

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND CHILD WELFARE: COLLABORATING FOR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

**COMING TOGETHER IS A BEGINNING; KEEPING TOGETHER IS PROGRESS;
WORKING TOGETHER IS SUCCESS.**

-- EDWARD EVERETT HALE

INTRODUCTION

The importance of working together to address the needs of children, youth, and their parents and caregivers, and to build strong families and communities is well established. Child welfare and other human services systems, as well as schools, early childhood organizations, health care providers, family resources centers, first responders, faith-based organizations, and businesses all have a role in creating safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments for children.

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), as amended by Public Law 111-320, is the key legislation that lays out the expectations of child abuse prevention and intervention services funded by the federal. CAPTA places a strong emphasis on interagency collaborations across child-serving systems. Child welfare, public health, mental health, juvenile justice, education, family support and strengthening, and other public and private systems are directed to work together to strengthen and support families.

There are unprecedented opportunities for collaboration between CBCAP leads and others whose work focuses on primary prevention and the child welfare system. The Children's Bureau within the Administration for Children, Youth and

Families (ACYF), emphasizes the reorientation of child welfare to focus on strengthening families through prevention at the community level and reducing the unnecessary removal of children from their homes. This vision includes a recognition that communities need to implement broad-based collaborative efforts to be effective.

In November 2018, the Administration of Children and Families released an Information Memorandum (IM) <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/im1805> that provides guidance to child welfare systems on reshaping child welfare in the United States to focus on strengthening families through primary prevention of child maltreatment and reducing unnecessary parent-child separation. The IM states: "The child welfare agency cannot and should not attempt to address primary prevention independently from the other critical agencies and organizations that support families and children. The child welfare agency should actively seek, engage, and sustain the involvement of leaders across the branches and levels of government responsible for operating child welfare systems in designing and implementing their jurisdictions' visions for serving children and families." (Administration of Children and Families, 2018)

While few would refute the importance of collaborating with others with shared interests,

there are often real challenges that can hamper effective collaboration. This brief features examples of successful collaborations between Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) state lead agencies (SLA), child welfare systems, and others working on behalf of children in their states to provide quality services that result in positive outcomes for children and families. The hope is that by sharing some of these successes, other jurisdictions will be encouraged to explore opportunities and develop ideas that enhance their collaborative networks and benefit their service populations

CHILD WELFARE AND CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION: IDENTIFYING COMMON GROUND

Child welfare systems are designed to provide a continuum of services to ensure children are safe and families have the necessary support to provide for their children's basic needs and overall wellbeing. The complex system is tasked with protecting children from further maltreatment, removing children from their homes when their families cannot keep them safe, reuniting children safely with their families, and finding permanent families for children who cannot safely return home. While child welfare systems' focus is on safety, permanency and wellbeing for children who have experienced maltreatment, at the heart of child welfare's purpose is to partner with and support families with the goal of preventing further maltreatment (tertiary prevention). While the focus and goals of the various levels of prevention can differ, there is a great deal of common ground pointing to opportunities for collaboration and possible integration of efforts between child welfare and prevention-focused organizations.

The purpose of primary prevention is to strengthen and support families to prevent child

abuse and neglect before it occurs. Secondary prevention efforts target children and families at greater risk for abuse and neglect. CBCAP funding supports primary and secondary prevention programs and services to build protective factors and achieve positive outcomes for children and families. These services may include parent education and support, respite care, housing, domestic violence and mental health supports, adult education, home visiting, and other similar services. Primary prevention includes not only promoting universal services, in which individuals can become involved to strengthen their own families, but also seeks changes across the social-ecological model. This can include efforts to build community capacity to adopt policies and practices that will strengthen families, promote optimal child development, and reduce the likelihood that child abuse and neglect will happen in the first place.

Child welfare and child prevention organizations are both guided by the belief that families are the primary providers for children and their needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members, and the communities in which they live.

