



# Children's Bureau

Training and Technical Assistance Network

2009

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Children's Bureau





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## **Introduction**

This booklet summarizes information on the Children's Bureau Training and Technical Assistance (T&TA) Network, within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The purpose of the T&TA Network is to build the capacity of State, local, Tribal, and other publicly administered or publicly supported child welfare agencies and family and juvenile courts through the provision of training, technical assistance, research, and consultation on the full array of Federal requirements administered by the Children's Bureau. T&TA Network members provide assistance to States and Tribes in improving child welfare systems and conformity with the outcomes and systemic factors defined in the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) and the results of other monitoring reviews conducted by the Children's Bureau to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. This booklet is designed to communicate to States and Tribes the specific focus of each T&TA Network member.

Many State and Tribal requests for training and technical assistance are made to Regional ACF offices. For a listing of Regional ACF offices and the States they serve, visit the ACF website:  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/oro](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/oro)

This booklet is available on the Children's Bureau website:  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/tta/index.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/tta/index.htm)



## National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement

### WHO WE ARE

The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NRCOI) strengthens and supports State and Tribal agencies committed to the welfare of children, youth, and families through training, technical assistance, and evaluation. The aim is to improve management and operations, bolster organizational capacity, promote service integration, and develop supervisory and management systems, resulting in improved outcomes for children and families.

The NRCOI also coordinates, facilitates, and evaluates onsite training and technical assistance across the seven NRCs and **AdoptUsKids**. The NRCOI facilitates the intake and assessment of agency requests, assists in the development of work plans, and evaluates the impact of network services. States can contact the NRCOI for assistance in identifying the NRCs to meet their needs.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

The NRCOI offers technical assistance, training, and publications to assist States and Tribes in the following areas:

#### Strategic Planning

The NRCOI can help State and Tribal agencies with all aspects of strategic planning, including planning for the development of CFSR Statewide Assessments and Program Improvement Plans (PIPs), assessing community needs and resources, developing and implementing comprehensive strategic plans across the agency, integrating strategic plans, and developing annual progress and services reports.

#### Quality Improvement

NRCOI staff can help train administrators and staff on how to develop and implement quality improvement systems, integrate CFSR processes and requirements into those systems, develop targeted performance outcomes, use outcome data, and make data-driven decisions at all agency levels.

#### Stakeholder Involvement

The NRCOI helps States and Tribes develop collaborative strategies and involve stakeholders in the CFSR process and other ongoing agency activities. Staff also can help agencies work collaboratively with community and public agencies to expand the array of targeted services for children and families.

#### Training Systems and Workforce Development

The NRCOI helps agencies assess and improve their comprehensive training systems for new and experienced workers by incorporating feedback

from quality improvement and other systems. The Center also helps States implement innovative strategies related to recruitment, retention, and other workforce issues.

#### CFSR Comprehensive Training and Technical Assistance Package

The NRCOI coordinates a process with other NRCs to provide targeted technical assistance to State agencies to help them prepare for the second round of the CFSRs, enhance leadership and management capacity, and achieve better outcomes through systemic change.

#### Peer Networks

The NRCOI hosts three national peer networks for child welfare staff:

- Peer to Peer Call Series for Child Welfare Trainers and Educators is a quarterly forum for exchanging ideas on all aspects of child welfare training.
- Child and Family Services Plan/Review Peer Network Coordinators hold bimonthly calls to facilitate the exchange of information and peer-to-peer consultation.
- Quality Improvement (QI) Peer Network national staff hold quarterly calls that focus on the successes of, barriers to, and strategies for implementing QI systems.

#### Teleconferences and Publications

The NRCOI offers numerous free teleconferences and publications, including:

- **Teleconference Sessions**
  - ✓ Actively Engaging Stakeholder and Community Partners on the CFSR Process
  - ✓ CFSR Data Indicators and Composites
  - ✓ Using Coordinated Technical Assistance to Improve Placement Stability
- **Print and Web Publications**
  - ✓ *Coping With Disasters and Strengthening Systems: A Framework for Child Welfare Agencies*
  - ✓ *Training System Assessment Guide*
  - ✓ *Strategic Planning for Child Welfare Agencies*
  - ✓ *A Framework for Quality Assurance in Child Welfare*
- **Newsletters**
  - ✓ *Innovations in Training*
  - ✓ *Coping With Disasters: Tips for Child Welfare Agencies*
  - ✓ *Stakeholder Involvement in Child Welfare*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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**Fax:** 207.780.5817

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**Contact:** Peter Watson, Director



## National Resource Center for Child Protective Services

### WHO WE ARE

The National Resource Center for Child Protective Services (NRCCPS) provides expert consultation, technical assistance, and training in all areas of child protective services (CPS), including intake, assessment, case planning, and ongoing services. The NRCCPS helps to build the capacity of State, local, Tribal, and other publicly administered or supported child welfare agencies to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families.

The specific focus of the NRCCPS is to assist jurisdictions with system and practice issues that help improve the prevention, reporting, assessment, and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

The NRCCPS can help to build State, local, and Tribal capacity through the following key activities:

- Planning and implementing systemic changes as defined in the States' Program Improvement Plans (PIPs)
- Providing technical assistance and consultation directly onsite as well as through state-of-the-art communication and technology-based methods
- Developing and delivering of training materials, guidelines, and protocols that increase a jurisdiction's capacity to ensure staff and supervisory competence
- Seeking out and disseminating evidence-based practices that will likely contribute to the achievement of PIP strategies and other Federal outcomes
- Providing expertise for state-of-the-art practice and decision-making when child maltreatment is accompanied by substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues
- Providing expertise on the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), and Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) requirements that must be addressed to meet legislated prevention, reporting, investigation, and treatment requirements
- Supporting and coordinating communication among and between the State Liaison Officers (SLOs) and the Children's Bureau

### Strengthening Programs to Improve Outcomes

The NRCCPS can help States identify and implement program improvement strategies at intake, investigation, assessment, case disposition, and case planning. NRCCPS can assist with designing safety, risk, and family case planning

assessments; protective capacity assessments; differential response approaches; citizen review panel development; and family reunification protocols for improved decision-making and outcome achievement.

### CAPTA Requirements

NRCCPS is especially equipped to help States address the eligibility requirements for the CAPTA State grant, including the requirements resulting from the 2003 reauthorization of CAPTA.

### SLO Support and Communication

The NRCCPS provides support to the SLOs through periodic surveys of their needs, followed by teleconferences to provide training and information, and an SLO newsletter that provides information on CAPTA, ASFA, and ICWA implementation, challenges, and issues. NRCCPS also assists the Children's Bureau in planning an annual SLO conference to further build State capacity.

### Collaboration and Coordination

The NRCCPS works as a member of the Children's Bureau Training and Technical Assistance Network. Collaboration includes working on technical assistance, training, and other capacity-building activities in collaboration with other NRCs and **AdoptUsKids** and participating with the NRC on Organizational Improvement on the evaluation of NRCCPS services.

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303.369.8008

## National Child Welfare Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues

### WHO WE ARE

The National Child Welfare Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues (RCLJI) provides expertise to State and Tribal agencies and courts on legal and judicial aspects of child welfare. RCLJI is dedicated to achieving safety, permanence, and well-being for abused and neglected children through improved laws and judicial decision-making. Areas of focus include permanency decision-making, adherence to ASFA and other Federal laws, the court's role in the CFSRs and child welfare reform, high quality legal representation for all parties, judicial and attorney workloads, quality assurance for courts and legal offices, effective forensic performance by agencies, the impact of ASFA on youth in the juvenile justice system, education needs of children in foster care, legal ethics, and the interplay of domestic violence and child welfare.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

RCLJI offers States the following assistance with their CFSRs:

#### Collaboration

RCLJI can assist with agency-court collaborative efforts at all stages of the CFSRs. Technical assistance can include, among other things, the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the agency and court covering how collaboration during the CFSR process will take place. RCLJI can offer advice and assistance on collaboration throughout the process.

#### Collecting and Analyzing Data

RCLJI can help coordinate focus groups as a method of analyzing the implications of existing agency and court data, employing in such groups judges, lawyers, and other stakeholders in the CFSR. Staff can also help analyze data the State is collecting to determine how effectively the courts are achieving safety, permanence, and well-being for children.

#### Legal and Judicial Issue Analysis

RCLJI staff can help by reviewing CFSR Statewide Assessments, final reports, and Program Improvement Plans (PIPs); identifying legal barriers to best practice; and recommending strategies to overcome barriers. RCLJI can also meet with the agency and/or court to help pinpoint underlying factors of legal system issues.

#### Promoting Stakeholder Involvement

RCLJI can assist in providing a full range of legal and judicial input regarding the CFSR. Staff can help States identify and engage all the most

appropriate legal system participants—including representatives of the Court Improvement Project—and help ensure they will stay involved throughout the process, from the CFSR preparation stage through implementation of the PIP.

