

Using Relationship Agreements to Build Stronger Two-Parent Households and Improve TANF Participant Outcomes

Fall 2025

What are Relationship Agreements?

Relationship Agreements are a collaborative approach where individuals define values, boundaries, and expectations to build trust, improve communication, and strengthen their connection.





How are Relationship Agreements Created?

- Start with open communication
- Identify key topics like communication styles, conflict resolution, and personal growth
- Define expectations together
- Write it down
- Develop a simple list of “dos and don’ts”
- Review and adjust over time

Benefits of Relationship Agreements

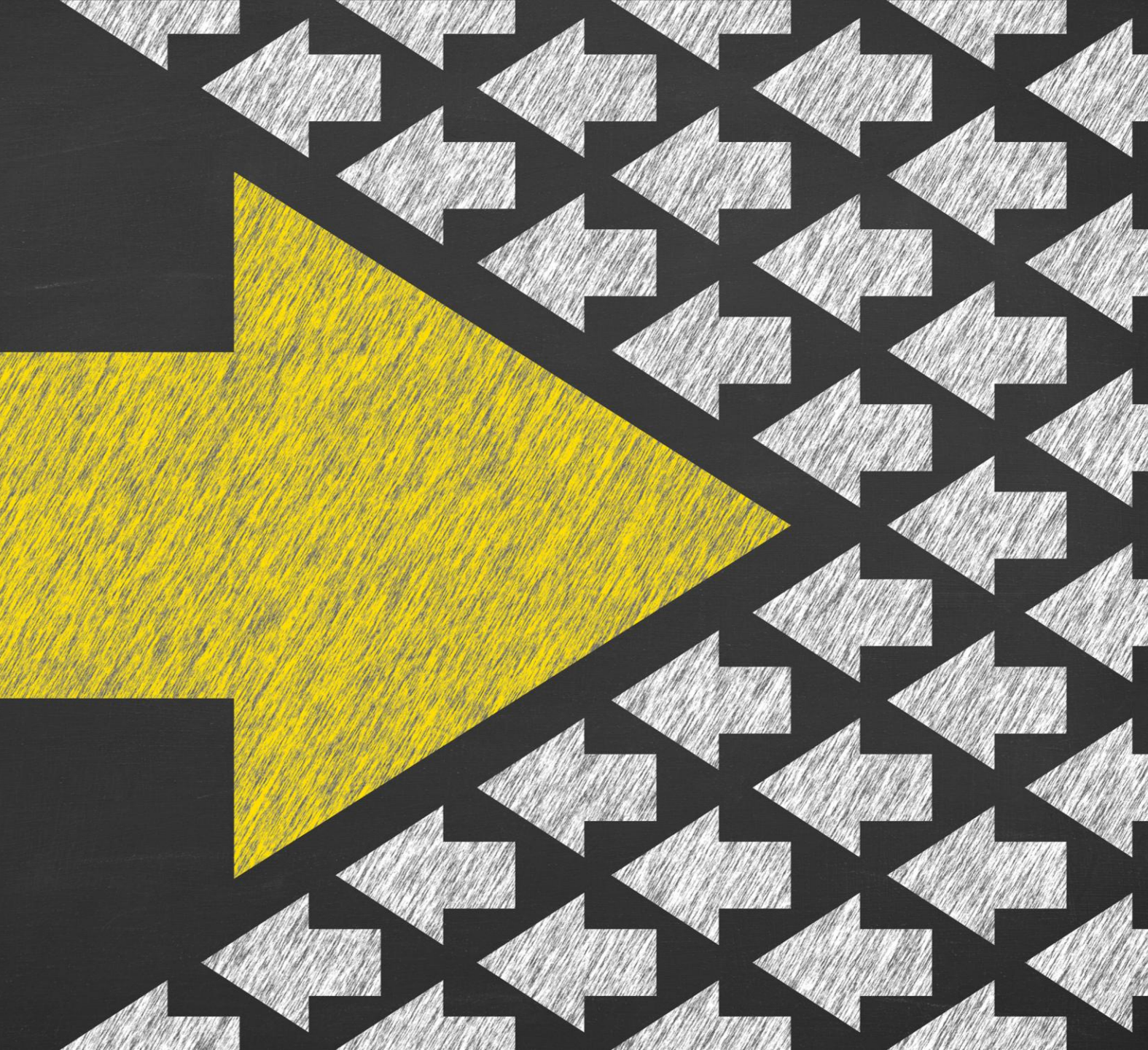
- Promote clarity and alignment between parents by identifying shared values
- Provide space to discuss and address differences constructively
- Establish clear expectations, improving dynamics and reducing misunderstandings
- Support couples in the formation and maintenance of two-parent families (Purpose 4 of TANF)
- Help parents improve communication, resolve conflicts, and build a positive, supportive home for their children (Purpose 1 of TANF)
- Create a lasting framework for success in the workplace to meet economic goals (Purpose 2 of TANF)