The child welfare system's mandate is to protect the immediate safety of children. The allocation of resources this requires, and the public attention that it garners, can obscure the reality that the child protection system does indeed value keeping families intact when child safety can be maintained, and is interested in prevention. The compelling mandate for safety can limit opportunities to find common ground and for child welfare and prevention-focused organizations to work together to enhance supports for children and families and prevent child abuse and neglect. Increased collaboration between those in the community who see their focus as primary prevention and those who work

with the public child welfare agency can increase awareness and access to community-level services and resources, improving outcomes for all families.

Leaders are developing initiatives and building partnerships between diverse groups that focus on community-based initiatives that support parents and families. The Florida Institute for Child Welfare, as one example, has been creating opportunities for discussion, collaboration, and building common ground among key stakeholders.

The Florida Institute for Child Welfare headquartered at Florida State University hosted a two-day symposium in the spring of 2018 to identify effective strategies for overcoming barriers to collaboration. Speakers introduced collaborative approaches that invest in the wellness of vulnerable families through education and prevention. The research symposium asserted the need for child welfare agencies to engage in fully collaborative and cooperative relationships with the communities they serve. The Keynote presentations for the symposium describe research about collaborative cross-sector efforts to strengthen communities and keep children free from harm. The Keynote presentations on *Building Inter-agency Partnerships to Prevent Child Maltreatment and Heal Hurting Families* from Michigan State University's Dr. Sacha Klein, and *Look for the Helpers: How Strong Communities Keep Kids Safe* from the Kempe Center's Dr. Gary Melton, are available online at the institute's website. <https://ficw.fsu.edu/prevent>

Florida's symposium not only focused on the nuts and bolts of collaborative efforts between child welfare and community partners, but also discussed the components of effective collaboration and some barriers to achieving it. More detailed examples of collaboration involving SLAs and state child welfare systems begin on page 8.

COLLABORATION STRATEGIES

There are many benefits of collaborating. Collaboration promotes innovation. Working together can help ensure efforts and services are more efficient and effective. The sharing of resources and knowledge can make overwhelming tasks more manageable and fill gaps in technical expertise. However, there are also challenges to collaboration. Collaboration takes a devotion of time and resources that can be perceived as "extra" or additional work, as well as a commitment to working through potential conflicts to achieve a common goal.

Throughout the guide you will see boxes detailing the ten elements of collaboration found in the FRIENDS Collaboration Toolkit. Visit the FRIENDS website to learn more about each element.



There is a wealth of information and tools that aim to assure that collaboration is effective and time well-invested. A few are described below:

- Collective Impact (CI) is a structured approach to achieve social change. Many communities are using this framework to implement effective community-wide systems of support. CI was first developed by FSG, founded in 2000 by Harvard Business School Professor Michael E. Porter and author and researcher Mark Kramer, to help foundations create more effective strategies and impact beyond their grant dollars. They examined successful collaborations and identified five key elements: a common agenda, mutually reinforcing activities, a commitment to

shared measures, a strong backbone organization, and continuous communication that allows for a culture of collaboration. <https://collectiveimpactforum.org/what-collective-impact>

- The Collaboration Toolkit on the FRIENDS' National Center website builds on the key elements necessary for collective impact and identifies ten elements that can be applied to strengthen collaborative work. Hope, mindset, authenticity, rules of engagement and conflict are among the elements addressed in the Toolkit. See research, reading materials, assessment tools, and suggested activities for each of the ten elements in the FRIENDS' Collaboration Toolkit. Throughout this brief you will see a description of many of the elements from the Toolkit. <https://www.friendsnrc.org/activities-that-support-collaboration/collaboration-toolkit>
- Finally, the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) has tools and tactics for joining with others to work on collective goals. They outline strategies collectively called

“boundary spanning leadership”. Learn more about this concept and CCL at their website. <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/boundary-spanning-the-leadership-advantage/>

COLLABORATION AT WORK

The Children’s Bureau is committed to supporting states in adapting the current child welfare system so that it strengthens the resilience of families as a primary intervention and provides children what they need to thrive. Many states are working vigorously, prevention practitioners alongside child protection professionals and other invested stakeholders to facilitate that change.

Many CBCAP State Lead Agencies (SLA) are already effectively collaborating with child welfare agencies and local communities. A few examples of innovative and working collaboration follow.