#### Strategic Planning

In coordination with the NRC on Organizational Improvement, RCLJI staff or consultants can meet with the agency and/or court to help develop specific legal and judicial related strategies to address issues identified in the final report, such as timely decisions, effective case review systems, and judicial involvement in achieving enhanced safety. RCLJI can help develop strategic planning for court involvement in the CFSR itself and for the legal and judicial facets of the PIP.

#### PIP Implementation

RCLJI offers tailored training and technical assistance as determined by the PIP.

Examples include:

- Improving legal representation of the agency and other parties
- Improving the timeliness of judicial decision-making
- Developing judicial performance measurement and quality assurance
- ASFA nuts and bolts implementation for judges
- Analysis of State statutes and court rules
- Analysis of judicial and attorney workloads with strategies for improvement

#### Other Training and Technical Assistance

The Center has new workshops that may be helpful to States and Tribes in the CFSR process, including:

- Best Practices to Implement ASFA: Creative Strategies for Permanence
- Making it Permanent: Efforts to Finalize Permanency Plans for Children in Foster Care
- Meeting Educational Needs of Children in Foster Care
- Achieving Permanency for Older Youth

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## **National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning**

### **WHO WE ARE**

The National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning (NRCFCPPP) focuses on increasing the capacity and resources of State, Tribal, and other publicly supported child welfare agencies to promote family-centered practices that support the safety, permanency, and well-being of children while meeting the needs of their families. The NRCFCPPP helps States and Tribes to implement strategies to expand knowledge, increase competencies, and change attitudes of child welfare professionals at all levels, with the goal of infusing family-centered principles and practices in their work with children, youth, and families who enter the child welfare system. The NRCFCPPP builds States' knowledge of permanency planning, placement stability, and other foster care issues.

### **HOW WE CAN HELP**

The NRCFCPPP provides both onsite assistance and a variety of information services.

#### **Onsite Training and Technical Assistance**

The NRCFCPPP offers onsite training and technical assistance to States, territories, Tribes, and other publicly supported child welfare agencies on a wide range of issues that promote sustainable systemic reform in child welfare. The NRCFCPPP is particularly focused on working with States throughout all stages of the CFSRs, including the development and implementation of States' Program Improvement Plans (PIPs).

Sample areas of technical assistance include:

- Supporting practices such as family group conferencing and family group decision-making that engage families in assessment, case planning, case review, and timely decision-making about reunification, adoption, guardianship, kin placement or appropriate use of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)
- Planning strategies to engage parents, courts, legal personnel, and community partners in the provision of safety-focused, family-centered services to children, youth, and families
- Promoting quality goal-oriented worker/child visiting, worker/parent (foster and birth) visiting, and visiting between children and youth in care and their parents
- Helping with permanency planning, effective concurrent planning, and goal achievement for all children and adolescents

- Supporting recruitment and retention of resource families and dual licensure issues
- Addressing foster care issues, including increasing placement stability, reducing disproportional representation of children and youth of color in foster care, and developing effective postpermanency services
- Building relationships between Tribes and States, including promoting cultural competency to increase understanding of Indian culture and improving State compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act
- Facilitating IV-E agreements between States and Tribes
- Engaging fathers and paternal resources in permanency planning
- Addressing sibling issues
- Working with birth families to promote reunification
- Enhancing services, including developing and strengthening home-based services to preserve families; supporting child welfare practices that address substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues for families; and addressing health and mental health care issues for children and youth in foster care

#### **Information Services**

The NRCFCPPP also offers information services to State, Tribal, and other publicly supported child welfare agencies to promote family-centered practices that support the safety, permanency, and well-being of children while meeting the needs of their families. Information is provided in the following formats:

- NRCFCPPP Weekly Update
- Web-based information services
- Publications and curricula in English/Spanish
- Quarterly webcasts
- Semiannual newsletter
- Teleconference series
- Podcasts of teleconference series
- Responses to State/Tribe requests for information

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology

### WHO WE ARE

The National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology (NRC-CWDT) provides a broad range of technical assistance to State and Tribal child welfare agencies and the courts on data and systems issues to improve outcomes for children and families. The Center helps States, Tribes, and courts improve the quality of data collected, build the capacity to use the information for decision-making in daily practice, and develop or improve case management and data collection systems, including Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information Systems (SACWIS). The NRC-CWDT provides technical assistance to States to help improve the quality of data reported to the Federal Government in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). The Center also provides technical assistance during the CFSR process and on other Federal, State, and local legislative requirements, policies, and initiatives. The NRC-CWDT coordinates the data conference sponsored by the Children's Bureau, usually held annually.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

The Center provides a broad range of technical assistance on program, data, and automation issues to public and Tribal child welfare agencies and the courts. Major areas of emphasis include assisting States in improving the quality of data reported to the Federal Government and supporting the CFSR process. Assistance may include:

#### Training

The Center provides training on using and managing data at all levels of the organization. This includes the development of customized training curricula and materials, the delivery of training to key staff, and training of trainers to promote systemwide improvements in understanding and using data in policy and practice.

#### Data Analysis

The Center can assist States in developing their capacity to analyze data for administrative use, which includes analyzing and using data in planning, evaluation, and system improvement efforts. Assistance in presentation of data to both internal and external stakeholders is also available.

#### AFCARS Assistance

The Center provides assistance around AFCARS, which can be tailored according to States' needs. This can entail a full Program Logic and/or Mapping Documentation Review or a more administrative-level AFCARS Overview and

Review of Federal Definitions and Policy Guidance. The AFCARS Toolkit, available on the NRC-CWDT website or free of charge as a CD-ROM, provides links to key materials and documents related to the collection of quality adoption and foster care data that can be used to address policy development and program management issues at the State and Federal level.

#### Coordinating Peer Consultation

The Center can coordinate consultation among States with similar issues. This can take place through informal exchange of information or through a structured process involving onsite, facilitated meetings. More information about peer consultation can be found on the NRC-CWDT website.

#### Supporting States in the CFSR Process

The Resource Center assists States throughout the CFSR process. Services include assistance in understanding data composites; preparation for and use of the State Data Profile; resolution of data sources, quality and interpretation related to outcome measures; evaluating enhancements required to information systems in the context of the Program Improvement Plan (PIP); and consultation on benchmarks and improvement measures during PIP development and implementation.

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## National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption

### WHO WE ARE

The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption works with States, Tribes, and agencies to increase States' capacity in adoption. The Center works to improve the effectiveness and quality of adoption and postadoption services provided to children and their families.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

The Center is available to partner with States, Tribes, and other members of the Children's Bureau's Training and Technical Assistance Network to work with staff and stakeholders in all phases of the process. The Center helps to identify strengths, needs, and actions that can be taken to improve outcomes for children. Assistance includes:

#### Analyzing Adoption and Permanency Options

The Center will review CFSR Statewide Assessments, Final Reports, and Program Improvement Plans (PIPs). The Center will also provide feedback on how it might provide technical assistance, training, tools, and materials to help States and Tribes plan and implement changes in practice, programs, policies, and systems to ensure timely adoption or other permanent family connections for children and youth.

#### Exploring Systemic Factors

The Center will assist States and Tribes in exploring how all systemic factors affect timely permanency, especially adoption.

#### Increasing Cultural Competence

Children of color are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system and among those waiting to be adopted. Center staff can help States reach out to communities of color to increase adoptions of children from those communities. Using a community-based approach, the Center will help States design programs to build relationships in communities to better address the needs of children and families of color.

The Center also has experience helping States work to fully implement the Multiethnic Placement Act as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provision (MEPA-IEP) and achieve adoptions in the context of Tribal traditions and the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

#### Promoting Stakeholder Involvement

The Center can help States and Tribes work effectively with other teams and systems of service (child protective services, intake, foster care, mental health, schools, etc.) to achieve timely adoptions.

