

Family First - Programs and Service Array Workgroup (PSAWG)

Meeting Date: October 8, 2020 | 1:30 - 3:00 pm

Meeting Summary

Agenda:

- 1) Timeline/Re-Launch Review
- 2) National Perspective from Chapin Hall
- 3) Grounding workgroup in past progress

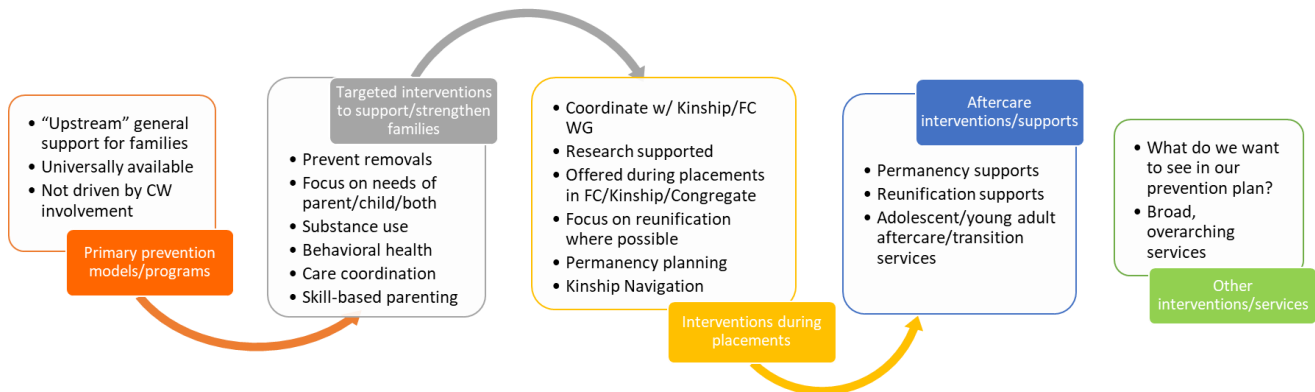
Welcome/Introductions:

- Dr. Elisabeth Cannata and Elizabeth Duryea introduced themselves as the co-leads for the workgroup.
- JoShonda Guerrier was introduced as one of the co-leads for the Family First planning process, as well as a co-lead for the Candidacy workgroup. Ken Mysogland is the other co-lead for Family First, but unfortunately, he was not able to make this meeting.
- Miranda Lynch and Olivia Wilks were introduced as Chapin Hall Policy Fellows. Miranda and Olivia serve as consultants throughout the process, providing research, expertise, and other resources to the Department.
- Elizabeth Duryea thanked the new members for joining the workgroup. She is excited to infuse thinking from other groups to this workgroup. The workgroup's last meeting was on March 5. At the time, the group was meeting on an aggressive schedule; she hopes the group will feel good about the progress made so far.
- Some ground rules:
 - This is a Zoom meeting, so please use the chat for questions. We will monitor the chat and address questions, but it will be easier to use the chat rather than unmuting.
 - Thanks to Chapin Hall for providing the Zoom room.
 - The co-leads preferred to record the meeting and asked the group if they had any objections to being recorded. There were no objections.
 - Elizabeth reviewed the goals of today's meeting: 1) Timeline/Re-Launch Review; 2) Hear the national perspective from Chapin Hall; and 3) Ground the workgroup in the past progress.
- At the last meeting on March 5, the workgroup worked on reviewing service alignment matching.
- Elizabeth noted that we have been keeping track of new members and there will be an orientation session on October 15 to review the past work and address any questions.

Workgroup Overview

- The Programs and Service Array workgroup kicked off on December 19, 2019. Their last meeting was on March 5, when COVID-19 disrupted the planning. The workgroup had six meetings that were three hours each. The meetings will now be 90 minutes. Much of the time was occupied by the mapping exercises, and the co-leads expect to spend less time at meetings now.