HOPE

Is the belief that change can occur. Hope can inspire people to work together for a renewed interest and purpose to work toward a common goal.

4 Elements of Hope

- A leadership style can serve as an instrument for instilling hope by providing a vision that intrinsically motivates others.
- High-hope collaborators are able to think creatively about producing limitless pathways, getting others excited, and serving as an inspiration even in the face of fear, adversity, and risk.
- Hope is contagious. You can provide a sense of confidence that change really is possible on a broad scale.
- Bright spots can be a center of focus when attempting to instill and encourage hope.

Colorado

Those leading child abuse prevention efforts in Colorado had a vision for raising awareness about what individuals, families and communities could do to strengthen families and keep children safe. This included a resource that outlined the continuum of services available to families, from primary prevention to permanency for children placed in out-of-home care. The belief was that, if community members could envision this continuum, it would break down silos, invite community involvement, and promote increased collaboration.

To achieve this goal, the Office of Early Childhood (the state's CBCAP lead) was invited to join an effort to promote the state's first centralized child abuse reporting line, an effort they could have seen as outside their scope. An initial state investment of \$2 million dollars was used to launch an extensive public awareness campaign to spread the word about the new reporting line. The initial investment has been leveraged to attract private funds, and public funds from several state departments, which resulted in a comprehensive, multi-year collaborative effort to convey an integrated message. As the campaign progressed and the centralized reporting number became more engrained in the public's mindset, the focus then shifted to include raising awareness of family protective factors and the community's role in promoting them.

The accomplishments of this collaboration were embodied most visibly by the development of a website (www.CO4kids.org) which achieved the desired goal of illustrating the continuum of services that are available to the general public. The collaboration intentionally created CO4kids.org as a stand-alone website that was not embedded into the public system or any private agency website. This allowed members of the collaborative to be equally responsible in

creating content for the website. It also makes it more accessible to the broader audience that cares about the well-being of Colorado's children, including potential foster parents, volunteers, mandated reporters, professionals and parents themselves. The message is clear to every visitor to the website: everyone has a role in child abuse prevention, and this is the place to help you discover yours.

MINDSET

The frame of reference
one brings to the table.

The results of this collaborative effort are impressive. The website, which is the centerpiece of the state's campaign, has had more than 1 million views each year. The campaign has also met its goal of increasing awareness among the general public of their responsibility to report suspected child maltreatment. Prior to the launch it was estimated that 75% of reports of child abuse and neglect in Colorado came from mandatory reporters, 15% came from family members, and only 10% came from the general public. After just a few short years, there is now a more balanced reporting ratio between the general public and professionals mandated to report all concerns. There is hope that this increased awareness will help build community investment in assuring children's safety and wellbeing that prevention vigorously promotes. The CO4kids website also features information about the importance of building protective factors, opportunities for families to connect to family support programs, and the state's Framework for Action for Child Abuse Prevention for Coloradoans who might not otherwise be aware of these resources.

Two of the critical components of collaboration mentioned in the FRIENDS Collaboration Toolkit are evident in Colorado's collaboration between those working on behalf of children: **mindset** and **adaptability**. An open mindset offers greater receptivity to new opportunities and possibilities where others may see challenges and barriers. Adaptability allowed parties to see where their interests overlapped and facilitated their achieving more together than either might have done alone.

AUTHENTICITY

Being transparent and vulnerable with collaborative partners is a good predictor of client outcomes.

Delaware

One key to the success between the CBCAP SLA - Prevent Child Abuse Delaware (PCAD), and the child welfare agency - the Division of Family Services (DFS), is the length and strength of their relationship. (PCAD is a private non-profit organization and has served as Delaware's CBCAP state lead agency since 2003.) This relationship has developed over a long period of time and has been strengthened through mutual respect. Collaboration between the agencies happens on a number of DFS's initiatives and activities. PCAD is an integral part of the planning and decision-making process when working on joint projects.

DFS and PCAD share many priorities and see it as collective work. This includes PCAD's active participation in a DFS strategy called "Outcomes Matter", a far-reaching, collaborative effort to change agency practice. It resulted in a reduction of all entries into foster care, increased placement with kin, particularly for teens, and a steadying of repeat maltreatment.