Opportunities for Case Managers to Practice with Families

- Explain what the agreements are and why they are important to develop.
- Develop short list of “do’s and don’ts” for communication and conflict together.
- Explain to participants how relationship agreements can align with personal and family goals for long-term success.

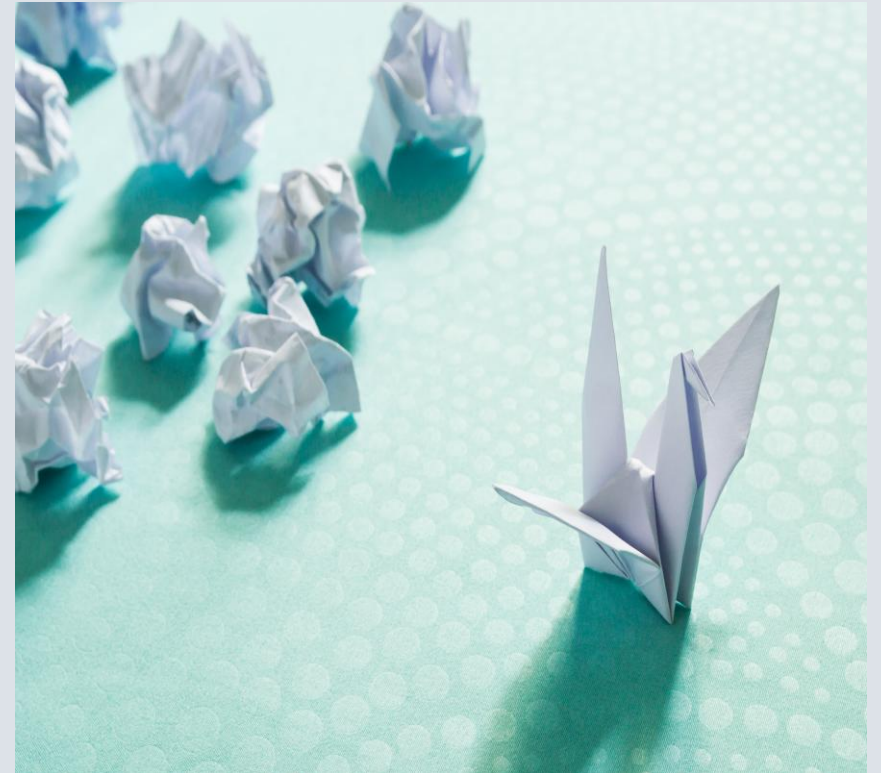


Opportunities for Case Managers to Practice with Families (continued)

- If conflict comes up during a conversation, gently remind participants of the agreement.
- Revisit and adjust the agreements regularly.
- Model the importance of relationship agreements by honoring them in every conversation.

Opportunities for Families to Practice

- Help participants integrate agreements into personal and professional relationships.
- Remind participants of the key components of relationship agreements.
- Discuss when agreements may be easier or harder to use.
- Address common roadblocks and explore practical solutions.
- Highlight respectful communication as a key professional skill.



Thank you!

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