



You Say Potato...

When interacting with professionals, historically families have been approached from an “expert” model. Professionals often look at families from a clinical perspective and use clinical language. As you might imagine, this conveys to the family that they do not possess the resources they need to solve their problem and they require someone to solve it for them. The language that comes from the “expert” model significantly interferes with the ability of professionals and families to partner successfully in their families’ care.

Family Driven Care enables us to replace the language used in the “expert” model with language that will strengthen families and support them to make informed decisions for their children.

It seems like such a small thing to focus on, but when you realize that if you can change the way a person talks, you are one step closer to changing the way they think, you will then see the impact of a few small words.

What We Hear: Deficit Based Language	What We Want to Hear: Strengths Based Language
The family needs an assessment	It may help to explore the family history, traditions and cultural perspectives
The family refuses to engage in services	It appears that the services do not match the needs of the family
The family is resistant	The family is multi-stressed
The child is acting out	The child appears to have unmet, misunderstood needs
The family will not comply with the plan	The family needs access, voice and ownership of their plan
The home is a disaster	The family needs support managing the home and establishing routine
The child is a sex offender/fire starter	The child has...behaviors
The family is not meeting their goals	The goals of the family appear to be challenging
The parents are adversarial	The parents are resilient and strong advocates
The parents need services	The parents have unmet needs
Client/case	Family/child
The family is chaotic	The family needs support in developing structure and routine
The child is explosive	The child is challenged with emotional regulation and distress tolerance skills
The child is unmanageable	The child needs support with distress tolerance

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