This initiative resulted in PCAD taking on a role that one may not immediately think was aligned with the scope of an agency focused on prevention. PCAD is the DFS-contracted provider of preservice training for potential foster parents, and in-service training for licensed foster parents and kinship caregivers. Because PCAD works to assure that all families have the tools they need to be their strongest, they saw foster parent and kinship training as a natural fit within their scope of work. These caregivers learn to rely on family protective factors to cope with the particular challenges of caring for children who have experienced trauma, grief and loss, and managing the impact of parental substance misuse and other adverse experiences. PCAD leverages their expertise in prevention to support and strengthen the caregivers and their families. This assists DFS in assuring that these placements remain safe and stable. Preventing placement disruption also supports achievement of the DFS goal of decreasing the incidence of older teens entering foster care by providing kinship caregivers the tools they need to successfully maintain the youth in their homes.

Additionally, PCAD helped review DFS policy and procedures and a member of the PCAD staff co-chaired one of the workgroups that arose out of the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) after the state's Child and Family Services' Review (CFSR). The work of this committee has improved collaboration across all Delaware foster care agencies. The group works together to provide training and support to address the topic areas identified by foster parents. These efforts lead to more confident and skilled foster families. There is trust and authenticity to the relationship between these two agencies that has facilitated vulnerability, allowing for an openness to feedback from each other, even at moments when organizations often might "circle the wagons" and assume a more defensive stance.

The interdependent, collaborative relationship between Prevent Child Abuse Delaware and the Division of Family Services is emblematic of several of the elements detailed in the FRIENDS Collaboration Toolkit. The **trust**, **authenticity** and **adaptability**, which characterizes their integrated work, benefits the families and children of their state and undergirds many of the agencies' successes.

GEORGIA

Georgia is transforming itself into a State of Hope, community by community. Led by the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS), the *State of Hope (SOH)* initiative reflects the belief that communities have strengths and solutions to create safety-nets for families and children—safety-nets that will remove disparities in education, enable self-sufficiency, and prevent child abuse and neglect. Developed by the Office of Strategy, Innovation and Engagement of DFCS, the State of Hope initiative is supporting and nurturing diverse community collaborations in fifty-three (53) sites across the state.

The CBCAP lead agency, the Prevention and Community Support Section of DFCS, is part of this multi-system collaboration. CBCAP funds have been blended with other funding to provide seed-money—a one-time financial investment given to five (5) SOH sites as they design and cultivate family-centered support systems in the following areas:

- **Education** – improving the educational attainment of vulnerable youth, most importantly the graduation rates of youth in foster care,
- **Trauma-Informed** – increasing the awareness of trauma informed practices, the impact of trauma and how to mitigate its impact,
- **Quality Caregiving** – improving the quality of caregiving across a continuum including, but not limited to, birth parents, kin caregivers,

foster/adoptive parents, and the larger caregiver community, and

- **Economic Self-sufficiency** – strengthening and supporting individuals and families on their path toward independence.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Helps to establish parameters that generally go unspoken for how partners will work together. Having clarity about these rules increases authenticity and buy-in.

The strength of State of Hope's mission is so compelling that although only five (5) sites received seed-money, fifty-three (53) communities moved forward as State of Hope sites, also referred to as the SOH Ecosystem. The SOH Ecosystem is a network where the sites connect, learn and collaborate to create family-centered support systems. The Ecosystem sites base their activities on identified strengths and priorities in their communities. Collaborators are made up of nonprofits, philanthropies, government, businesses, and individual citizens who believe they can individually and collectively create hopeful environments that improve outcomes for children and families. Georgia CBCAP supports the SOH Ecosystem by providing prevention related information, training and funding opportunities to the sites.

The *State of Hope initiative* builds off the Communities of Hope concept started by Casey Family Programs (<https://www.casey.org/tag/2020-building-communities-of-hope/>) and the work of the Northwest Georgia System of Care Advisory Council (SOC) and the Northwest Georgia Region

of Hope. To learn more about Georgia’s State of Hope Initiative, visit the State of Hope website, <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/state-hope>.

