

leading with  
evidence

APRIL 25, 2019

## Promoting Equitable Outcomes With the Family First Prevention Services Act

THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION





**Suzanne Barnard,  
The Annie E. Casey Foundation**

**Welcome and Overview**

# The Leading With Evidence Webinar Series



THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION



**William T. Grant**  
FOUNDATION

# Today's Presenters



**Alexandra Citrin**  
Center for the Study of  
Social Policy

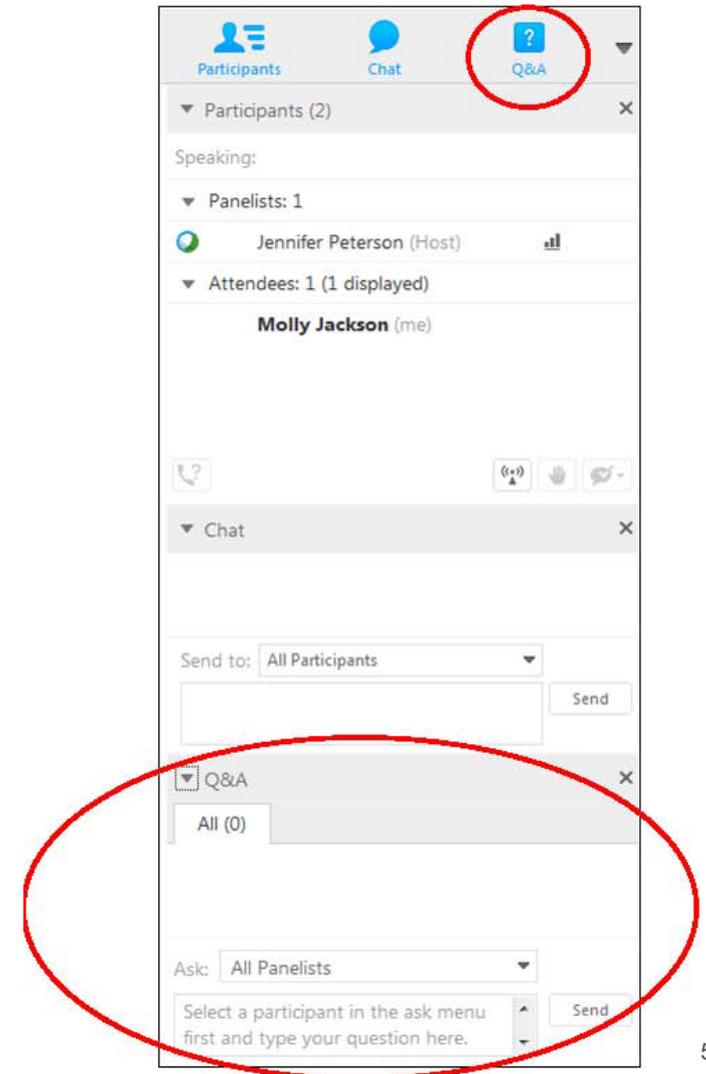


**Megan Martin**  
Center for the Study of  
Social Policy

# Communicating During the Webinar

**Communicate with us using the Q&A window at the right of the presentation window.**

- Type questions for the panel at any time during the webinar.
- Use the box to let us know if you are having technical difficulties.



# The Family First Act: A Tool for Advancing Equity

# The Family First Prevention Services Act

- Supports keeping children at home with their families when safe
- Promotes appropriate placements for youth who must enter foster care
- Prioritizes family-based placements
- Creates safeguards against placing children unnecessarily in congregate care
- Provides new model foster home licensing standards
- Extends Chafee services for youth in care



# Prevention Services



- **Eligibility:**

- Children who are candidates for foster care
- Parents and caregivers of children who are candidates
- Pregnant and parenting youth in foster care

- **Services:**

- Mental health, substance abuse, in-home parent skill-based programs

- **Evidence Criteria:**

- Well-supported, supported, promising
- Clearinghouse forthcoming
- Guidance for tribes operating IV-E systems



