Collaborative Family Engagement (CFE) is an integrated or embedded approach that establishes a true team between CASA and CPS to work together to complete the steps of Family Finding. It is based on the fact that children generally have many blood relatives and other important connections that can be identified, located, engaged with and involved in the child’s permanency planning. Using tools and techniques focused on connection, engagement and an understanding of trauma, family members and other committed adults have the opportunity to become involved in the case much earlier and are encouraged to participate in the planning and decision making for the child while he or she is in care.

Differing from the traditional implementation model where the work and results fall to one Family Finding specialist, the CFE team will share the Family Finding work, and every success will be a cooperative achievement. CFE takes the “finding” of the family much further by ensuring an authentic commitment from CASA and CPS to truly and meaningfully engage with found connections. Open communication and collaboration is encouraged amongst the CFE team, with an emphasis on utilizing the child’s CASA volunteer. This teaming approach models the need for and goal of establishing a community of support, or network, around the children and their families.

Texas CASA and CPS understand the importance of welcoming these relatives and other connections’ presence and encouraging their continued involvement in the child’s life, and will work together through CFE to ensure every child in care can have a sense of belonging, connections and lifelong relationships – and a chance at finding and sustaining meaningful connections with their family members and loved ones.