- Originally, the workgroup had around 70 members. It now has 104. These members are mostly made up of community partners, DCF staff, and representatives from other Departments.
- The deliverable for the workgroup is a candidacy plan/program recommendation.
 - April 2020 was the original target (the workgroup was two meetings away from this target).
 - December 2020 is the new (tentative) workgroup target
- Where We Started

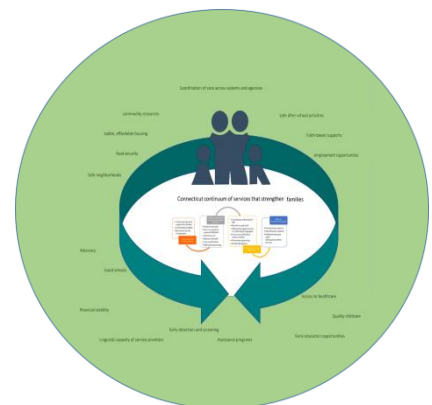
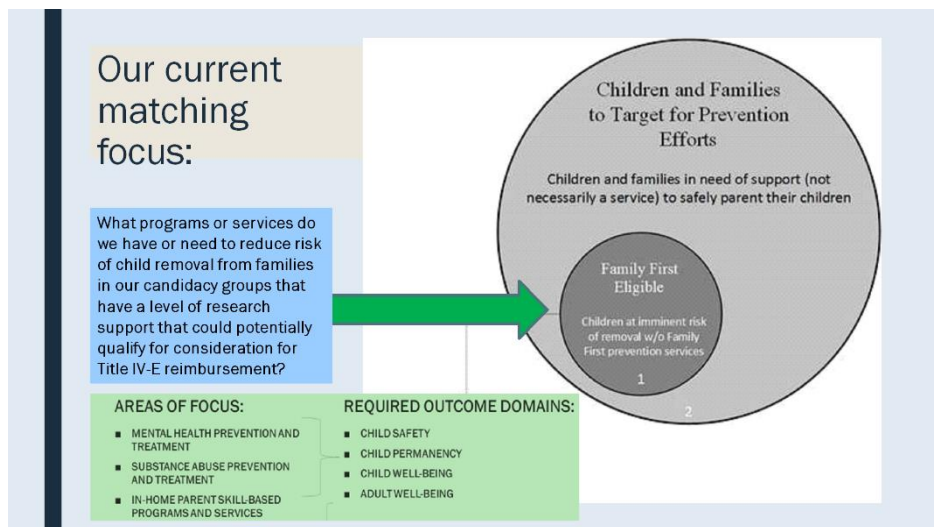


- In January, the workgroup started with the above diagram to visualize the continuum of services that strengthen families. At the time, there was no candidacy definition, so the workgroup began building momentum with identifying the related programs and services within the existing continuum in CT
- Overview of Workgroups
 - The Candidacy workgroup worked weekly on the definition, whose populations PSAWG would ultimately use to map services. After PSAWG maps services onto the populations identified by Candidacy, these service recommendations will go to the Governance committee for approval. Governance makes the final decisions on whether a recommendation is approved or if the workgroup will be asked to revisit a recommendation.
 - The "who" is done by Candidacy
 - The "what" is done by Programs and Service Array
 - The funding will be done by Fiscal and Revenue Enhancement
 - Meanwhile, the Kinship and Foster Care workgroup is focusing on how to leverage kin, further down the continuum (yellow box). They are focusing on expanding kin strength and access to services. They have only two more meetings to review and refine their recommendations, so they are in a good position.
 - The QRTP workgroup, who started later in the process and only had one meeting before the pause, will be building out the aftercare portion of the continuum (blue box). They have recently re-launched and are excited to continue.
 - The Governance Committee, as previously mentioned, will approve all recommendations.