# Ensuring Appropriate Placements

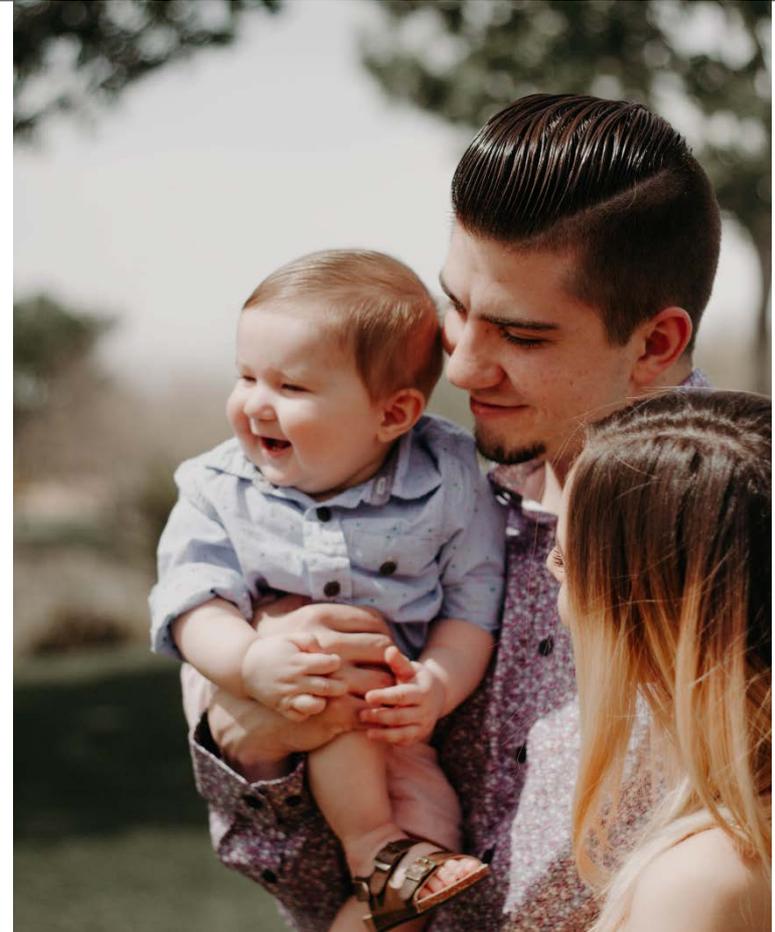


- **Promoting appropriate placements:**
  - Array of placements
  - Recruitment and retention of foster parents
  - Support for kin
  - Assessments of need
  - Judicial oversight
- **Qualified Residential Treatment Program requirements:**
  - Case planning, family engagement, accreditation, needs-based
- **Exclusions:**
  - Pregnant and parenting youth, Commercially Sexually Exploited Children and independent living programs



# The Family First Prevention Services Act

- Family First does not advance equity on its own
- States must be intentional about reducing existing disproportionalities and disparities
- States can prevent the hardwiring of new policy and processes that reinforce existing inequities
- Creates an opportunity to undo existing systemic and institutional racism



# How Family First Advances Equity



Engage the broader **community**



Develop an **array** of prevention services



Invest in growing the **evidence**



Reduce **disparities** in congregate care



# Engaging the Broader Community

# Engage the Broader Community

- Include **partner agencies** and **community stakeholders** to gain multiple perspectives about the needs of children and families
- Go beyond the usual suspects – engage child welfare staff at the **county and local level**



# Engage the Broader Community

- **Engage families**  
– those who have and have not participated in prevention services
- **Meaningfully include youth voice**



# Engage the Broader Community

- **Promote a shared investment** in developing the plan will also lead to shared accountability — ensuring that quality services are effectively implemented
- Find **mechanisms for transparency**



# Engaging Community: Colorado and Ohio



COLORADO



OHIO

- Created public-facing websites for transparency
- Created workgroups (and subcommittees) to engage non-child welfare employees



**Center for the  
Study of  
Social Policy**  
Ideas into Action

# Engaging Community: Washington, D.C.



- Conducted focus groups of parents who have received or are receiving prevention services
- Conducted focus groups of direct service providers



# Developing an Array of Prevention Services

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Develop a broad range of prevention services that can meet the unique needs of families

1

**Analyze data and disaggregate** by race, sexual orientation, gender identity, other needs.

2

Consider promising approaches that have a **strong fit** for your children and families.

3

**Include targeted services** for pregnant and parenting youth, post-reunification, guardianship and adoption.

# Developing an Array: Examples



- **Washington, D.C.:**
  - Including prevention programs that meet needs of community in proposed Title IV-E prevention plan



# Developing an Array: Examples



- **Allegheny County, Pennsylvania:**
  - Collects data on sexual orientation and gender identity
  - Regularly disaggregates data by race, sexual orientation and gender identity



# Investing in Growing the Evidence

# Invest in Growing the Evidence

**Only a small number of evidence-based programs have been normed on children and families disproportionately involved with child welfare – and for whom the greatest disparities exist**

- Identify local interventions that work to achieve positive outcomes for children and families
- Utilize maintenance of effort dollars (MOE) to support innovation
- Invest in communities of color implementing promising and effective approaches
- Look to tribes operating Title IV-E systems
- Look to National Quality Improvement Centers



# Invest in Growing the Evidence



- Maintenance of effort dollars (MOE):
  - New Title IV-E funding must *support and not supplant* existing investments in prevention.
  - Formula for each state
  - Unique opportunity for states to invest in innovation because there are no eligibility or evidence requirements for these dollars



# Reducing Disparities in Congregate Care

# Reduce Disparities in Congregate Care

- Implement foster parent **recruitment and retention strategies** for youth who are over-represented in congregate care, including LGBTQ youth, teenagers, youth with behavioral health needs and those who are expectant or parenting.
- Review your current foster family **licensing standards** and compare to the national standards.
- Invest in **targeted training** for foster parents.
- Provide **in-home support** for foster parents.



