#NSWM 2019

Leveraging the Family First Prevention and Services Act to Encourage Innovation and Maximize Performance Management and Impact

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Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago is a research and policy center, focused on a mission of improving the well-being of children and youth, families, and their communities.

Chapin Hall provides public and private decision-makers with rigorous data analysis and achievable solutions to support them in improving the lives of society’s most vulnerable children, youth and families.
Jurisdictions build new capacity to:

- Use data and evidence in decision-making
- Lead toward a strategic direction and priority outcomes
- Build structures that support strong governance and outcome attainment
- Implement strategies to meet specific needs of children and families
- Align policies and finances to gain traction and momentum
- Monitor progress and continually improve

Impact

- Jurisdictions become learning organizations ready to respond to Family First Prevention Services Act, CCWIS, new evidence and levers, etc.

Building capacity across domains creates readiness to leverage current & future system improvement and transformation opportunities.
Goals for this Presentation

• Provide context for understanding Family First by providing a brief overview of the child welfare population and policy environment.

• Provide a description of key provisions and opportunities in Family First to promote family stability and well-being.

• Understand implications and opportunities to engage stakeholders to assess, human services, practices and business processes to better serve communities at risk.

• Highlight approaches that promote agencies’ engaging in assessment and continuous quality improvement (CQI) and achieving maximum impact.
Context –
The Child Welfare Population and Funding for Services
Children In Foster Care Last Day of FFY

Children In Foster Care Last Day of FFY

Overdose Death and Drug-Related Hospitalization Rates and Foster Care Entry Rates, 2011-2016

Source: U.S. DHHS, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. AFCARS Report #24

Involved in Referrals and Services:
School personnel, Social workers, health care practitioners, behavioral health professionals, child care providers, shelters, etc.

Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare

Racial Disproportionality Index at Select Child Welfare Intervention Points, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Identified as Victims</th>
<th>Entering Foster Care</th>
<th>Waiting for Adoption</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic – all races</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Racial bias within child welfare agency, family courts & service providers

Poverty and social economic status of family

Geographic/jurisdiction context and policy, including funding of services

Disparity

Federal and State spending in Child Welfare

Proportion of federal and state/local expenditures on categories of services

- Federal
  - Out-of-home placement: 46%
  - Adoption & legal guardianship: 19%
  - In-home preventive services: 15%
  - Child protective services: 15%
  - Services & assistance for older youth: 2%
  - Other: 2%

- State/Local
  - Out-of-home placement: 47%
  - Adoption & legal guardianship: 16%
  - In-home preventive services: 17%
  - Child protective services: 15%
  - Services & assistance for older youth: 2%
  - Other: 3%

Federal financing of child welfare

Sources of child welfare funding in SFY 2014

Federal funding sources

Other federal (1%)
Medicaid (3%)
Title IV-B (2%)
SSBG (5%)
TANF (10%)
Title IV-E (23%)
State and local (56%)

Note: Each state reported data based on its state fiscal year 2014—for most states, this was July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. Of the 50 states plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, only six (AL, DC, MI, NY, TX, and WY) reported a different SFY calendar.

Family First Prevention and Services Act: Provisions and Opportunities
Family First: A Real Transformational Opportunity

• Landmark legislation: **Most significant child welfare law in 20 years**

• Dramatically **alters the federal financing structure** for child welfare programming

• Provides the legislative foundation for states to **substantially transform their child welfare systems to invest more in family preservation services and family-based placements** for children and youth who must enter foster care

• Creates platform for establishing or furthering **transformational vision and leadership**
Leveraging Family First to Promote Child Welfare System Transformation

- Prevention
- Evidence Based Interventions
- High Quality Group Care
- Other Family Support Provisions
Family First provisions to stabilize families

- States will have the option to use title IV-E federal funds for evidence-based preventive services/programs for children and youth determined to be at imminent risk of foster care, as well as for pregnant and parenting youth in foster care.

