

# 2013 Three Branch Institute on Child Social and Emotional Well-Being

## Glossary of Terms and Key Concepts

### *General Child Welfare*

- ◆ **The Adoption Foster Care Analysis System (AFCARS):** Collects case-level information, twice yearly, from state and tribal title IV-E agencies on all children in foster care and those who have been adopted with title IV-E agency involvement. This includes demographic information on the foster child as well as the foster and adoptive parents, the number of placements and removals a child has experienced, and the current placement setting.
- ◆ **Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS):** A multi-purpose tool developed for children's services to support decision making, including level of care and service planning, to facilitate quality improvement initiatives, and to allow for the monitoring of outcomes of services.
- ◆ **Court Improvement Program (CIP):** A federal grant program administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth and Families. Enables the courts and agencies involved in the child welfare system to develop systemic, statewide changes to significantly improve the handling of child welfare cases while ensuring compliance with state and federal laws regarding child dependency and child welfare matters.
- ◆ **Differential Response:** Differential response is a CPS practice that allows for more than one method of initial response to reports of child abuse and neglect. Also called "dual track," "multiple track," or "alternative response," this approach recognizes variation in the nature of reports and the value of responding differently to different types of cases.
- ◆ **Evidence Based Programs (EBP):** Programs, procedures or tools that have proven effective in addressing a particular problem or condition. EBPs are often developed in academic or other controlled service environments, due in part to needed constraints imposed by research design and measurement protocols on referral criteria and concurrent interventions.
- ◆ **Family Group Decision-Making:** A family meeting model used by child protective services agencies to optimize family strengths in the planning process. This model brings the family, extended family, and others important in the family's life (e.g., friends, clergy, neighbors) together to make decisions regarding how best to ensure safety of the child.
- ◆ **Family Preservation Services:** Family preservation services are short-term, family-based services designed to assist families in crisis by improving parenting and family functioning while keeping children safe. These services build upon the conviction that many children can be safely protected and treated within their own homes when parents are provided with services and support and empowered to change their lives.
- ◆ **Permanency:** Permanency in child welfare means a legally permanent, nurturing family for every child. Child welfare professionals first focus on preserving families and preventing the need to place children outside of their homes. When children must be removed from their homes to ensure their safety, permanency planning efforts focus on returning them home as soon as is safely possible or placing them with another permanent family. Other permanent families may include adoptive families, guardians, or relatives who obtain legal custody.

- ◆ **Racial Disproportionality and Disparity:** The occurrence of population cohorts as over-or underrepresented in public child welfare relative to their proportion in the general population. Certain racial groups, such as African American and Native American children, are consistently overrepresented in public child welfare compared to their representation in the general population.
- ◆ **Reinvestment:** Reinvestment of savings, including savings from reduced foster care caseloads, into evidence based prevention and intervention programs designed to prevent the need for or reduce the duration of foster care placements.
- ◆ **Targeted Case Management:** A child-centered, family-driven and community-based service. Case managers conduct intake; coordinate comprehensive assessments of the child's strengths and needs; produce individualized support plans to address those needs, coordinate, advocate for and develop services identified in the plan; monitor the child's progress; and, evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of services.
- ◆ **Title IV-E Child Welfare Demonstration Waivers:** Projects are funded by the Children's Bureau and provide states with the opportunity to more flexibly use federal Title IV-E funds to test new service delivery and financing approaches to improve outcomes for children and families involved in the child welfare system. Using this option, states can design and demonstrate a wide range of approaches to reforming child welfare and improving outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being. The Children's Bureau may approve up to 10 projects per year in federal fiscal years 2012 to 2014. The following states were approved for 2012 waivers: Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.

## **Child Well-Being**

- ♦ **Behavioral Health:** A general term commonly used interchangeably with the term mental health. Includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being; determines how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.
- ♦ **Early and Periodic Diagnosis, Screening, and Assessment (EPSDT):** A standard Medicaid benefit for children. EPSDT ensures that children get appropriate screening, as well as medical, vision, hearing, and dental services to identify and treat any problems as soon as possible. Also includes mental health assessments and services. Because they are eligible for Medicaid, all children in foster care who are eligible for Title IV-E reimbursement are entitled to EPSDT.
- ♦ **Fee for Service:** Medicaid service delivery system where health care providers are paid for each service.
- ♦ **Impact of Maltreatment:** The impact of abuse and neglect on the short- and long-term health and well-being of children which can prevent children from developing the skills and capacities they need to be successful in the classroom, in the workplace, in their communities, and in interpersonal relationships. Maltreatment impacts include: (1) behavioral; (2) neurological, and (3) traumatic.
- ♦ **Health Home:** The Affordable Care Act created an optional Medicaid State Plan benefit for states to establish Health Homes to coordinate care for people with Medicaid who have chronic conditions, including behavioral health conditions. Health Home providers integrate and coordinate all primary, acute, behavioral health, and long-term services and supports to treat the whole person.
- ♦ **Managed Care:** A delivery system in which most Medicaid services are from a single managed care organization (MCO) under contract with the state, which provides health services on a prepayment basis, based either on cost or risk. Some states have enrolled their foster care populations into customized Medicaid managed care programs, specific to the needs of foster care children.
- ♦ **Psychotropic Medications:** Psychiatric medicines that alter chemical levels in the brain which impact mood and behavior. Antipsychotics, antidepressants, ADHD drugs, anti-anxiety medications and mood stabilizers are some of the more commonly used psychotropic drugs. According to a 2010 study of Medicaid enrolled children in 13 states, children in foster care, who represent only three percent of those covered by Medicaid, were prescribed antipsychotic medications at nearly nine times the rate of children enrolled in Medicaid who were not in foster care.
- ♦ **Functional Assessment:** Functional assessment is a central component of promoting social and emotional well-being for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. It is a holistic evaluation of child well-being and can be used to measure improvement in skill and competencies.

- ♦ **Trauma:** Trauma for children in foster care can result from exposure to abuse and neglect, removal from home, separation from families, placement in out-of-home care, school changes and change of peers. These traumatic events may lead to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a serious condition that can develop after a person has experienced or witnessed a traumatic or terrifying event in which serious physical harm occurred or was threatened.
- ♦ **Trauma Informed Approach:** An approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms, acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives, and is clinically appropriate and effective. As related to children in foster care, trauma-informed care may include: screening and assessments; interventions and supports; culturally competent strategies; family and youth engagement; and outcomes monitoring.
- ♦ **Well-Being:** Those skills, capacities, and characteristics that enable young people to understand and navigate their world in healthy, positive ways. The term is used to include a broad range of physical, cognitive, behavioral, emotional and social functioning. It is important to consider the overall well-being of children who have experienced abuse and neglect throughout their involvement with the child welfare system and after their case is closed. Because of the large proportion who have experienced trauma or who have behavioral health disabilities, focusing on the social and emotional aspects of well-being can significantly improve outcomes for .