Additionally, the CBCAP Lead Agency has recently launched *Building a State of Hope*, a statewide child abuse prevention campaign. Georgia’s State of Hope initiative is part of this larger movement that aims to motivate all Georgians to play a role in helping prevent child abuse and neglect for the well-being of everyone in their community. To learn more about *Building a State of Hope*, visit the website at www.belongingforhope.org/.

CONFLICT

Productive conflict is sometimes the most effective way to make progress.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Like many states, there are several entities working on behalf of families and children in New Hampshire. New Hampshire Children’s Trust - NH’s CBCAP lead, Family Support NH -the statewide network of family support and strengthening programs, and Spark NH - the state’s early childhood advisory council, are some of the programs working closely with, but are not part of, the public health and human services agencies. Even the public systems within the state’s Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), including the Division of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), (which encompasses child protection and juvenile justice), and the Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) (where Maternal and Child Health services are housed), have worked on common interests, but these services have not always been optimally integrated.

Recently, however, these entities and others have recognized each others’ work as, what Collective Impact calls, “mutually reinforcing activities.”

In 2016, an independent consultant conducted a quality assurance review of the NH child welfare system. As a result of this review, the NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) called for a system-wide transformation of how New Hampshire serves children and families. Some goals of the transformation included strengthening the workforce; fortifying the division’s bonds with stakeholders, including community partners also working on behalf of children and families; assuring children and families have the supports necessary to prevent maltreatment from occurring in the first place; and constructing enhanced safety approaches along with stakeholders.

New leadership in DHHS is spearheading the effort, which included forming an interagency team to help guide the work. This Interagency Team (IAT) of the Child Welfare Systems Transformation (CWST) is focused on three key areas: 1. Collective System Advocacy, 2. Strategic Consultation, and 3. Shared Accountability for outcomes. The IAT is made up of individuals representing several public and private entities working on behalf of children and families in New Hampshire, including schools, police, attorney general’s office, Office of Child Advocate, public health and many others. Those involved in the work, including the CBCAP lead, NH Children’s Trust, and others from public and private agencies, immediately recognized a difference from past invitations to collaborate with DCYF, where they tended to be involved later in the process, primarily to elicit feedback or to be informed about initiatives in their final stages. During the CWST effort, DHHS explicitly included diverse stakeholders from the outset to conceive and co-create the transformation with them.

There are also subcommittees working on specific elements of the system transformation including a workgroup on maltreatment prevention. This subcommittee has brought together the CBCAP state lead, the state's family support and strengthening network and other organizations working on behalf of families and children with DPHS and DCYF to explore ways DHHS can shift its focus more toward primary and secondary prevention. This has created a forum where the activities and priorities that stakeholders have been working on individually can be leveraged for collective impact.

One result has been the adoption of a shared focus on social determinants of health and an effort to impact all levels of the social ecological model, not just the individual and family level. This shift to a more public health, prevention-oriented lens has provided more common ground on which to collaborate. The effort has intentionally adopted the Boundary Spanning Leadership Framework (Center for Creative Leadership) in partnership with the Association of State and Territorial Health Organizations (ASTHO) to inform and maximize the benefits of their collaboration.

Efforts by the team to plan and advocate, while moving to action when the time is right, show up in several of the components of collaboration mentioned in the FRIENDS Collaboration Toolkit. The preparing, conceiving and advocating exemplified **hope** that change could occur. This, along with the adoption of the Boundary Spanning Leadership framework, reflects an **intentionality** to the collaborative work. While advocates and collaborators shared many common interests, addressing some priorities took a degree of **adaptability**, as opportunities arose that perhaps were not exactly what was originally conceived. New Hampshire's child and

family serving community is making a concerted effort to come out of silos and work together.

INTENTIONALITY

Being purposeful and deliberate can attract others to want to connect.

