
FAMILY CENTERED, NEIGHBORHOOD BASED PRACTICE OUTCOMES

We are committed to improving the results we achieve for the children and families involved in the child welfare system, including:

1. A reduction in the number and the rate of children being placed away from their birth families;
2. An increase in the number and rate of children who, when they come into foster care, are placed with families in their own neighborhoods or communities;
3. A reduction in the number of children served in institutional and group care and a shift of resources from group and institutional care to kinship care, family foster care, and family-centered services;
4. A decrease in the lengths of stay of children in placement;
5. An increase in the number and rate of children being reunified with their birth families;
6. A decrease in the number and rate of children re-entering placement;
7. A reduction in the number of placement moves experienced by children in care;
8. An increase in the number and proportion of brothers and sisters placed together;
9. A reduction in the disparities associated with race/ethnicity, gender, or age in each of the above outcomes.

FAMILY CENTERED, NEIGHBORHOOD BASED PRACTICE GOALS

In order to achieve these results, we are committed to pursuing the following goals:

1. Developing a network of family foster care that is more neighborhood-based, culturally sensitive, and located primarily in the communities in which the children currently live.
1. Assuring that all children who come into foster care, including teens and brother-and-sister groups, are routinely placed with families.
2. Increasing the number and quality of foster and kinship families to meet projected needs.
3. Providing the services needed by birth families and children in a timely enough manner that they can be safely reunited as soon as possible.
4. Better screening children being considered for removal from home, to determine what help a family needs to keep their children safe, to make that help available when it is most needed, and to better support the children who must be placed;
5. To involve birth parents, foster parents, and kinship families as team members with the agency and with one another;
6. To become a neighborhood resource for children and families, by investing in the capacity of communities where large numbers of families involved in the child welfare system live.

FAMILY CENTERED, NEIGHBORHOOD BASED PRACTICE STRATEGIES

In order to achieve these goals, we are committed to implementing four core strategies:

- Recruiting, Training, and Supporting Resource Families: Finding and maintaining resources who can support children and families (both foster and kinship) in their own neighborhoods;
- Building Community Partnerships: Partnering with a wide range of community organizations in the neighborhoods where referral rates to the child protection system are high; and working together to create an environment that supports families involved in the child welfare.
- Making Decisions as a Team: Involving not just foster parents and caseworkers, but also birth families and community members, in all placement decisions to ensure a network of support for the child and the adults who care for them.
- Becoming Self-Evaluating: Collecting and using hard data about child and family outcomes to find out where progress is being made and to show where change is needed.