- Two workgroups have been sunsetted, the Candidacy workgroup and the Community Partnerships workgroup. The Candidacy workgroup accomplished their work and finished the narrow and broad candidacy definitions. Community Partnerships realized there was a better way to allow community stakeholders to connect and provide direct, timely input.
- There is a new workgroup called Infrastructure Practice and Policy, which will focus on capacity building. They will determine how families will access these services and empower themselves *without* DCF involvement. DCF is the child welfare agency, but it is not meant to be the whole child welfare system.
- This workgroup aims to determine how we are ensuring that our recommendations and investments support our views on what is best for children. It will also look at how to bundle services together, while acknowledging that some parts of the continuum are better addressed by other workgroups.
- Phase I: Comprehensive Inventory - What programs and services do we have to strengthen families?
 - The workgroup completed a comprehensive inventory of services in Connecticut, including the name, level (statewide/region), and category (what it aims to address). The group has been building out this list since January.
- Before the Hiatus: Matching Programs and Services to Defined Candidacy Groups
 - Just before the hiatus, the group was examining the candidacy definitions, which were fairly broad. They mapped those definitions into the service continuum. The definition covers those who are vulnerable to coming into care. After sorting them into the continuum, the workgroup focused on mapping interventions onto these populations (this will be addressed more later).
 - The co-leads noted something key about Family First: Family First aims to shift IV-E funding, which normally reimburses the Department for services for youth in foster care, to cover preventative services that meet certain EBP standards. These standards are somewhat narrow, so the workgroup has needed to consider what models will meet candidates' needs so that these funds can be shifted from the back-end to the front-end. There may be some services that support families but do not necessarily align with the candidacy definitions - these can still be funded as part of the broader prevention plan, though not necessarily through Family First/IV-E.
- Breakout Groups: Jan/Feb 2020
 - The workgroup broke out into smaller interdisciplinary groups based on subject matter expertise. They worked to determine target needs and desired outcomes for the different populations, then matched services to populations based on those needs and outcomes.
 - During this process, they considered what aspects must be part of that service and what is meant to be achieved by that service. They considered all programs within Connecticut that may apply as well as programs in other states.
 - FFPSA has a clearinghouse of services that meet their standards, but they have not finished reviewing them all, so the workgroup included services that might be approved in the future.

- They considered the research base that the service has behind it as well as whether it has been previously vetted by a trusted group that rates EBPs.
- Research and Review: Feb/March
 - At this point in time, the workgroup began researching and reviewing the inventory according to a few required dimensions: What group would it apply to? What is its target population? What empirical support does it have? Is it approved by the federal clearinghouse? Does it have high evidence/meet standards? What outcomes does it generate? What are the provider requirements/how is it provided?
 - Family First funds are meant to address mental health prevention/treatment, substance use, and in-home parenting.
- Inventory Matched to Identified Needs: March
 - By March, the workgroup had a comprehensive and growing inventory of services. They began to look at cross-categories and compared each program and model with the difference candidacy groups. This information is tracked in a spreadsheet, which also includes the evidence level of the program. It is an opportunity to match programs/services to identified needs.

- Even if certain services will not work for Family First, this could be useful for the broader plan.
- It is important to continue considering the goal (see graphic)
- CT is building its Prevention Plan, a portion of which will address Family First. Right now, this narrow piece of the Plan is our focus (see small circle in diagram). We need to ask ourselves, what programs or services do we have or need to reduce the risk of removal that meet the level of research and support?
- We will then match those Family First models that meet the narrow expectations; however, we know that there are many other, larger needs that families have. Those needs lie in the broader circle of community support.



