

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM LINKAGES: POLICY AND PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Keeping Families Out of the CW System	Intake and Investigations	Case Planning	In-Home Child Protective Services	Out-of-Home Care/ Permanency	Older Youth Exiting Foster Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modify mandated reporter training to add recognizing signs of parental/family stress and developmental concerns that can be addressed before abuse/neglect occurs.</li> <li>• Establish pathways for mandated reporters to link families to supports before a/n occurs.</li> <li>• Train ECE staff and incorporate Protective Factors and Strengthening Families strategies into early care and education programs.</li> <li>• Insure young parents with newborns have priority access to home visiting programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement <i>Differential Response</i> to create alternative pathways for families who may benefit from non-child welfare services.</li> <li>• Train CPS intake/ investigation staff and supervisors on skills to engage families.</li> <li>• Train CPS intake/ investigation workers and supervisors on developmental milestones, indicators of developmental delays, risk and protective factors.</li> <li>• Use community advocates to support families in investigations/ assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include ECE professionals on the child and family team for families with young children involved with child welfare.</li> <li>• Insure that children are assessed for developmental milestones, delays and effects of trauma as part of EPSDT screens or other assessments.</li> <li>• Require that child welfare case plans address developmental outcomes for children as well as issue of child safety and permanency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish priority linkage to Home Visiting Programs for families with infants and toddlers with child welfare cases.</li> <li>• Identify/utilize parent advocates to engage families and link them to traditional and non-traditional services and supports.</li> <li>• Establish easy referral process to child care subsidy programs to insure that young children are enrolled in high quality ECE.</li> <li>• Train child welfare workers/supervisors to understand early child development, developmental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require that EPSDT and medical screens assess for developmental milestones and effects of trauma.</li> <li>• Require all young children in placement to be enrolled in high quality ECE. Insure stability in ECE arrangement upon reunification.</li> <li>• Modify Kinship and Foster Parent training curriculum and protocols for assessing potential caregivers to include understanding the effects of trauma on child development, developmental milestones and strategies to build protective factors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a “two generation approach” to prepare youth for their own economic and social success and to be strong parents.</li> <li>• Insure that young adults in care have a comprehensive plan for educational achievement and economic success and stability as well as supports and services to meet their social and emotional well being needs.</li> </ul>

Keeping Families Out of the CW System	Intake and Investigations	Case Planning	In-Home Child Protective Services	Out-of-Home Care/ Permanency	Older Youth Exiting Foster Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train TANF staff on developmental needs of young children, protective factors and ways to engage families to link them to community based services and support.</li> <li>• Build community and legislative support for community-based Family Success/Family Support programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize family teaming at intake to assess comprehensively family strengths and needs in content of community and family supports.</li> <li>• Take immediate steps to link families to services to create safety including the provision of concrete supports (income, housing, jobs).</li> <li>• Establish clear referral path from intake for developmental assessment/early intervention as required by CAPTA for infants and toddlers.</li> <li>• Integrate the SF/Protective Factors framework into family preservation and early intervention contracts with CBO's and Community Collaboratives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include enrollment in high quality ECE in child welfare case plans.</li> <li>• Require that child welfare case plans include specific strategies to build protective factors in the family and address needs for concrete supports and family economic success.</li> </ul>	<p>milestones, effects of trauma on children and requirements for optional child development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insure that child welfare case plans include strategies to insure a family's economic success and stable housing.</li> <li>• Allow child welfare case plan activities to fulfill TANF work participant requirements or suspend TANF work participation until case plan is complete.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Family group conferences to promote nurturing relationships, increase parental knowledge of children and youth development and help families connect to other persons and networks of support while in foster care and upon reunification.</li> <li>• Require and insure frequent visitation between children and their parents, especially insuring that there is opportunity for developmentally appropriate contact for infants and toddlers (aim for daily contact in accessible locations that provide opportunities to address parenting practices and relationship building).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide youth with information and access to reproductive health care.</li> <li>• Adopt a special focus on pregnant and parenting teens (including fathers) to teach them about the importance of the parent-child relationship from birth, child development and developmental milestones and how to build protective factors in their families.</li> <li>• Insure home health visiting and enrollment in early head start or high quality child care for children of youth in or exiting foster care.</li> </ul>

Keeping Families Out of the CW System	Intake and Investigations	Case Planning	In-Home Child Protective Services	Out-of-Home Care/ Permanency	Older Youth Exiting Foster Care
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote family continuity through relative placement, placing siblings together and fostering extended family contact.</li> <li>Increase judicial understanding of child development and SF/Protective Factors framework and strategies which can be integrated in Court Orders.</li> <li>Through Child Welfare Quality Improvement activities (CFSRs, QSRs, and data tracking), track developmental and social and emotional well being outcomes for all children and youth in foster care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train foster parents and congregate care staff on strategies to promote protective factors in youth.</li> <li>Through Child Welfare Quality Improvement activities (CFSRs, QSRs and data tracking), track social and emotional well being outcomes for youth in and exiting foster care and outcomes related to educational and economic success.</li> </ul>