CFSR Round 4: Stakeholder Engagement

MEANINGFUL STRATEGIES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

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Children’s Bureau Presenters

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Purpose

• Provide states with ideas, and resources to support their efforts with child welfare system partners/stakeholders throughout the CFSR process
POLLS
Lessons Learned

**Group 1**
- Young persons with lived experience and experience working alongside federal staff to provide assistance to state and evaluate state programs.

**Group 2**
- Young persons with lived experience recruited from national organizations to provide alternate perspectives that are not informed by experience partnering with federal staff on monitoring efforts.
Reflections of Lessons Learned

• “Young people [young adult consultants] need to know what the ramifications are to taking part in a review. Knowing what tangible results might stem from playing a crucial part in a review.”

• “I like the idea of having a young person [young adult] with lived expertise co-facilitate case-related interviews with young people. I think having that ally presence in the room for those interviews could be very empowering for both parties.”

• “Youth should be involved in all areas and not so much with an emphasis on any but representation at all levels at the discretion of the youth. There are plenty willing to give input in an area they are interested in given prep and support.”

• “[Provide] a clear understanding of how their feedback will be used and acted on. Sometimes it feels like feedback from young people is ‘heard’ but then never used/acted on.”
CB Expectations for Stakeholder Involvement in the CFSR
Guiding Principles/Foundations for Including Family Voice in the CFSR

Families and Youth are our best source of information

Shared decision-making and planning approaches increase engagement

Empowering Youth & Families to make critical decisions in their lives
CFSRs Promote Shared Responsibility and Collaboration
Improving System Performance

- Family-centered
- Community-based

Improved Outcomes
Approaches to Collaboration

FOCUS GROUPS

SURVEYS

JOINT PLANNING FORUMS
Stakeholders With Lived Experience

- Youth
- Parents & Caregivers
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Benefits to Organizations</th>
<th>Benefits to Young People</th>
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<tr>
<td>Involves young people in program evaluation for better results</td>
<td>Supports resiliency, autonomy, and well-being</td>
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<td>Encourages comprehensive understanding of young people and their changing needs in “real time”</td>
<td>Teaches young people how to take initiative, and builds accountability</td>
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<td>Utilizes young peoples’ knowledge and insights to promote developmentally appropriate services</td>
<td>Empowers young people to advocate for themselves</td>
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<td>Improves an organization’s cultural responsiveness</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for leadership, critical thinking, decision-making, and community engagement</td>
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<td>Creates youth buy-in; increases retention and engagement in services</td>
<td>Encourages young people to build professional skills in a professional environment</td>
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How States Can Operationalize Youth Voice in Round 4

- Canvass: Canvass the Voices of Youth
- Recruit: Recruit Young People with Lived Experience
- Work: Work with Young People During Multiple Aspects of the CFSR
Polls
## What We Know About Parent/Caregiver Voice

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<th>Benefits To Organizations</th>
<th>Benefits To Parents/Caregivers</th>
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<td>Improved Child Welfare Outcomes</td>
<td>Key Partners in Decision-Making</td>
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<td>Enables organizations to effectively design and deliver services that best meet the needs of children and families who are accessing their services</td>
<td>Motivation to improve parental protective capacities</td>
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<td>Improved policy perspectives</td>
<td>Empowers parents/caregivers to take initiative and builds accountability</td>
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<td>Drives sustained collaboration of a broad range of stakeholders</td>
<td>Builds long-term strengths, skills, and capacity to engage with other systems</td>
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Operationalizing Parent/Caregiver Voice in Round 4

**IDENTIFY**
Identify Parent Groups in Jurisdiction

**OFFER**
Offer a Variety of Opportunities to Include Parent/Caregiver Voice

**ENGAGE**
Engage Parents and Caregivers in Ways That are Respectful of Their Lives and Circumstances
Other Considerations for Engaging Both Youth and Parents & Caregivers

- Supporting Inclusivity
- Locating People with Lived Experience
- Overcoming Obstacles and Barriers
Evidence of State Collaboration

• Engaging a broad group of stakeholders in the development and ongoing analysis of the PIP and new statewide assessment

• Sharing ownership of the statewide assessment and PIP processes by internal and external partners

• Establishing standing meetings and ensuring they are regularly attended by key partners

• The state agency and its partners assigns responsibility (and authority) to key staff for communicating regularly, internally and externally, about the Child and Family Services Reviews process.
Technical Assistance Available From the Capacity Building Center for States
TA Model for Lived Expertise Engagement
Engaging Center for States’ Services

**MAJOR AREAS OF SERVICES**

- Providing tailored, expert coaching and consultation on projects that aim to improve child welfare outcomes and support agencies’ strategic and long-term goals.

- Supporting peer groups that allow child welfare professionals to virtually connect with colleagues working in similar practice areas or on common initiatives.

- Developing and disseminating publications, tools, and learning experiences on a variety of child welfare topics to increase awareness and knowledge of federal child welfare initiatives and child welfare policy and practice.