OREGON

Oregon's governor directed all state agencies to develop and implement systems' transformations at the state level in the areas of poverty, employment, health and child well-being agencies. As a result, all divisions within the Department of Human Services (DHS) began to collaborate and strategize on how best to promote family stability and provide a strong framework for moving adults into jobs and families out of poverty. The concept for the Family Support and Connections (FS&C) program is a direct result of intra-agency, cross-program collaboration. Oregon's analysis of point in time data showed that 30.1% of children involved with the child welfare system and remaining in their homes were members of families receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). With such an overlap in families served, the value of collaborating was clear. Working together could improve the effectiveness of services in both systems, meaning better outcomes for families.

FS&C is funded in part with CBCAP funds. Families who are receiving TANF and have identified risk indicators for child abuse or neglect meet the requirements for entry into the FS&C program. The program uses a strength-based and trauma-informed case management style to develop

partnerships with families. This approach combines best practices in family strengthening and joint case planning. FS&C is available statewide in each of Oregon's 36 counties and open to all citizens who qualify, including tribal members. Helping communities to safely keep children and families intact and to prevent the need for public assistance in future generations, the FS & C program provides culturally sensitive services, which include home visiting, individualized interventions, emergency services, and connections to other community-based organizations. Program brochures are available in three languages in addition to English: Vietnamese, Russian and Spanish.

LIKEABILITY

The attitude and approach one brings to collaborative work.

DHS embraces a continuous improvement process through local FS&C and statewide Advisory Committees. Comprised of administrative staff and program management at both the local agency and community level, action planning is ongoing so that the collaborative ensures outcome accountability through strong evaluation, implementation and tracking mechanisms. Using data analysis and predictive analytics, a collaborative workgroup recommended the priority list of family factors associated with potential child abuse and neglect to guide appropriate program referrals.

The state CBCAP steering committee, consisting of local program coordinators, contracted prevention service providers, and parents who were program participants, has informed

program modifications and training needs. Self-Sufficiency program staff, child welfare program staff and the contracted providers involved in providing FS&C services have all been involved in cross- focusing on relevant topics (i.e. ACES, resilience, domestic violence, child sexual abuse prevention, equity, social determinants of health, and the Strengthening Families Framework, etc.) for all partners connected to FS&C. This has enhanced collaboration and services to the families involved in the program. Feedback from program participants and other continuous quality improvement efforts have also identified ways to enhance the program.

Program modifications have included revision of the TANF referral form to include risk factors so that it could be used as a tool to increase the appropriateness of referrals to prevention services programs in each local area. This cross-system reflection on practice has also resulted in easier coordination of services, to include established, high-quality early education programs; developmental screenings; immunizations and well-child care; and kindergarten readiness resources.

Through the Family Support and Connections program, Oregon has improved system alignment and better equipped staff from two systems to meet the needs of families by building on their strengths better than either system could have done alone.

WASHINGTON

Collaboration within Washington state has focused on capacity building, sustainability and listening to the voices of parents and families. In 2018, Washington established a Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), which integrated several departments that served children, including Strengthening Families, the

CBCAP state lead. The department was established after the governor appointed a Blue-

Ribbon Commission to recommend an organizational structure for a department focused solely on children and families. At the very heart of the creation of this new department was better collaboration, integration, and alignment of child abuse and neglect prevention services and activities within the child welfare system. The CBCAP state lead served as a subject matter expert on the integration of prevention services in the new department. The Blue Ribbon Commission’s report, “Improving the Well-Being of Washington State’s Children, Youth and Families” outlined eleven findings and recommendations https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/BRCCF_FinalReport.pdf. Three of the eleven findings and recommendations focused on increasing collaboration between programs within DCYF:

- ***State services are not currently organized in a way that achieves the best outcomes for children, youth, and families.*** There should be a single department whose mission is centered on child safety, early learning, and the social, emotional and physical well-being of children, youth and families.
- ***Parents and families who are facing challenges must be offered needed and appropriate services earlier to improve the healthy development of children and youth, protect them from harm, and disrupt multigenerational trauma.***
- ***We should use this opportunity to improve the effectiveness of how and when services are delivered, with a much greater focus on prevention and recognition of the importance of caregiving to***

healthy brain development. What we know about the importance of stable, nurturing relationships for children...must be incorporated into the practice model for early learning, child welfare and juvenile justice, including the courts.