- Prevention services are for children/parents/kin caregivers regardless of income, and defined as:
  - Skill based parenting programs – individual and family counseling, parenting skills and parent education
  - Substance abuse treatment and prevention
  - Mental health treatment
Family First provisions to focus on evidence

- Prevention services must meet one of 3 levels of evidence: promising, supported and well-supported.
- Half of prevention service investments must be at the well-supported level.
- States must submit to the federal government a Prevention Plan that prompts careful consideration of selected services, target populations, intended outcomes, etc.
- Federal funding for evidence-based kinship navigator programs
Family First provisions to support right-sizing group care

• Restricts federal financial support for children in child care institutions to:
  ✓ Facilities that meet the Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) criteria (e.g., accredited, trauma informed, engages family and provides after care) for any child’s stay beyond 2 weeks.
  ✓ Children whose assessment completed within 30 days indicates their clinical needs are best met in that setting.

• Additional safeguards for children placed in QRTPs include specific case planning requirements, review and hearing requirements, and court approval of placements.
Family First provisions to support right-sizing group care

- Federal grant funds can be used to provide reunification services while children and youth are in care, and up to 15 months post-reunification.
- Federal funds can support a child in foster care placed with their parent in a licensed residential family-based treatment facility.
- Prevention services for children living with relatives, outside of formal foster care.
- Federal investment in kinship navigation services.
Transformative Opportunities that could be leveraged in Family First

- **Transforming** the child welfare focus from foster care to prevention, increased family stability, and well-being
- **Engaging** the community in reimagining the role of the child welfare system
- **Applying** a trauma-responsive lens to the continuum of prevention and out of home services
- **Partnering** across systems (mental health, substance use, juvenile justice, early childhood, health, etc.) to align prevention efforts
- **Expanding** the evidence base in child welfare and spreading innovative practices
- **Reinventing** the business model of residential care providers to best serve families
- **Aligning** processes for deploying clinical and functional assessments
Discussion Questions

• What opportunities do you see to better serve vulnerable children and families? e.g.,
  • To increase the availability of effective services.
  • To fill gaps in the service array that could prevent the need for foster care.
  • To increase the evidence for promising services.
  • To provide multidisciplinary training that will improve the effectiveness of front line staff and providers.

• What partnerships should be created or leveraged to maximize those opportunities?
Approaches and Tools for Impact
Assessment & Planning

• Maximize and leverage the provisions in Family First to promote system transformation.

• Be methodical in planning to identify opportunities to embed the transformation throughout the system.

• Clarify direction and strategy and align resources to be successful.

• Develop clear and integrated implementation plans to ensure comprehensive approach and effective tracking and evaluation.

• Be well prepared and ready to implement!
Family First: Chapin Hall’s Approach to Readiness Assessment, Planning and Capacity Building for Implementation

Transformation Framework

- Sequencing and Jurisdictional Considerations
- Implementation Capacity and Strategy
- Administrative and Fiscal
- Practices, Service Array, and Policy
- Data and Evidence
Continuous Quality Improvement

“The ultimate goal of CQI is to enable organizations to improve their overall performance on an ongoing basis”

(“Section 3: Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) in Child Welfare”, n.d.)

• Incorporate CQI and capacity building to become a learning system.
Foundations of CQI

CQI relies on an **organizational culture** that is proactive, supports continuous learning and is firmly grounded in the overall mission, vision, and values of the agency.

(Casey Family Programs & the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, 2005)

Quality CQI efforts are dependent upon the **active inclusion and participation** of staff at all levels of the agency, children, youth, families, and stakeholders throughout the process.

(Administration on Children, Youth and Families, 2012)

A high quality CQI approach incorporates the **rigorous use of evidence**.

(Wulczyn et al, 2014)
Improvement planning & decision-making

Data:
- Administrative
- Surveys
- Interviews/focus groups

PLAN
- Use the data to make observations about performance
- Explore root causes with key stakeholders
- Design/implement solutions
- Identify benchmarks & targets to be achieved

DO
- Implement solution
- Monitor implementation

ACT
- Determine the extent to which the problems still exist
- Make decisions to continue, modify, or discontinue solutions

STUDY
- Review ongoing data
- Talk to stakeholders and decision-makers about progress and impact

Adapted from: Wulczyn et al., 2014
Closing Reflection

• What are the challenges to using a CQI approach to policy implementation?

• What strategies could you use to address these challenges?
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