- What's Next? October 2020 and Beyond!
 - There are several "top tier" models that we need to consider, so the next phase will be "slicing and dicing" to organize and narrow down the programs.
 - The workgroup will put programs into the following categories:
 - Models that meet needs across multiple candidacy groups
 - Models that address needs most associated with child removal (that are "matchable" to a research-supported program or service)
 - Models that address needs that are often exclusionary from other programs or services or where there is a current gap that places families at risk of child removal if there is research-supported model addressing specialized need)
 - EBPs that could provide cross-system support
- Where We Are Picking Up
 - Review the expanded list of models classified on FFPSA Clearinghouse
 - Finalize review of all models identified by workgroup in Phase 1
 - Reduce potential programs and services list to models that meet or likely meet FFPSA Clearinghouse criteria
 - Workgroup to match reduced list of models to candidacy group needs or select models to recommend to governance body and fiscal workgroup for inclusion in FFPSA plan for Title IV-E reimbursement
 - Looking at current services that meet criteria, gaps in current service array, models that meet multiple Candidacy Group needs
 - May require interim guidance from fiscal workgroup leads and/or governance committee
 - Candidacy plan must focus on models that meet FFPSA level of empirical support
 - Elisabeth Cannata added that the workgroup will also update the spreadsheet to include more updated evidence levels.
 - The workgroup will first need to consider the dark circle (narrower candidacy plan) to determine what programs meet the empirical support for the federal clearinghouse. If things do not meet that standard, they can still be considered for the broad plan. As has been said, the Department wants to redefine its system and disinvest from removal. The first step is to focus on models that will meet the FFPSA requirements. Elisabeth did a review of EBPs at a previous meeting to give the group more information about EBP requirements.

National Context (Chapin Hall - Miranda Lynch and Olivia Wilks)

- Miranda Lynch explained that back in March, only about four states had approved Prevention Plans, but now there are nine (several have been approved in the past few weeks). Several states have been through this process already.
- Miranda reiterated that Family First (FFPSA) should be leveraged as a tool to support families.
- There is still not a large number of interventions listed on the federal clearinghouse, and those that are listed are somewhat limited in topic and outcomes. There is some frustration with the clearinghouse's pace; about 31 interventions have met the requirements, but many have not. Four states are considering doing their own review of

some programs. Another issue that was raised is whether the approved interventions have sufficient evidence of being culturally responsive. The Candidacy workgroup wanted additional supports meant to address the disparity between white kids and kids of color, and the Programs and Service Array workgroup looked at specific cultural needs - the interventions tend not to have evidence that they are appropriate/effective.

- Chapin Hall has worked with states to plan and implement their Prevention Plans. They stay in learning mode, recognizing that they can always benefit from more insight from others. They are ready to answer any questions that the workgroup may have.
- Elisabeth Cannata reminded the group that many models are still being approved, and Connecticut actually has many approved models already in place.

Next Steps

- Everyone is recommended to look at the Family First website, which contains meeting minutes from every workgroup, presentations, and information about the process. There is also a document that includes the latest states whose Prevention Plan has been submitted/approved; many of these plans are publicly available.
- On October 15, there will be an orientation over Zoom for new workgroup members from 1:30-2:30 pm.
- The workgroup's next meeting will be **October 22 from 1:30-3:00 pm**. We will review the charter and potentially update it. We will also continue to slice and dice the service array mapping by candidacy.
- The workgroup meets every two weeks, from 1:30-3:30 pm.
- Miranda Lynch added that the Children's Bureau had an open call for models that closed last week. It is not a particularly transparent process; one can see if a program is under review, but not where it is in the sequence. Programs are bumped up if they are included in a prevention plan. States will still have the ability to do a systematic review until next year, in which case the model goes to the top for review. Information about this is published.
- Elisabeth thanked Chapin Hall for their navigating the other plans; it is helpful to see other plans and consider how they could guide ours.
- Elisabeth reiterated that the expectations regarding outcomes and research design are very precise and may be influential on our design. Again, programs that do not fall under Family First could still be part of the broad plan.
- One person asked whether Child First has been approved, and Miranda answered that it has not and it is not on the queue, but other states have submitted it hoping it would be approved and there is a technical review happening in Colorado.
- Elisabeth said that for programs that have not been reviewed or are not on other clearinghouses, members should consider what research is available and the type that is available.
- Elisabeth said that they would recommend models with an evidence base to the Governance Committee.
- At this point, the workgroup reached its time for the day. The Co-Leads thanked JoShonda, Michael Williams, and Chapin Hall. They hoped that this meeting helped to ground the members, and they assured the group that future meetings will be more interactive.