These three recommendations are all being addressed with the development of a single department centered on healthy children (DCYF), established in 2018. As part of this effort, Strengthening Families Washington has focused on promoting an understanding of early brain development in order to build staff capacity and maximize the impact of this knowledge for internal and external child and family serving partners. These partners have included the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Department of Social and Health Services (mental health, adult services, child support and TANF), and the Department of Health (DOH).

ADAPTABILITY

Seeing change as an opportunity.

The Blue-Ribbon Commission report further includes specific scenarios to illustrate how enhanced alignment of programming will benefit families (see Table 1 below).

What Alignment and Integration Will Look Like

Scenario	Currently	Aligned and Integrated looks like....	What would be different?*
Mom coming in with a baby to receive WIC	WIC services provided with the potential of linkages to other services as needs present themselves	Proactively assessing for additional needs and providing access and linkage to meet those needs and also identifying if mom is a Native American/member of a Tribe (example – a depression screening and related protocol to offer assistance if the mom needs other supports and services wherever she lives and that she can access immediately and easily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternal depression would be identified and addressed early on, preventing serious negative impacts on baby. • Appropriate supports are identified that are accessible, portable, and voluntary • Joint case planning when appropriate with ability to leverage and access partner agency’s case management and data systems to promote a seamless approach to the service experience

(Washington State Blue Ribbon Commission on the Delivery of Services to Children and Families, 2016, p. 71)

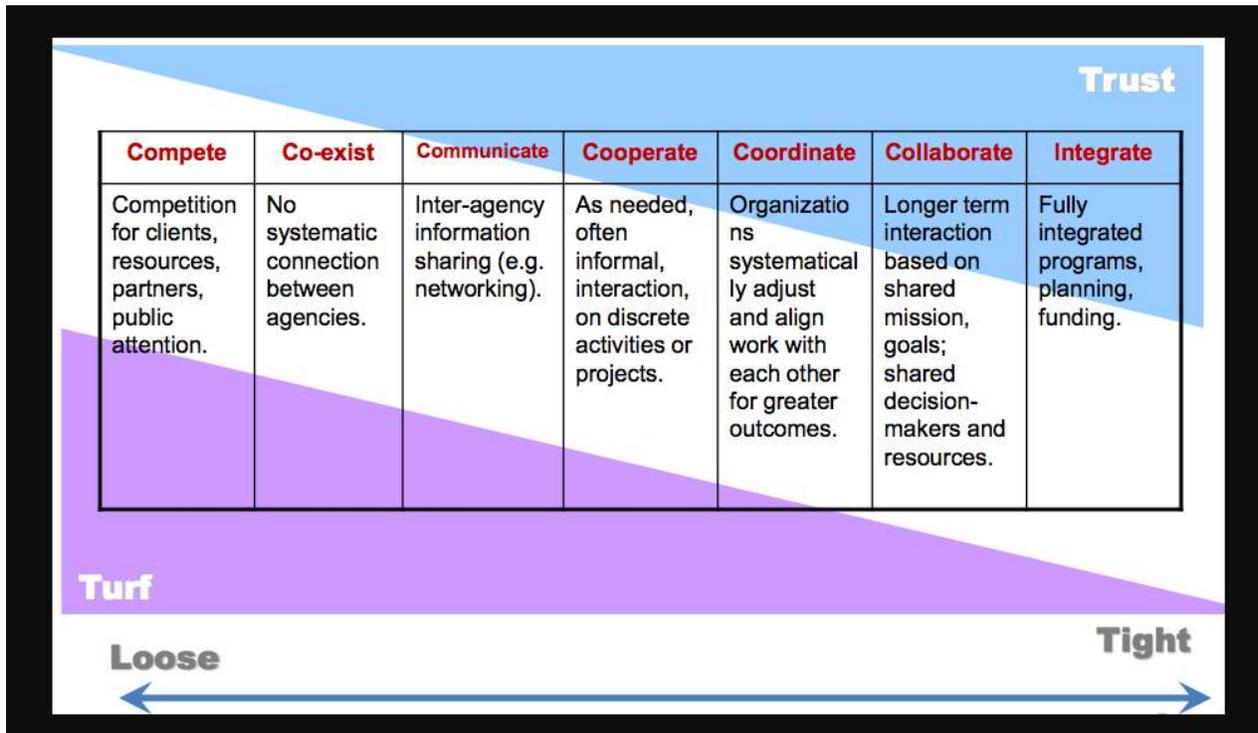
Additional collaborative efforts to enhance services for families include ongoing work with *Child Abuse Prevention and Child Welfare: Collaborating for Creative Solutions*