### Training and Technical Assistance

The Center can provide training and technical assistance at any point in the CFSR process to enhance practice, knowledge, skills, and abilities and improve adoption program planning. Some areas of technical assistance include:

- Program planning to achieve timely adoption outcomes
- Using information systems for adoption program planning
- Developing and sustaining adoption support and preservation services, including adoption certification programs for mental health providers
- Negotiating title IV-E Adoption Assistance Agreements
- Operating under Federal regulations (Adoption and Safe Families Act, MEPA-IEP, ICWA)
- Collaborating with faith communities
- Developing culturally competent child welfare services
- Preparing, assessing, and retaining foster, kin, and adoptive families
- Preparing and assessing children and youth for adoption, including those with developmental disabilities
- Making adoption an option for older children and youth
- Finding and engaging fathers and their families in adoption planning

Curricula are available on assessment and preparation of children and families for adoption, cultural competency in child welfare, and adoption support and preservation services.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**Contact:** Natalie Lyons, Director

## National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development

### WHO WE ARE

The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development (NCWRCYD) increases the capacity and resources of States and Tribes to help youth in care meet the goals of safety, permanence, and well-being. The Center can help States incorporate youth into all areas of programs and services, implement services that address legislative requirements, and prepare for CFSR and Program Improvement Plan (PIP) development and implementation. The Center bases its technical assistance and training around four core principles: youth development, collaboration, cultural competence, and permanent connections.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

NCWRCYD has worked successfully with both States and Tribes to bring stakeholders together in an environment that promotes constructive dialogue. NCWRCYD can:

- Facilitate diverse groups for strategic planning, collaboration, and consensus building
- Work with States to draw youth into all three stages of the CFSR in order to benefit from their unique contributions and perspectives
- Prepare youth to participate in the CFSR
- Work with States to engage Tribes
- Facilitate planning sessions during the PIP
- Evaluate Statewide Assessments, final CFSR reports, and PIPs, with a dual focus on improving services for youth and highlighting opportunities to engage youth in planning and implementation
- Work with States and Tribes to recognize barriers and identify solutions for inclusion of youth and families in case planning and services
- Work with States and Tribes to improve the Chafee Foster Care Independence and Education and Training Voucher programs

### Technical Assistance and Training

The Center facilitates systemic change by providing technical assistance (TA) prior to and concurrent with training activities. TA sessions are designed to assist program and administrative staff with implementing and managing necessary change.

Technical assistance activities may include:

- Work groups and committees
- Strategic planning sessions
- Action planning sessions

The NCWRCYD offers a variety of trainings for States, Tribes and other providers that focus on both organizational and skill development. The Center

can modify training to meet an organization's needs in the following areas:

- Positive youth development
- Engaging youth in the CFSR
- Youth/adult partnership building
- Permanency planning
- Cultural diversity
- Collaboration
- Youth advisory board development
- Strengths-based assessment and case planning
- Educating judges and attorneys
- Ethnographic interviewing
- Conflict resolution
- Family group decision-making
- Youth leadership development
- Pregnant and parenting youth
- Life skills assessment and transition planning
- Life skills instruction
- Concurrent planning
- Working with Native American youth
- Preparing youth for transition
- Foster and adoptive parent training
- Managing aggressive behavior
- Residential childcare programming
- Working with runaway and homeless youth
- Spirituality
- Gender-specific training

### Information Services

NCWRCYD regularly gathers, analyzes, and disseminates information on services and practices relevant to youth. NCWRCYD communicates with State Independent Living Coordinators and other professionals to stay current with trends, programs, and policies. Resources include:

- A website providing current information on Federal, State, and Tribal policies and practices affecting youth and their families
- Web-based, State-specific factsheets highlighting policy information, promising practices, and Chafee activities
- Newsletters and publications containing best practices and current trends in youth work, published with collaboration from nationally recognized leaders in the field of child welfare

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## **National Resource Center for Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents at AdoptUsKids**

### **WHO WE ARE**

As part of The Collaboration to **AdoptUsKids**, a federally funded project operated by the Adoption Exchange Association, the National Resource Center for Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents at AdoptUsKids (NRCRRFAP) provides training and technical assistance to States and Tribes on issues pertaining to the development and implementation of high quality services to recruit and retain foster, adoptive, concurrent, and kinship families.

### **HOW WE CAN HELP**

The NRCRRFAP provides training and technical assistance (T&TA) to help States and Tribes with issues related to the recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families, including topical areas related to customer service, diligent recruitment, interjurisdictional placement, special T&TA projects, Train-the-Trainer, and IV-B plan (CFSP) recruitment and retention. The NRCRRFAP can provide assistance with all phases of States' CFSRs, PIPs, 5-year Child and Family Services Plans (CFSPs), and Annual Progress and Services Reports.

### **Training and Technical Assistance**

The NRCRRFAP's service goals are to:

- Help States and Tribes develop a pool of waiting families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed
- Increase the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children
- Promote and enhance the role of foster and adoptive parents in recruitment and planning
- Assist States and Tribes in ensuring their recruitment and response processes are driven by practices whose effectiveness has been demonstrated and based on relevant data
- Provide a forum for facilitated peer-to-peer networking, consultation, and technical assistance

### **Support for the CFSR Process**

The NRCRRFAP supports States in the CFSR process by:

- Providing individualized assessments of recruitment and retention needs and interjurisdictional placement practices
- Exploring and disseminating information about established, effective recruitment activities and initiatives

- Offering access to a team of national experts for consultation and training on recruitment, retention, and interjurisdictional issues and strategy development
- Producing training manuals and tools for child welfare professionals and prospective families on best practices in recruitment and retention of families, writing profiles on waiting children, matching waiting children with families, working with military families, engaging community partners, and implementing targeted recruitment approaches

### **Training and Consultation to Support Agencies and Build Internal Capacity**

Current areas of expertise include:

- Recruiting foster and adoptive families (general, targeted, child-specific, and child-centered)
- Placing children interjurisdictionally
- Using the national online photolisting for waiting children
- Writing profiles on waiting children
- Developing and sustaining community-based partnerships
- Developing strategic planning and consultation related to the development of title IV-B recruitment plans
- Responding effectively and supportively to inquiring families
- Using the national photolisting service for available families
- Using the national recruitment campaign materials as part of States' recruitment strategies

### **Website and Photolisting**

The partnership also maintains the **AdoptUsKids** website. The website is the first Federal online photolisting service featuring children waiting to be adopted from foster care.

### **Additional Components of AdoptUsKids**

The NRCRRFAP supports a variety outreach and other activities.

- Establishing joint trainings and national meetings with child welfare administrators, adoption and foster care managers, and other child welfare professionals from the public and private sectors
- Developing and supporting a network of adoptive parent organizations
- Planning, carrying out, and assisting the States and Tribes in providing fulfillment for

the national multimedia campaign to recruit adoptive and foster families for waiting children

- Implementing and supporting recruitment response teams to assist States in responding to national, State, and local recruitment campaigns and to support and nurture interested families

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## Child Welfare Information Gateway

### WHO WE ARE

Child Welfare Information Gateway provides information services for the Children's Bureau, compiling, synthesizing, and disseminating resources on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families to child welfare professionals and the public.

Child welfare and related professionals can rely on Information Gateway for quick access to publications, websites, a workforce community of practice, and online databases covering a wide range of topics, including child welfare, child abuse and neglect, foster care, adoption, and the content areas on which the T&TA Network members provide technical assistance.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

The Information Gateway website is a hub where professionals and the public can:

- Search the library
- Access subscription services
- Contact Information Gateway staff
- Download full-text publications
- Network with peers on workforce and training
- Access specialized databases
- Find information about special initiatives supported by the Children's Bureau

### The Library

The Information Gateway Library has more than 49,000 titles related to child welfare. Users can search the library online, access preprogrammed searches on popular topics, and download or order materials. The library offers specialized services for Children's Bureau and NRC staff:

- Weekly updates on recent acquisitions
- Literature searches and other reference services

### Subscription Services

Sign up for free subscriptions:

- *Children's Bureau Express* is a monthly online digest of child welfare news, research, promising practices, and more.
- *My Child Welfare Librarian* provides monthly topic-specific lists of recent library acquisitions.
- *E-lert!* informs subscribers about new Information Gateway publications and webpages.

### Customer Services

Trained staff respond to phone calls, emails, and mail requests for information, products, and referrals from child welfare and other professionals, Federal and State employees, and the public.

### Information Gateway Publications

Access publications on the full scope of child welfare topics, including research syntheses and briefs, bulletins for professionals, and factsheets for families. Many publications are also available in Spanish.

### Specialized Databases

Through the website, customers can access:

- The National Foster Care and Adoption Directory
- State Statutes Series
- The Child Welfare Workload Compendium
- National Organizations
- Adoption Assistance by State
- Conference Calendar

### Special Initiatives

Child Welfare Information Gateway supports Children's Bureau special initiatives, including:

- National Child Abuse Prevention Month
- National Adoption Month
- National Foster Care Month

### Other Children's Bureau Supports

Information Gateway also supports the Children's Bureau and States by:

- Maintaining the Children's Bureau website
- Attending, exhibiting, and presenting at conferences
- Maintaining listservs
- Supporting the Federal Interagency Work Group on Child Abuse and Neglect
- Providing onsite Program Specialists
- Collaborating with the T&TA Network

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**Website:** [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

**Contact:** Mary Sullivan, Principal Investigator  
Pamela Day and Mike Torpy, Co-Directors

## National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect

### WHO WE ARE

The National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) serves as a repository for high-quality datasets relevant to the study and prevention of child maltreatment. The Archive's primary goals are to support the research of child maltreatment scholars and to promote secondary data analysis as a critical tool for the advancement of scientific understanding. NDACAN activities include acquiring and processing child maltreatment data for dissemination, providing technical assistance to data users, and conducting workshops and institutes secondary analysis. The Archive is a project of the Family Life Development Center in the College of Human Ecology at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

The Archive promotes and supports the use of its datasets in a number of ways.