# Reduce Disparities in Congregate Care



- Develop guidance to reduce unintended consequences of placement of youth in more restrictive settings
- Ensure appropriate assessments of all youth in care to ensure safety while preventing bias from influencing placement decisions

# Reduce Disparities in Congregate Care: Example



- **Prince George's County, Maryland**
  - Working to design and implement training
  - All foster parents are required to take module



# Key Takeaways and Resources

# Key Takeaways

- 1. Implementation is key** to actively ensuring equity and preventing unintended consequences.
- 2. Equity isn't just an “add on.”** It must be core to implementation.
- 3. Intentionally focusing on equity** should help states better meet the mandates of Family First.



# Resources from CSSP

- *10 Ways to Advance Equity and Well-Being through FFPSA:* <https://cssp.org/resource/seizing-the-opportunity/>
- *Responsibly Defining Candidacy within the Context of FFPSA: Five Principles to Consider:* <https://cssp.org/resource/responsibly-defining-candidacy/>
- *FFPSA: Pregnant and Parenting Youth FAQs:* <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Family-First-FAQs.pdf>
- *Opportunities for Progress: Better Serving Families with Domestic Violence through FFPSA:* <https://cssp.org/resource/opportunities-for-progress-domestic-violence-ffpsa/>

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# Resources from CSSP

- *Out of the Shadows: Supporting LGBTQ Youth in Child Welfare through Cross-System Collaborations:* <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Out-of-the-Shadows-Supporting-LGBTQ-youth-in-child-welfare-through-cross-system-collaboration-web.pdf>
- *Achieving Racial Equity: Child Welfare Policy Strategies to Improve Outcomes for Children of Color:* <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/achieving-racial-equity-child-welfare-policy-strategies-improve-outcomes-children-color.pdf>
- *Expanding the Evidence Universe: Doing Better by Knowing More:* <https://cssp.org/resource/expanding-the-evidence-universe/>

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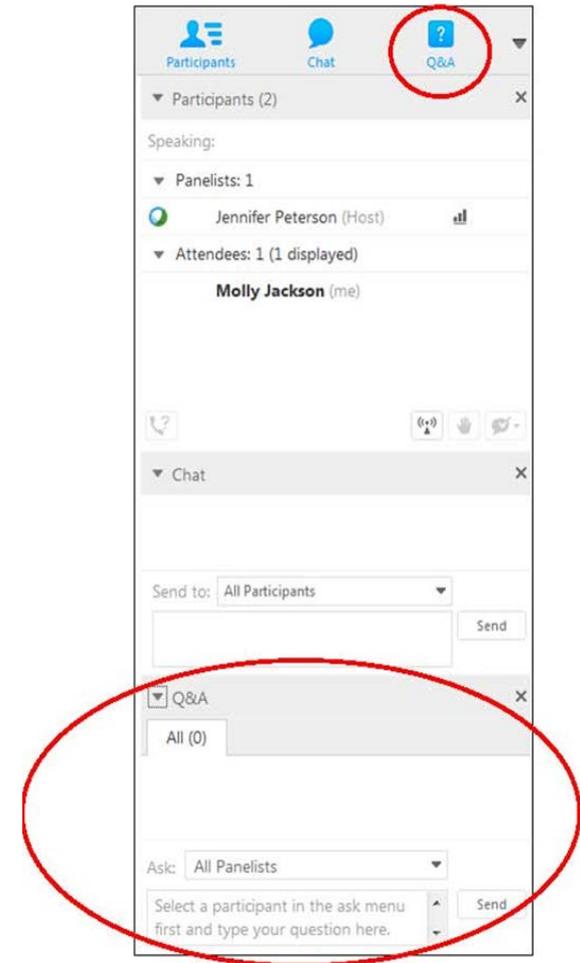
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# Questions?

Please use the Q&A function on your screen to submit questions.

A recording of this webinar will be sent to those who registered and posted at [www.aecf.org/webinar](http://www.aecf.org/webinar).



# The Leading With Evidence Webinar Series

## 2018 WEBINAR RECORDINGS

- *Bringing Evidence-Based Program Adaptations Into Child Welfare Systems*
  - <https://www.aecf.org/blog/watch-our-webinar-adapting-evidence-based-programs-in-child-welfare/>
- *Funding Evidence-Based Programs in Child Welfare: Implications of the Family First Act*
  - <https://www.aecf.org/blog/funding-evidence-based-programs-in-child-welfare-with-the-family-first/>
- *Assessing Readiness for Implementation: Using the Hexagon Tool*
  - <https://www.aecf.org/blog/webinar-assessing-readiness-for-implementation-with-the-hexagon-tool/>
- *Tools and Resources for Research-Practice Partnerships*
  - <https://www.aecf.org/blog/leveraging-research-practice-partnerships-to-support-the-work-of-child-welf/>

## COMING SOON

- Join us in July for *Six Fiscal Analysis Steps for Family First*. (Watch [aecf.org](https://www.aecf.org) for date and registration information.)

## THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

*Developing solutions to build a brighter future for children, families and communities*

[www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)