- Providing access to national child welfare expertise, including young adults and families with lived experience and expertise in child welfare.
Capacity Building Center for States
Lived Expertise Consultants
Division X Technical Assistance

Division X and the Center for States
- Consultant Coordinator and Peer Supports
- Focus on equity, inclusion, and diversity
- Executed on behalf of the Children’s Bureau

Division X
- 1-year commitment
- Independent effort with targeted focus
- Led by Lived Experience Team
- Youth-centered capacity building

Center for States
- Multi-year opportunity
- Part of the Capacity Building Collaborative
- Partnership between Family and Young Adult Consultants
- Capacity building across the child welfare continuum

States, Tribes, and Jurisdictions

Targeted Assistance Projects

Regional Peer Calls

National Peer Group Events

Tools and Resources

Universal Events

Improved Services to Youth and Young Adults
Legal and Judicial Integration and Engagement in CFSR Round 4
Purpose

Provide support to state child welfare agencies and state CIPs in their efforts to engage with lawyers, judges, and other court personnel throughout the CFSR
Goals for Legal and Judicial System Engagement for Round 4

- Lawyers, judges, CIPs, and court personnel are involved early and throughout the CFSR beginning with the release of the SWDI and preparation of the Statewide Assessment.
- Lawyers and judges are educated about the CFSR and the critical role they play in achieving positive outcomes for families.
- States are supported in obtaining legal and judicial system integration throughout the process.
Compliance versus Engagement
Child Welfare Agencies’ Requirement to Collaborate

• State child welfare agencies must demonstrate substantial, ongoing and meaningful collaboration with State courts in the development and implementation of their State plans under titles IV-B and IV-E and any PIPs developed as a result of the Child and Family Services and IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Reviews.

See Section 422(b)(13) of the Act.
Court Improvement Program
Requirements to Collaborate

• State courts are required to demonstrate “meaningful, ongoing collaboration” among the courts in the state, the title IV-B/IV-E agency, and, where applicable, Indian Tribes in their CIP applications in order to receive funding (Section 438(b)(1)(C) of the Act.)

• “Meaningful, ongoing collaboration” means that: state courts, title IV-B/IV-E agencies, and Tribes will identify and work toward shared goals and activities to increase the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in the child welfare system.

• State courts must also commit to participating in all stages of child welfare program planning and improvement efforts, including the CFSP/APS, CFSR, and Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review processes within required timeframes.
Court Improvement Program Considerations

- CIP is one representative of these systems
- Lawyers, GALs, judges, court administrators integrated throughout
- State plans for engagement to be developed
- Conduit to obtaining participation of judges and maybe lawyers
Compliance versus Engagement
Intersection of Legal/Judicial and Child Welfare Agency Interests Relevant to the CFSR

Data of interest

• Example: An analysis of AFCARS data on exits for children and youth entering foster care shows us that while over 85 percent of children and youth will eventually achieve permanency through reunification, guardianship, or adoption (after 4 to 5 years), less than 50 percent will return to their families of origin through reunification. (ACYF-CB-IM-21-01)
The CFSR is linked with legal requirements

- Example: Federal law and regulation clearly emphasize the importance of working to preserve families and for agencies to make reasonable efforts to prevent removal and finalize permanency goals. The law also emphasizes preserving family and community connections for children and youth in foster care. CFSR findings related to these requirements indicate that states need to make improvements in these areas. *(ACYF-CB-IM-21-01)*
Intersection of Legal/Judicial and Child Welfare Agency Interests Relevant to the CFSR

Legal and judicial practice intersects with the CFSR
- Example: The following areas are examined by the CFSRs and are opportunities for systemic and case improvement:
  - The timeliness of hearings that affect the permanency goals of reunification, guardianship, and adoption
  - The appropriateness of permanency goals
  - The effectiveness of notification to foster care parents and other caregivers of permanency hearings and opportunities to be heard
  - The effectiveness and availability of the array of services made available to children and families

(Round 4 CFSR Fact Sheet)
How Does Engagement Look?
Intersection of Legal/Judicial and Child Welfare Agency Interests Relevant to the CFSR

Statewide Assessment

- Members of the legal and judicial communities can help develop the statewide assessment by providing data, information on relevant legal and/or judicial issues, and/or sharing their experiences (Round 4 Legal-Judicial Fact Sheet)
Lessons Learned From Involvement of the Legal and Judicial Systems in Round 3 of the CFSRs
Figure 3: Descriptive Statistics of Legal and Judicial Strategies and Activities

2 All states had a strategy.

Prepared on behalf of the Children's Bureau by JBS International, Inc.
Figure 4: Percentage of Strategies by Outcome

- P1: 35%
- SF-CRS: 19%
- P2: 11%
- S2: 11%
- WB1: 9%
- WB2: 5%
- WB3: 4%
- S1: 2%
- SF-FAPL: 1%
- SF-QAS: 1%
- CQI: 1%
Figure 5: Percentage of PIP Strategies That Required Practice Changes of Judges and Lawyers, and CIP Efforts to Implement

PIP Strategy Required Practice Change of Judges to Improve System: 33%

PIP Strategy Required Practice Change of Lawyers to Improve System: 32%

PIP Strategy Required Efforts of CIP to Improve System: 93%

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Figure 6: Number of Times PIPs Demonstrated Legal, Judicial, and CIP Involvement

- PIP Demonstrates Involvement from Legal Community: 34 Yes, 17 No
- PIP Demonstrates Involvement from Judicial Community: 31 Yes, 20 No
- PIP Demonstrates Involvement from CIP: 44 Yes, 7 No

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CB Support for Legal & Judicial Engagement in Round 4

- Joint letters to Chief Justices & Agency Directors
- Follow-up meetings with Chief Justices & Agency Directors
- Educating about the key roles of legal, judicial, and court representation in the CFSR
- Support for developing legal and judicial engagement plans at CIP Multidisciplinary Task Force Meetings
Legal & Judicial Engagement

Letters to Chief Justices and Agency Directors
Legal & Judicial Engagement

Meetings with CIP multi-disciplinary task forces
Legal & Judicial Engagement

CIP self-assessments
State plans for legal/judicial engagement
Legal & Judicial Engagement

Technical assistance from the Capacity Building Center for Courts
Questions ?