#### Dissemination of Datasets

The Archive distributes datasets to eligible faculty and staff at research centers that have an Institutional Review Board recognized by the U.S. Office for Human Research Protections. The Archive distributes datasets (data files and complete documentation) free of charge. Archive staff also provide users with free technical support. Potential users are encouraged to review the holdings list to identify datasets of interest and then use the extensive online documentation to determine if these datasets will suit their needs.

#### Summer Research Institute

Conducted annually since 1993, the Summer Research Institute is a secondary data analysis workshop that combines classroom instruction with hands-on experience. Participants are selected on a competitive basis from a wide variety of disciplines including psychology, social work, and medicine. The primary goals of the Institute are to increase utilization of the Archive's holdings and to provide training in secondary analysis to child maltreatment researchers. The Institute also provides researchers a unique opportunity to network and collaborate with other scholars in the field.

#### NDACAN Publications

The Archive distributes several free publications:

- The e-newsletter, *The NDACAN Update*, reports on the Archive's activities, highlights new research conducted with the holdings, and announces the availability of new datasets.
- The handbook, *Depositing Data With the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and*

*Neglect: A Handbook for Investigators*, outlines data processing and documentation standards for investigators who deposit data in the Archive.

- An Archive brochure and Current Holdings flier are also available.

#### Support for Users and Contributors

The Archive provides free user support to data contributors and data users. This support takes various forms, including advice on appropriate hardware and software configurations, software support and troubleshooting, and consultation on data processing and documentation.

#### Listserv for Child Maltreatment Researchers

In 1993 the Archive established an Internet discussion group to facilitate information exchange and networking among researchers in the field of child abuse and neglect. With hundreds of subscribers, the Child Maltreatment Research discussion group is a major scholarly discussion group in the child welfare field. The list is carefully moderated to ensure on-track discussions and a manageable volume of postings. The scope of the discussion group includes all areas of child abuse and neglect research (e.g., epidemiology, etiology, prevention, consequences, intervention, and treatment) and the full range of research issues (e.g., measurement, instrumentation, statistical analysis, ethics). The list is not open to discussions of program or clinical issues except as they relate to evaluation research.

#### Website

Detailed information about the Archive and its holdings can be found the website. The site contains all of the publications, order forms, and most dataset documentation for browsing and downloading. Also available are the Archive's latest workshop and product announcements, including the Summer Research Institute announcement and application.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## **National Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for Child Welfare Systems of Care Grantees**

### **WHO WE ARE**

Improving Child Welfare Outcomes Through Systems of Care is a Children's Bureau initiative that grew out of the State CFSRs, which showed that serious deficiencies exist in most State child welfare agencies in terms of ensuring children's safety, finding them permanent homes, and promoting their well-being. Systems of care is a service delivery approach that builds partnerships to create a broad, integrated process for meeting families' multiple needs. This approach is based on the principles of interagency collaboration; individualized, strengths-based care practices; cultural competence; community-based services; accountability; and full participation of families at all levels of the system. Systems of care is not a "program" or "model"; instead, it serves as a framework for guiding processes and activities designed to meet the needs of children, youth, and families.

The Children's Bureau awarded funding to nine initiatives around the country to demonstrate systemic changes in the way States and Tribes provide services to children, youth, and families. In addition, the Children's Bureau funded the National Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for Child Welfare Systems of Care Grantees to support the grantees through programmatic and evaluation technical assistance, evaluation, and training.

### **HOW WE CAN HELP**

The National Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for Child Welfare Systems of Care Grantees provides training and technical assistance and evaluation to recipients of funds from the Children's Bureau for the Improving Child Welfare Outcomes Through Systems of Care demonstration initiative. The Center develops resources and provides technical assistance that supports the grantees' efforts to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families. Through its evaluation efforts, the Center also produces information on the initiative's development, implementation, and effectiveness.

#### **Technical Assistance**

Technical assistance efforts to grantees include:

- Identifying grantee needs and providing technical assistance to support the development, implementation, and sustainability of their system of care efforts
- Providing technical assistance through liaisons assigned to each grantee and conducting

additional technical assistance through presentations, conference calls, meetings, and other means

- Creating and distributing products to help grantees and others implement the systems of care framework
- Developing products that integrate technical assistance experience, evaluation findings, and other information to support wider understanding and implementation of systems of care

#### **Evaluation**

The Center provides assistance with evaluation efforts that include:

- Working with sites and local evaluators to develop and implement a national cross-site evaluation of the implementation of systems of care in the demonstration sites
- Providing training and technical assistance as needed to support national evaluation data collection
- Providing evaluation data and results to sites for program improvement, social marketing, or other uses
- Developing products that integrate evaluation findings, technical assistance experience, and other information to support wider understanding and implementation of systems of care

#### **Maintaining a Website With Resources**

The National TA and Evaluation Center provides content to Child Welfare Information Gateway for the Systems of Care section of the Information Gateway website; this section includes an extensive library of resources relating to the systems of care principles.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## Technical Assistance to State Legislators on the Child and Family Services Reviews

### WHO WE ARE

The Technical Assistance to State Legislators on the CFRs initiative is designed to inform State legislators about, and engage them in, the CFRs and other child welfare reform efforts. This effort also is designed to enhance links between State legislators who have child welfare oversight responsibility and State child welfare agencies. The technical assistance is provided by JBS International, Inc., (JBS) and its subcontractor, the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), as a component of the JBS contract with the Children's Bureau to operate the State Team Training Project.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

This project component educates State legislators about the role of the CFRs and Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) in supporting States in improving child welfare systems. It also identifies and shares with State child welfare agencies strategies for engaging State legislators in child welfare and the CFR and PIP processes. It promotes links between State legislators and child welfare agencies through onsite technical assistance events in States, technical assistance reports, and presentations at national conferences.

### Technical Assistance Provided

During the past 2 years, technical assistance to State legislators has fostered legislator-agency collaboration in support of the CFR process and child welfare reform through technical assistance events in a range of areas:

- Assisting State legislative committees in assessing options for improving their State's ability to meet the educational needs of children in foster care
- Briefing State legislators on strategies for addressing child safety issues
- Arranging for State child welfare agency administrators to brief other State agency leadership on approaches that have worked in fostering legislator-agency collaboration
- Helping States assess how they manage adoptions of children with special needs, including providing an overview of innovative programs in other States

### The Technical Assistance Process

NCSL plans each technical assistance event with input from State legislators, State child welfare agency staff, Federal staff, and JBS. The following

is additional information regarding technical assistance requests:

- **Eligibility**—State legislators, State child welfare agencies, or both may apply for technical assistance. States that previously received technical assistance are eligible for additional assistance.
- **Application process**—Legislators, their staff, and State child welfare agency staff may submit requests for technical assistance in writing or by telephone. Requests should include (1) a brief description of the assistance needed, (2) a description of the proposed forum for technical assistance (for example, informal meeting, legislative hearing, or workshop), (3) the intended audience, and (4) the preferred date. The project will follow up with each technical assistance requester.
- **Selection process:** Priority will be given to applications from both State legislators and child welfare agency administrators; the technical assistance may target legislators, child welfare agencies, or both. Next in order of priority are requests that target child welfare agency personnel only. Within these guidelines, assistance is provided to all requesters within available contract resources.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## National Child Welfare Leadership Institute

### WHO WE ARE

The National Child Welfare Leadership Institute (NCWLI) provides leadership development training, mentoring, and technical assistance to mid-level managers in public and Tribal child welfare agencies throughout the country. Managers in private agencies are included in the target group of trainees when they represent States in which child welfare services have been privatized. Participation in NCWLI programs is intended to increase the effectiveness of mid-level managers and to build human capital needed in child welfare agencies in order to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and families in those systems.

### Collaboration

NCWLI comprises several partner organizations, each bringing indepth expertise in child welfare. All partners involved in NCWLI are highly qualified child welfare experts and include individuals from the Social Research Institute, College of Social Work, University of Utah; Independent Living Resources, Inc. in Durham, NC; the American Humane Association in Denver, CO; the National Implementation Research Network from the University of South Florida (USF), Tampa; and evaluators from the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, also from USF, Tampa.

### Vision and Mission

NCWLI trainees will enhance their leadership skills in order to succeed in their current environment and to be prepared to lead their agencies in the future as that environment changes. These enhanced skills will encourage productive and effective relationships with others within the immediate work setting and within the broader child and family services systems. Trainees will learn and practice evidenced-based management skills that are associated with personal and organizational success.

