



## Values and Principles – Prevention Mindset Institute

FRIENDS has convened national experts in prevention, including Action4Child Protection, the Children’s Trust Fund Alliance, Mining for Gold, the Prevention Institute, and FRIENDS’ Parent Advisory Council to join with six teams from states who are leaders in work to develop ambitious and promising strategies for a new kind of child welfare system. The state teams are comprised of CBCAP state agency leads, state child welfare leadership, and other state partners. Together this group forms the Prevention Mindset Institute (PMI). The group will convene virtually and in person over the next year to support and influence efforts towards building a child wellbeing system that focuses on engaging with families in order to identify and provide supports that strengthen them and their communities.

PMI participants recognize that a clear set of values and principles illustrate what is important to a group of people and their mission. Values convey the beliefs participants share as they embark on this work. Principles are those crucial concepts and actions essential for moving the work forward guided by our values. Together, they provide critical information for bringing others into the collaboration, navigating conflicts, and remaining focused on outcomes.

Prevention Mindset Institute participants articulate these values and principles for building a new system:

### VALUES

- **Families are the experts** of their own experience. Children are best cared for in their own families with resources and supports accessible, as needed, to remain safely intact.
- **Respect** that learning and knowledge comes from a variety of methods and sources, both empirical and experiential, and there is equal value in both.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** of historically marginalized groups must be at the heart of the work. Diversity is defined broadly to include all aspects of identity including race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and ability.
- **Listening** more than talking is a key component of effective and meaningful change.
- **Trust** both in the good intentions of those who have declared a commitment to the work; and acknowledgement that there is work to do to rebuild trust in many communities.
- **Optimism:** Change is possible.
- **Humility:** Seek and be open to learning that may result in our own mindset shifts.
- **Steadfastness:** We are committed to long-term sustainable mindset shifts and systems change, even when situations demanding immediate response may momentarily slow the broader commitment to change.
- **Patience:** Change does not come quickly.
- **Persistence:** We are trying to shift entrenched beliefs and recognize that the old way of doing things may not be optimal.
- **Creativity:** We are willing to consider actions we may not have tried before and are open to experiencing the learning opportunities provided when we don’t get the results we intended.

- **Collaboration:** Pooling our knowledge, leveraging our differences, and co-creating the definition of success will bring about better results, than any of us could achieve alone.

## PRINCIPLES

- **Primary Prevention:** Utilizing a public health approach to identify the supports, policies, and structures in communities that help families be their strongest. All families should have access to the resources and supports that enhance the social determinants of health and historically marginalized groups should have a voice in community planning efforts.
- **Courageous Honesty:** Listening deeply to other perspectives about our work and needed changes in our systems.
- **Inclusion:** Including the voices of those who will be most impacted by the change, especially caregivers and youth who have been involved in the systems we seek to change. This means sharing power, resources and information, and using language that is easily understood and accessible.
- **Investing Time:** Investing time to come to shared understanding of key terms and concepts.
- **Data Driven:** Integrating evaluation of our efforts from the beginning so that we can clearly identify our successes and what needs modification.
- **Flexibility:** Knowing that the work must be dynamic, we are intentional, reflective, and willing to make changes when our analysis of the data or our partners' perspectives on the data indicates we should.
- **Commitment to Racial Justice:** Recognizing that in the child-serving system there are disparities in experience, how individual families are treated, and outcomes of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color. A mindset shift must have equity and racial justice at the center; this will be facilitated, in part, by equitable inclusion of representative perspectives.
- **Trauma-Informed:** Integrating our knowledge about the impact of trauma, we actively resist retraumatization, and support actions and programs that promote healing.
- **Reduce Stigma:** Acknowledging that a barrier to families seeking support sooner is the stigma associated with asking for help. We see reducing this stigma as a component of our work.
- **Contribution to a growing body of work:** Articulating our lessons learned not only to benefit the states participating in the Institute but to contribute to the growing body of work transforming child welfare systems into child wellbeing systems.

## References for what shared values and principles offer to systems change collaboratives and organizations:

Hsieh, Tony. (May 24, 2010). *How Zappos Infuses Culture Using Core Values*. Harvard Business Review.

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