc
- How do we measure progress? How do we measure families? Do we have the tools that are designed for a South African population? CSDA University of Joburg has research to offer. UWC also has research and design of tools that measure family resilience. We need a model that measures family capability.
- The CFS platform must be a place where people can share research information. This will help decision-makers. This will also assist with policies that intersect towards a common goal in the support of strengthened families.
- Government and donors spend a lot of money on isolated / silo groups but there is never money to spend on whole family development.
- Money gets spent on children programmes, without proper consideration that children are part of families. Whole family development must be sustainable. Some of policies that relate to children need to be interrogated because they create a range of other problems.

SO who needs to Act?

Family practitioners, parents, researchers, civil society implementers, policy makers, government officials, private sector service providers, journalists and writers, community leaders, planners and thinkers!

How? These are some of the actions to take forward:

We need services that are integrated and understanding that families themselves have agency. Families also have solutions. We need an integrated plan for the sector.

With key family lobbyists eg FAMSA, and researchers eg UWC, UJ, we will set up a group to review current models (local and international) that measure family resilience / capability / functionality What some people will call family wellbeing

Share with other practitioners integrated approaches that support whole family development

Get involved in:

- the research and design of a model that measures family
- development of an integrated plan for the sector
- training to provide better understanding of courts raising awareness of diverse needs of families

SO raise the voice...

Join hands and hearts and minds to build a critical mass of individuals and organisations who address the problems of our country THROUGH THE LENS OF FAMILY!

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