The NCWLI training curriculum, while focusing on leadership skills, will utilize evidence-based practice as the common link across the entire curriculum and will promote data-driven decision-making. Specific objectives include:

- Development of a leadership curriculum based on a model that prepares mid-level managers to lead positive change
- Utilization of principles of adult learning—Stages of Change—while incorporating opportunities for transfer of learning
- Implementation and support of regional and topical e-learning communities to function as effective, supportive mentoring networks

- Development of sustainable, real-world initiatives as the work products associated with completion of the NCWLI training

### Training Model

NCWLI's innovative leadership model includes four components:

- Trainees will participate in a 5-day residential training event culminating with the development of action plans for specific changes they plan to implement in their agencies.
- Initial training will be followed by a 3-month transfer of learning period at which time Institute staff will provide intensive consultation and technical assistance to assist participants with the change initiatives. Web-based resources (e.g., webinars) and e-learning communities will be provided, through which NCWLI participants and staff will communicate with each other to create leadership networks among participants.
- The next phase will be a 3-day training event during which participants will discuss progress and challenges encountered in their change efforts. Additional training will be provided on evidence-based practice, program evaluation, and media relations to provide skills in leading and evaluating change efforts.
- Participants will continue their implementation of projects during the remaining 4 months of the grant period. The implementation period will include intensive technical assistance to develop leadership capital and to advance child welfare practice towards more effective models.

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## National Child Welfare Workforce Institute

### WHO WE ARE

The purpose of the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) is to build the capacity of the nation's child welfare workforce and improve outcomes for children and families through activities that support the development of skilled child welfare leaders in public, private, and Tribal child welfare systems. The NCWWI also serves as a workforce resource to other members of the T&TA Network.

NCWWI staff include faculty from social work schools at eight universities around the country that were funded by the Children's Bureau in 2003 as grantees for "Developing Models of Effective Child Welfare Staff Recruitment and Retention Training."

The eight grantees established collaborative working relationships during their 5-year projects, and this partnership has been carried over to the NCWWI. Leading the effort is the University at Albany, State University of New York, which is joined by the University of Denver, Fordham University, University of Iowa, Michigan State University, University of Michigan, University of North Carolina, and University of Southern Maine. They are joined by the National Indian Child Welfare Association, which brings expertise in Tribal issues.

### BACKGROUND

In 2003, a General Accounting Office study, citing interviews and CFSR findings, reported that high turnover and staffing shortages in the child welfare workforce increased the workload burden on remaining caseworkers. Consequently, this greater burden resulted in delayed maltreatment investigations, fewer worker visits with children and their families, limited opportunities for building relationships, and hastened decision-making that affected systems' abilities to ensure the safety and placement stability of children served.

In response, the Children's Bureau has developed and supported child welfare training initiatives and other discretionary programs to promote the development and dissemination of promising and proven approaches to workforce problems. Building the capacity of child welfare systems to effectively recruit, train, supervise, manage, support, and retain the workforce of child welfare professionals has become one of the Children's Bureau's critical strategies for systemic change.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The NCWWI will undertake a broad range of activities to promote effective child welfare practice and support leadership development, skill-building, and growth. Delivery of child welfare leadership

training curricula, facilitation of a national peer network of child welfare leaders, strategic dissemination of effective and promising workforce practices, administration of subgrants to colleges and universities for child welfare professional education stipend programs, and an extensive evaluation are critical components. The NCWWI will advance Federal priorities while supporting training systems and workforce initiatives at the State and national levels.

Specifically, the NCWWI's responsibilities fall under eight categories:

- Convening a National Child Welfare Workforce Institute Advisory Committee
- Conducting activities related to knowledge management and assessment, including identifying best practices in workforce development, leadership, and cultural competence and developing training curricula
- Providing national leadership training for middle managers and distance learning opportunities for supervisors
- Funding and monitoring subgrants for M.S.W. and B.S.W. traineeships in child welfare
- Coordinating peer networking around workforce and leadership issues
- Collaborating with the Children's Bureau and the T&TA Network to be a resource on workforce issues, and partnering with Regional Offices and State and Tribal child welfare agencies to implement NCWWI activities
- Disseminating evidence-based, effective, and promising workforce practices
- Evaluating NCWWI activities, as well as activities of the M.S.W. and B.S.W. traineeships and the five Comprehensive Workforce Grants

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## National Quality Improvement Center on Non-Resident Fathers and the Child Welfare System

### WHO WE ARE

The Children's Bureau funded American Humane Association and its partners the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law and the National Fatherhood Initiative to create the Quality Improvement Center on Non-Resident Fathers (QIC-NRF) in 2006. The purpose of this 5-year project is to determine, through a research design, the impact of nonresident father involvement on child welfare outcomes.

### BACKGROUND

The focus for the project came as a result of the CFSRs and the *What About the Dads?* report.<sup>1</sup> Both the CFSRs on State child welfare systems and the *What About the Dads?* report indicate there is very little meaningful engagement occurring between the child welfare system and fathers or other paternal relatives.

### GOALS

The QIC-NRF has three main goals:

- To promote a research-based and outcome-focused approach to inform best practices related to the engagement of nonresident fathers and the paternal family in the public child welfare system
- To determine the impact of father involvement on child safety, permanence, and well-being outcomes
- To facilitate a collaborative information-sharing and problem-solving national network among subgrantees, the Children's Bureau, public child welfare agencies, private service providers, the courts and legal systems, and other stakeholders

### RESEARCH

Research will take place over two phases.

#### Phase I: National Needs Assessment

The first phase (Year 1) will involve conducting a national multifaceted, interactive needs assessment to identify the current state of nonresident father involvement in the child welfare system. The barriers and challenges to positive father involvement will be researched from three perspectives: social work/child welfare, legal/courts, and current private provider program

<sup>1</sup> Malm K., Murray J., and Geen R. (2006). *What About the Dads? Child Welfare Agencies' Efforts to Identify, Locate and Involve Nonresident Fathers*. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from [www.urban.org/publications/411316.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/411316.html)

practice. A literature review, a web-based resource board, a State CFSR Program Improvement Plan search, key informant interviews, focus groups, and informational summits will inform the selection of the topical focus areas for the research and demonstration projects administered in Phase II of the project.

#### Phase II: Implementation, Evaluation, and Dissemination

The second phase will involve:

- **Administering grants (Years 2-5):** A small number of demonstration projects will be funded through a competitive process to ultimately answer the question, "How is overall child safety, permanence, and well-being impacted as a result of increased father involvement?" The QIC-NRF will provide ongoing technical assistance to funded projects and will facilitate the development of an information-sharing network among projects.
- **Evaluating process and outcomes (Years 2-5):** A cross-site evaluation involving both descriptive and outcome analyses will be conducted to assess the outcomes achieved by the initiative and synthesize findings across the individual projects. Lessons learned through the implementation process will be documented. The QIC-NRF will provide technical assistance to support grantee evaluations.
- **Dissemination of knowledge (Years 2-5):** To help build a knowledge development process and engage the field, information will be shared in a timely manner throughout all stages of the initiative. Initial information will include an executive summary of the literature review, key informant interviews, focus groups, and informational summits. Initial findings from grantees on their implementation process, strengths, and challenges will also be disseminated. Finally, information on outcomes achieved through the cross-site evaluation will be shared nationally, and project-specific outcomes will be synthesized and disseminated.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## National Quality Improvement Center on the Privatization of Child Welfare Services

### WHO WE ARE

The Children's Bureau funded the University of Kentucky and Planning and Learning Technologies to create the National Quality Improvement Center on the Privatization of Child Welfare Services (QIC PCW) in 2005. The purpose of this 5-year project is to build knowledge and inform decision-making regarding public/private partnership in child welfare service delivery.

### BACKGROUND

The focus of this Center was designed in recognition of the work that public child welfare systems do to enhance service delivery and outcomes, acknowledging that some States were investing in moving some segments of the service array into the private sector. Little is known about the effectiveness or efficiency of these reforms and how a public/private partnership can be managed in such a way as to promote positive organizational and child and family outcomes.

### GOALS

The QIC PCW has three main goals:

- To promote and support an evidence-based and outcomes-focused approach to child welfare system development and organizational improvement
- To build consensus on appropriate models of reform and the respective roles and responsibilities of public and private agencies and to provide input on areas on which the child welfare policy and evaluation fields should focus
- To facilitate a collaborative information-sharing and problem-solving national network among subgrantees, the Children's Bureau's Training and Technical Assistance Network, public child welfare agencies, private service providers, and other stakeholders

### RESEARCH

Research is taking place in two phases.

#### Phase I: Research and Knowledge Dissemination

The first phase of the process included a multifaceted literature review and knowledge gaps analysis to determine the current status of privatization in child welfare, assess the depth and breadth of the evidence base, and identify a topical focus area upon which research and demonstration grants could be funded. Triangulation of the data revealed a critical and timely topic in need of

research that three States (Florida, Illinois and Missouri) have been funded to study.