Tribal communities to implement home visiting and other local CBCAP programs serving American

Indian/Alaska Native families, which is evidence of their commitment to community engagement. Funded programs and services focus on eliminating disparities in outcomes for families based on race and socioeconomic status.

Washington’s changes are relatively new, but the state has made significant progress already and continues to demonstrate and seek out new and innovative ways to better serve children, youth and families.

CONCLUSION



(The Tamarack Institute, 2017)

Collaboration can be inspired by a leadership directive, new opportunities, or recognition of overlapping interests. Many thought leaders on collaboration discuss it as existing on a continuum of collaboration strategies, including acknowledging that as participants move along the continuum, claims to “turf” decrease, while trust increases. While few working on behalf of children would ever say they are doing it alone, the degree to which one is working with others is helpful to understand along this continuum. It can be a helpful tool for participants who are collaborating to come to a shared understanding of the purpose of their work, as well as for participants to assess their level of commitment and interest before entering into collaborative work.

some examples demonstrating multiple strategies. Delaware, for example, has worked across systems for several years and is probably closer to integrating efforts, as displayed on the far-right end of the continuum. Integration is characterized by jointly working towards shared goals and seeing the priorities of the work as one’s own, rather than just being involved in each other’s work.

Several themes emerged in the states’ examples, which point out characteristics detailed in the collaboration continuum as well as the elements described in the FRIENDS toolkit for collaboration. All of the states featured maintain an open mindset regarding the scope of their work and where there were possibilities of overlap between the work of the CBCAP state lead agency and

The examples shared in this brief, all demonstrate strategies at the right end of the continuum, with

TRUST

The very foundation
of a productive relationship.

others working on behalf of children and families in their state. This mindset fostered possibilities of moving from just coordinating to collaborating. In the New Hampshire and Oregon examples, the programs were intentional about using data to illustrate a need, which spurred leadership directives to expand reach and scope of their initiatives to improve access and support for the children and families of these states.

The CBCAP state lead agencies and other prevention-focused agencies in Delaware and Washington have long-standing relationships with their peers in child welfare, which has created trust and opportunities to partner in areas that might not immediately be seen as the purview of a prevention agency. This included leading foster parent training (Delaware) and serving as subject matter experts in strategic planning and system change efforts by the child welfare agency (Delaware and Washington).

The element that is perhaps most ubiquitous in the state examples, and maybe in any successful change effort is hope. The FRIENDS' Toolkit states: "When you have high hope, you not only believe that the future can be different, but also have the ability to do something about it." (FRIENDS National Resource Center, n.d.)

Since the 1940's, when Hugh Leavell and E. Guerney Clark from the Harvard and Columbia University Schools of Public Health first coined the term, primary prevention, preventionists have advocated for policy and social changes that strengthen individuals and families. The examples included in this brief feature the work of prevention and child welfare practitioners, and others, who are redesigning systems, programs, and initiatives. The states featured and others are working together with a sense of hope and a focus on strengthening families and communities to assure safe, stable nurturing relationships for children. (Cohen, Chavez, & Chemini, 2010)

The Children's Bureau's vision to reorient child welfare to focus on strengthening families through prevention at the community level, points to opportunities only increasing for CBCAP leads to coordinate, collaborate and even integrate their work with systems, organizations, individuals, and communities to achieve common goals.

INFORMAL RELATIONSHIPS

True connections with others leads to
solutions that you never imagined were
possible.

RESOURCES

- Administration for Children and Families. (2018, March 6). *Current CBCAP Program Instruction*. Retrieved from FRIENDS National Resource Center: <https://friendsnrc.org/current-cbcap-program-instruction>
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