#### Phase II: Innovative Performance-Based Contracting and Quality Assurance Systems

In Phase II, the QIC PCW and its funded projects will be working to answer a number of research questions regarding how the planning, implementation, and evolution of such systems relate to desired systemic, organizational, and client outcomes.

In addition, the QIC PCW is working to facilitate ongoing knowledge development and dissemination through:

- Promotion of more rigorous, comparative evaluation related to privatization
- Making evolving information available
- Providing opportunities for ongoing dialogue among a network of public and private child welfare agencies, policymakers, and stakeholders

Our ongoing approach to technical assistance, dissemination, and diffusion of knowledge includes:

- Website/listservs/discussion boards
- Presentations at conferences/meetings
- Periodic reports and publications
- Provision of consultation to child welfare administrators, services providers, and others regarding what has been learned
- Facilitation of opportunities for dialogue on issues related to child welfare privatization with the broader field
- Dissemination of projects and materials developed by States and agencies for use in privatization initiatives
- Ongoing literature review and posting of updated annotated reference list
- Collaboration with the Children's Bureau Training and Technical Assistance Network

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## **National Quality Improvement Center on Differential Response in Child Protective Services**

### **WHO WE ARE**

The Children's Bureau funded the American Humane Association to create the National Quality Improvement Center on Differential Response in Child Protective Services (QIC-DR) in FY 2008. The purpose of this 5-year project is to generate knowledge on effective practice models of differential response in child protective systems and support the infrastructure needed at the State and local levels to improve child welfare outcomes for children and their families referred for suspected maltreatment. In addition, the QIC will foster collaborative research, demonstration, and dissertation projects that address differential response across systems that promote family strengths and keep children safe: neighborhood and community-based organizations, prevention programs, child protection, child welfare, health, education, housing, and financial and family support.

### **BACKGROUND**

Differential response, also referred to as "dual track," "multiple track," or "alternative response," is a service model that allows CPS to respond differently to various accepted reports of child abuse and neglect, depending on factors such as the level of risk and severity. Since the mid-1990s, States and other jurisdictions across the country have been implementing various models of differential response to better meet the needs of children and families who come to the attention of the child protection agency.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The QIC-DR has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Develop knowledge about improving outcomes for children and families in the child welfare system through the implementation of differential response models in CPS systems
- Promote collaborative problem-solving among selected projects and doctoral students receiving dissertation support through the QIC
- Develop and implement CPS differential response research and demonstration projects
- Establish a national information-sharing network to disseminate information on promising practices
- Evaluate the impact of implementing differential response models on outcomes for children and families who are identified as a result of referrals for suspected child maltreatment

- Identify barriers and recommend/implement changes in policies/procedures/practice

### **RESEARCH**

The QIC-DR will explore a broad range of issues and questions about effective practice models of differential response—methods of successful implementation of differential response models, kinds of collaborations and systems that are essential to their success, reasons why some differential response initiatives have been discontinued, and ways in which these efforts can result in better outcomes for children and families and further reduce the risk of child maltreatment.

The research will take place over two phases.

#### **Phase I: Planning**

The first year includes the development of the following:

- A National Advisory Committee for the QIC-DR that will assist the QIC in its tasks
- A comprehensive review and analysis that describes and evaluates the effectiveness of current efforts to implement differential response models in CPS and identifies service and knowledge gaps.
- A comprehensive literature review that details the research and promising practices and provides an analysis of the current state of research on differential response models in CPS
- An implementation and evaluation plan for Phase II of the project. This plan will present a clear and all-inclusive vision of how the QIC will operate in years 2-5 and how it will evaluate the research and demonstration projects supported during these years

#### **Phase II: Implementation**

Years 2-5 of the grant will involve:

- Announcing, supporting, and evaluating research and demonstration projects. The QIC will support at least three projects that will develop and implement, replicate, evaluate, or systematize effective practice models of differential response in CPS systems, with specific components or strategies that are based on theory, research, or evaluation data.
- Announcing and supporting dissertation research. The QIC will provide up to 2 years of dissertation support for up to four advanced doctoral students studying differential response.
- Developing a network. The QIC will develop a network for grantees to share information and collaborate on areas of interest and inquiry.

- Planning and conducting an evaluation. The QIC will plan and conduct a rigorous, objective evaluation of the project. Findings will include examples of strategies that are tied to positive outcomes for children and families.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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in CPS

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## National Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood

### WHO WE ARE

In FY 2009, the Children's Bureau funded the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) to create the National Quality Improvement Center on Preventing the Abuse and Neglect of Infants and Young Children (QIC), hereafter known as the QIC on Early Childhood (QIC-EC). CSSP will partner with ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families, and the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds.

The purpose of this 5-year project is to improve the social, physical, behavioral, cognitive, and emotional well-being of children 0 to 5 years old and their families who are at risk of abuse and neglect, including those impacted by substance abuse and/or HIV/AIDS. The QIC will support a number of collaborative research and demonstration projects across the child abuse prevention, child welfare, early childhood, and other health, education, and social service systems.

The research and demonstration projects will explore a broad range of issues about gathering child abuse and neglect prevention evidence, how to improve developmental outcomes for infants and young children, what kinds of collaborations and systems are effective, and how these efforts can result in better outcomes for young children and their families at greatest risk for child maltreatment.

The new knowledge that emerges from the research and demonstration projects will be built around three key components: (1) a social-ecological approach to prevention that addresses child maltreatment at multiple levels—individual, family, community, and policy; (2) evidence of effectiveness that integrates professional experience and expertise in the context of families' culture, characteristics, and values with scientifically rigorous methodology; and (3) a more thorough understanding of how building protective factors, in addition to reducing risk factors, can reduce maltreatment for young children and their families.

### BACKGROUND

This project was initiated because of growing research in the neurobiological, behavioral, and social sciences that points to the critical importance of early life experiences in shaping the developmental outcomes for children in later life. These early years are critical because this is the period of the most rapid development in the areas of brain development, physical growth, motor skills, language formation, emerging self-concept, and social and behavioral skills. Negative experiences that occur during these formative years can have long-lasting, detrimental effects

on children's learning, behavior, and physical and mental health.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The QIC has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Develop knowledge about evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies aimed at preventing the abuse and neglect of infants and young children
- Promote collective problem-solving through funding selected early childhood and child abuse prevention research and demonstration projects that advance innovative evidence-based and evidence-informed practice improvements and knowledge about preventing child maltreatment and promoting child and family well-being
- Establish a national information-sharing network to disseminate promising practices
- Evaluate the impact of projects implementing evidence-based or evidence-informed child abuse prevention programs in reducing the risk of child maltreatment
- Identify barriers to prevention and recommend changes in policies, procedures, and practice

### RESEARCH

Research takes place over two phases.

#### Phase I: Planning

The first phase (Year 1) involves the following:

- Forming a National Advisory Committee for the QIC-EC
- Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment on preventing the maltreatment of infants and young children
- Conducting a literature review that includes promising practices for prevention
- Fine-tuning the work plan and evaluation plan
- Developing a plan for reviewing and selecting grant recipients and for awarding dissertation support
- Developing a preliminary design for the Phase II implementation plan that presents a clear and comprehensive vision of how the proposed QIC-EC would operate

#### Phase II: Implementation

In Phase II, the QIC will announce, award, monitor, provide technical assistance to, and evaluate 48-month research and demonstration projects. These projects will test and rigorously evaluate a variety of models or hypotheses related to improving the social, physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being of children 0–5 years old who are at the greatest risk of abuse, neglect, and

poor developmental outcomes. Supported projects will exhibit cross-agency partnerships that target young children and their caregivers, including those who are impacted by substance abuse and/or HIV/AIDS. The QIC also will support up to four 2-year dissertation research awards to advanced level doctoral students conducting research in this area. The QIC will build a regional and national learning network of public and private organizations that are working to address child abuse and neglect prevention to ensure that they receive timely updates on lessons learned. The QIC will actively collaborate with the existing Federal resource centers and TA network throughout the grant period to provide them with the latest knowledge emerging from the QIC. The QIC will conduct a cross-site evaluation of the research and demonstration projects it supports and will evaluate the overall impact of the QIC.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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Director

## National Abandoned Infants Assistance Resource Center

### WHO WE ARE

The National Abandoned Infants Assistance (AIA) Resource Center's mission is to enhance the quality of social and health services delivered to abandoned children and those at risk of abandonment due to the presence of drugs and/or HIV in the family. The Center seeks to achieve these ends by providing training, information, and resources to service providers who assist these children and their families.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

The Resource Center provides training and information to professionals on a wide range of issues, particularly as they relate to the safety, well-being, and permanence of children affected by substance abuse and/or HIV.

### Training

The Center offers a variety of training types:

- **Teleconferences.** The Center sponsors an annual series of interactive phone conferences with guest presenters. These trainings are recorded and archived on the Center's website. Recent seminars:
  - ✓ Infants Exposed Prenatally to Methamphetamines
  - ✓ Facilitating Disclosure With Children in HIV/AIDS-Impacted Families
  - ✓ HIV Prevention Interventions With Women Affected by Substance Use
  - ✓ Treatment and Program Development for Women With Multiple Disorders
- **Conferences/Webcasts.** The Resource Center hosts annual national conferences and webcasts. Recordings and handouts of plenary sessions are archived on the website. Recent topics:
  - ✓ Substance Exposed Newborns: Weaving Together Effective Policy & Practice (2005)
  - ✓ Sustaining Your Child and Family Services Organization in Lean Times: A Webcast (2005)
  - ✓ Raising Kin: The Psychosocial Well-Being of Substance-Affected Children in Relative Care (2004)
- **E-Training.** Online training pertaining to families affected by HIV, substance-exposed newborns, and other topics is under development and can soon be accessed on the Center's website.

### Materials Development

The Resource Center disseminates a biannual magazine, factsheets, issue briefs, monographs, reports, and videos. Examples include:

- **Magazine. *The Source***
  - ✓ Methamphetamine and OxyContin (spring 2006)
  - ✓ Developmental Disabilities, Substance Abuse, and Parenthood (fall 2005)
  - ✓ Substance Abuse Prevention With Children of Substance Abusers (spring 2005)
- **Factsheets/Issue Briefs**
  - ✓ *Spirituality: A Powerful Force in Women's Recovery* (2006)
  - ✓ *Substance Exposed Infants: Noteworthy Policies & Practices* (2006)
  - ✓ *The Psychosocial Well-Being of Substance-Affected Children in Relative Care* (2006)
  - ✓ *Sustaining Your Child & Family Services Organization in Lean Times* (2006)
  - ✓ *Boarder Babies, Abandoned Infants, and Discarded Infants* (2005)
- **Reports**
  - ✓ *AIA Project Profiles* (2006)
  - ✓ *Effects of Prenatal Substance Exposure on Infant and Early Childhood Outcomes* (2006)
  - ✓ *Discarded Infants and Neonaticide: A Review of the Literature* (2004)

### Research and Resource Development

The Center examines emerging issues and explores practice and policy implications by conducting research and consulting technical expert groups. Results are released in the form of monographs. Recent topics:

- *Guide to Future Care and Custody Planning for Children* (2005)
- *From the Child's Perspective: A Qualitative Analysis of Kinship Care Placements* (2005)
- *AIA Best Practices: Lessons Learned From a Decade of Service to Children and Families Affected by HIV and Substance Abuse* (2003)

### Individualized Information Searches

The Center provides links to literature, statistics, and relevant referrals on a broad variety of pertinent topics.

### Interactive Website

The Center's publications, resources, databases, and recorded trainings are housed on an interactive website. Links, references, and information from other sources are selectively featured as well.

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## National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

### WHO WE ARE

The National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (FRIENDS) is a service of the Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect. FRIENDS (Family Resource, Information, Education, and Network Development Services) provides training, technical assistance, and information to Federal grantee agencies implementing the grants for Community-Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention (CBCAP), under the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003.

The purpose of FRIENDS' work is to build the capacity of State CBCAP lead agencies and communities to prevent child abuse and neglect and strengthen and support families.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

FRIENDS provides training, technical assistance, and information to State CBCAP lead agencies in order to build their capacity to:

- Foster an understanding, appreciation, and knowledge of diverse populations in order to be effective in preventing and treating child abuse and neglect
- Facilitate efforts in the interagency, interdisciplinary coordinated planning and development of a network of community-based programs and activities designed to strengthen and support families to prevent child abuse and neglect
- Conduct regular and ongoing needs assessments that will be used to identify unmet needs and also incorporate findings from other statewide needs assessment processes
- Demonstrate a commitment to meaningful parent leadership, especially for parents of children with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, and members of other underrepresented or underserved groups
- Maximize funds for the financing, planning, and operation of child abuse prevention programs and activities
- Promote the development and implementation of lead agency program evaluation processes that include a peer review component and other evaluation methodologies
- Support States in their Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) resulting from CFSRs

FRIENDS uses several methods to deliver training, technical assistance, and information dissemination to CBCAP State Lead Agencies, including:

- **Technical Assistance**
  - ✓ Offers CBCAP State Lead Agencies and their statewide networks knowledge and expertise in strategies to prevent child abuse and neglect through electronic, telephone, and onsite technical assistance. Onsite assistance must be requested by the CBCAP State Lead Agency.
  - ✓ Coordinates a Peer 2 Peer Mentoring and Consultation process matching more experienced CBCAP leads to newer leads.
  - ✓ Hosts expert workgroups on cultural competence, peer review, evidence-based practice, measuring protective factors, Program Assessment Rating Tool, and parent leadership.
- **Training**
  - ✓ Facilitates an annual conference for CBCAP State Lead Agencies and invites State Promoting Safe and Stable Families staff to promote collaboration
  - ✓ Offers two Outcome Accountability training sessions per year to assist State Lead Agencies in identifying, measuring, and reporting on child abuse prevention outcomes
  - ✓ Provides two Parent Leadership Ambassador trainings per year to help CBCAP leads develop meaningful leadership roles for parents
  - ✓ Hosts a number of topical teleconference trainings each year and posts the archived audio recordings on the FRIENDS website to make them available 24/7 to any interested person
  - ✓ Develops online trainings
- **Information Development and Dissemination**
  - ✓ Offers a comprehensive website to disseminate information
  - ✓ Supports two listservs, one of which is specifically for CBCAP leads and another general listserv for anyone interested in child abuse prevention
  - ✓ Develops publications and toolkits based on the expressed needs of the CBCAP lead agencies

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**Website:** www.friendsnrc.org

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## Child Welfare Technical Assistance Implementation Centers

### WHO WE ARE

The Children's Bureau established five Regionally based Implementation Centers to expand the existing Training and Technical Assistance Network (T&TA Network) and enhance its ability to provide in-depth and long-term consultation and support to States and Tribes. In addition to working with the T&TA Network, each Implementation Center will enter into formal partnerships with States and Tribes in its assigned geographic service area to execute projects focusing on the implementation of strategies intended to achieve sustainable, systemic change that results in greater safety, permanency, and well-being for children, youth, and families.

### BACKGROUND

The Implementation Centers were funded in FY 2009 to fill a gap in the Children's Bureau's existing T&TA Network. Despite the efforts of States and Tribes to adopt and institutionalize new principles and evidence-based practices into their child welfare systems, they often lack the resources necessary to implement comprehensive strategic plans, and the other members of the T&TA Network are limited in their ability to provide intensive, long-term TA. The Implementation Centers were created to expand the T&TA Network and enhance its ability to support States and Tribes.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Guided by a systems of care approach and informed by the CFSRs, the Implementation Centers support and facilitate more formal communication and networking across State and Tribal child welfare systems to capitalize on existing expertise and promote cooperative problem-solving. In collaboration with members of the T&TA Network and CB, each Implementation Center works with States and Tribes in its geographic service area to address both specific problems and broad child welfare performance issues. Responsibilities include:

- Performing Regional outreach to States and Tribal child welfare systems and engaging them in a formalized system of networking and problem-solving
- Entering into mutually binding agreements with States and Tribes to execute multiyear implementation projects that will facilitate systemic change and build capacity for successful institutionalization of child welfare principles, policies, and effective or promising models of practice
- Promoting peer-to-peer networking and mentoring through such initiatives as Regional

workgroups, Regional meetings, peer-to-peer site visits, and conference calls

- Providing intensive, coordinated, and individualized TA to State and Tribal partners to foster strengths-based change in organizational culture, administration, and direct practice with children and families
- Collaborating with members of the T&TA Network to utilize their knowledge and expertise in assessment and effective child welfare practice
- Collaborating with each other across geographic service areas to address common child welfare issues and to effectively evaluate this initiative as a whole

### IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation will take place over two phases.

#### Phase I: Planning

During the first year of the project, each Implementation Center will convene at least one Regional forum in its geographic service area. Each forum will be a venue to inform States and Tribes about the T&TA Network's resources and the Implementation Center's activities, including networking opportunities and implementation projects. The meeting's principal objective will be to increase knowledge about the process of systems change and to promote solution-focused dialogue. Also during Phase I, each Implementation Center will initiate outreach to targeted States and Tribes and develop project proposal expectations and a selection process.

#### Phase II: Implementation

During the 54-month second phase, Implementation Centers will continue to engage States and Tribes and convene regional forums. The Implementation Centers will also provide coordinated and individualized TA that supports the implementation of strategies for systems change and execute peer-to-peer networking and implementation projects with selected States and Tribes. Implementation Center and project activities will be evaluated, and the findings will be disseminated

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

#### Northeast and Caribbean Child Welfare Implementation Center Serving Regions I & II

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**Atlantic Coast Child Welfare Implementation Center**

**Serving Regions III & IV**

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**Midwest Child Welfare Implementation Center**

**Serving Regions V & VII**

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**Mountains and Plains Child Welfare Implementation Center**

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**Western and Pacific Child Welfare Implementation Center**

**Serving Regions IX & X**

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## National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare

### WHO WE ARE

The National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) is a service of the Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Children's Bureau Office on Child Abuse and Neglect.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

NCSACW works to develop knowledge and provide technical assistance to Federal, State, and local agencies and Tribes to improve outcomes for families with substance use disorders who are involved in the child welfare and family court systems.

### Technical Assistance

NCSACW helps develop cross-system partnerships and practice changes to address the issues of substance use disorders among families in the child welfare system. All requests for technical assistance are coordinated with the CSAT and ACF. A limited amount of onsite technical assistance is provided at no charge based on availability and application process.

Areas of technical assistance include:

- Connecting individuals with resources, including publications, journal articles, research, and statistics
- Consulting expertise on screening and assessment for family engagement, retention, and recovery
- Presenting at conferences
- Facilitating clinical and policy workgroups of substance abuse and child welfare staff and judicial officers
- Assisting in the development of interagency protocols and strategic plans
- Assisting States in responding to their CFSRs and developing their Program Improvement Plans (PIPs)
- Answering questions and making referrals to other experts in the field
- In-depth technical assistance for a limited number of sites selected through a solicitation process

### Information Gathering and Dissemination

NCSACW staff maintain an extensive library of resources on the intersection of alcohol and other drugs, child welfare/Tribal child welfare, and family court systems.

### Web-Based Services and Tutorials

The NCSACW website is available to provide a wide range of online resources. In addition, NCSACW has developed a series of online tutorials:

- Understanding Child Welfare and the Dependency Court: A Guide for Substance Abuse Treatment Professionals
- Understanding Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery:  
A Guide for Child Welfare Workers
- Understanding Substance Abuse and Child Welfare Issues:  
A Guide for Judicial Officers (anticipated 2007)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Larisa Owen, TA Services Director

## National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health

### WHO WE ARE

Since 1984, the National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health at Georgetown University has been dedicated to helping States, Tribes, territories, and communities build systems that improve access to quality care and improve outcomes for children with, or at-risk of, emotional disorders, and their families. The Center is supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Administration for Children and Families, private foundations, and individual contracts.

System of care values guide the work of the Center as it promotes service delivery that is community-based; comprehensive, coordinated, and collaborative across systems; in full partnership with families and youth; culturally and linguistically competent; strengths-based; and individualized to meet each child and family's needs.

### HOW WE CAN HELP

Technical assistance and training opportunities are offered by the Center through ongoing work or through cost-sharing arrangements.

#### Training Events

Examples of training events include:

- National Training Institutes offered every 2 years to a national audience of more than 2,000 to provide practical information on best practices in building comprehensive systems of care
- Primer Hands On: System of Care, an interactive training, offered in both English and Spanish, to provide leaders with in-depth knowledge of the structural, process, and operational components of systems of care
- Primary Care and Mental Health Integration training for States and communities
- Intensive 4-day curriculum-based interactive training program on leadership development for administrators and family leaders
- Monthly technical assistance conference call series

#### Individualized Technical Assistance

Examples of strategies for providing TA include:

- National Policy Academies for high-level, cross-agency teams from individual States and Tribes to work on policies and practices to support system reform
- Transformation facilitation involving individual support for State Child Mental Health Directors

- Individualized technical assistance for States receiving infrastructure grants
- Responding to individual requests, including limited onsite technical assistance
- Presentations, including conference key notes and workshops
- Brokering to connect individuals and organizations with resources
- Facilitating and leading meetings to do strategic planning and solve complex issues

#### Discovering, Producing, and Disseminating Knowledge

Through research studies and evaluation activities, the Center discovers new knowledge and provides this information to the field through publications, articles, book chapters, and searchable databases. Publications are available through the website.

#### Child Welfare – Mental Health Initiative

The goal of the Center's child welfare and mental health initiative is to increase the capacity of States and communities to offer effective mental health services for children and families served by the child welfare system. The Center infuses child welfare issues into its ongoing work, partners with other NRCs on specific projects, conducts related studies, and provides assistance on mental health and child welfare collaboration.

#### Topics and Areas of Focus

The Center provides technical assistance on a number of issues including, but not limited to, strategic planning to build systems of care, cross-system collaboration, policy and infrastructure development, cultural and linguistic competence, early childhood mental health, leadership and workforce issues, health and mental health needs of children and families in child welfare, mediation, primary care and mental health, financing, managed care, evidence-based practices, building family-driven and youth-guided systems, screening and assessment, and school-based mental health services.

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**Website:** [http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/programs/ta\\_center](http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/programs/ta_center)

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## Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health

### WHO WE ARE

The Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health (TA Partnership) provides technical assistance to system of care communities funded by the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program. Since 1993, the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program has provided funding to over 67 communities around the country to more effectively meet the mental health needs of children and youth with serious emotional challenges.

### Mission

The mission of the TA Partnership is to help currently funded communities build systems of care to meet the mental health needs of children, youth, and families. The TA Partnership helps communities transform the way services are delivered to children and families by emphasizing the system of care philosophy of delivering services that are family driven, youth guided, community based, and culturally competent. The TA Partnership:

- Promotes system of care principles and values
- Implements technical assistance strategies that promote family-professional partnerships
- Promotes the identification and use of effective evidence-based clinical interventions
- Facilitates collaboration within and among multiple systems in system of care communities in effectively addressing the mental health needs of children and families

### HOW WE CAN HELP

A Child Welfare Resource Specialist is included as part of the TA Partnership through support by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families. The Child Welfare Resource Specialist assists funded systems of care sites in addressing the mental health needs of children and youth served by the child welfare system. The Child Welfare Resource Specialist supports system of care grantee communities in improving safety, permanency and well-being outcomes by:

- Increasing access to appropriate mental health services for children and families in the child welfare system
- Improving collaboration between the mental health and child welfare system
- Increasing use of evidence-based practices for children, youth, and families in the child welfare system
- Increasing family and youth engagement in decision-making and as partners in helping other families navigate the child welfare system

### Opportunities for Collaboration

State, local, Tribal and other publically supported child welfare agencies can contact the TA Partnership to learn from and build upon the successes of system of care communities. System of care communities can serve as a resource and share strategies for creating a system of care, a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that are organized to meet the individual challenges of children and youth in the community.

### Training and Technical Assistance

The Child Welfare Resource Specialist promotes system collaboration and practice changes to better address the mental health needs of children, youth, and families at risk of or involved in the child welfare system. The Child Welfare Resource Specialist can provide linkages with system of care communities to learn more about:

- Implementing systems of care
- Delivering family-driven, youth-guided, and culturally competent services
- Promoting collaboration between the mental health and child welfare systems

The TA Partnership website provides more information about currently funded system of care communities and technical assistance and resources for implementing a system of care for addressing the mental health needs of children and youth.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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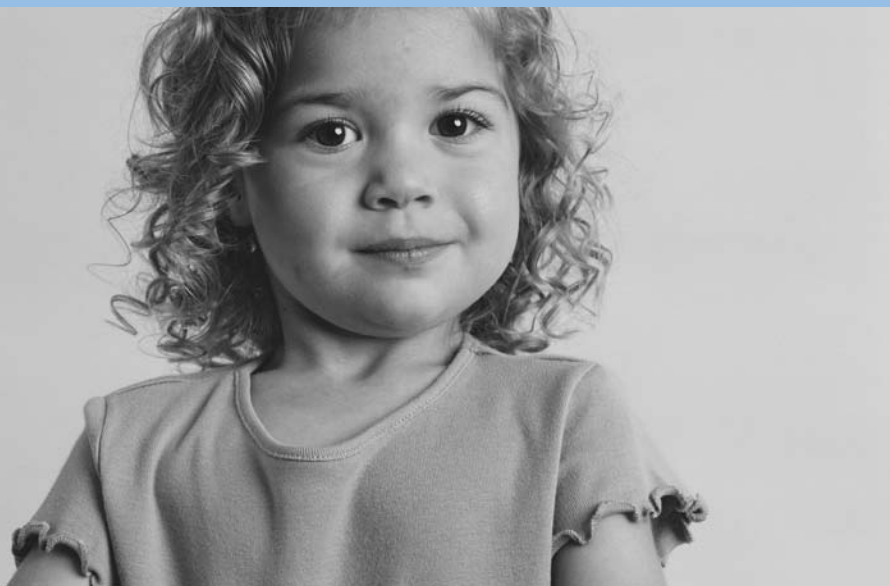
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# The Children's Bureau



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