Promoting Positive Policies

• Connecting Child Welfare Policy to the Healthy Transition Initiative
Presenters

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Purpose

Participants will:

- **Learn about child welfare mandates as they relate to transition age youth**

- **Understand common key issues and challenges with youth aging out of the foster care system and HTI**

- **Brainstorm how to include these issues in the development of state policies**
National Policies

Child Welfare Mandates:

• Foster Care Independence Act of 1998 – John H Chaffee Foster Care Independence Program (Chaffee)

• Adoption Safe Families Act of 1997 - Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)

• Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections)
National Policies

• **Chaffee**
  • History
    • Limited funding and supports
      • Housing, Education, Employment
    • Age limitation
    • Youth Voice

• **Outcome**
  • Additional funding, supports and services, opportunities
National Policies

- **CFSR**
  - **History**
    - Conformity to compliance with procedural requirements
    - No opportunity to make improvement before or after review

- **Outcome**
  - Improve Safety, Permanency and Well-being
  - Established National Standards
  - Monitor states conformity to these standards
  - State Wide Self Assessment
  - Program Improvement Plan
National Policies

• **Fostering Connections**
  • History
    • Limited funding and supports
      • Housing, Education, Employment
    • Age limitation
    • Passed unanimously through youth advocacy
  • Outcome
    • Increased opportunities for adoption and relative guardianship
    • Improve education and health care, including mental health
    • Better prepare older youth for adulthood extending support for transition to age 21
    • Support Tribes through access to IV E funding
Common Key Issues

• Adoption
• Homelessness
• Education
• Unemployment
• Health and Mental Health Issues
• Early parenthood
• Long-term dependency on public assistance
• Increased rates of incarceration
Common Key Issues

- Adoption
- My Adoption Story

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<tr>
<th>Chaffee</th>
<th>CFSR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allocated additional funding for tuition cost for foster youth adopted after their 14 birthday.</td>
<td>Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations</td>
<td>Extends adoption assistance and guardianship payments to age 21 (state option)</td>
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<td>Item 7: Permanency goal for child</td>
<td>Item 9: Adoption</td>
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Common Key Issues

- **Homelessness**
- **My homelessness experience**

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<td>States can use up to 30% of their allocation for room and board expenses for youth that are 18-21 as long as they were in care when they turned 18.</td>
<td>Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations</td>
<td>Allows states, at their option, to provide care and support to youth in foster care until the age of 19, 20, or 21</td>
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<td>Item 8: Reunification, guardianship and placement with relatives</td>
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<td>Item 10: Other planned living arrangements</td>
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# Common Key Issues

- **Education**
- **My Education Experience**

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<td>Created more funds to help children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age prepare for and enter post secondary training and education institutions</td>
<td>Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs Item 21: Educational needs of child</td>
<td>Require state child welfare agencies to improve educational stability for children in foster care by coordinating with local education agencies to ensure that children remain in the school they are enrolled in at the time of placement into foster care</td>
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Common Key Issues

- **Unemployment**
- **My employment struggles**

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| Provided employment and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency | Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs  
Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents and foster parents | The act requires child welfare agencies to help youth make a transition plan 90 days prior to their emancipation. |
Common Key Issues

- **Health, including Mental Health**
- **Becoming Healthy**

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| States have been given an option of extending Medicaid services to youth 18-21 that have aged out of care. | Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs  
  Item 22: Physical health of child  
  Item 23: Mental health of child | The act requires states to develop a plan for the ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for any child in foster care. |
Common Key Issues

- Early parenthood
- Becoming an uncle

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<td>Provide training in daily living skills and preventive health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention);</td>
<td>Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs</td>
<td>Clarifies that children 16 and older who are adopted from foster care or who exit foster care to live with a relative guardian are eligible for independent living services.</td>
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<td>Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents and foster parents</td>
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### Common Key Issues

- Long-term dependency on public assistance
- Breaking the cycle

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<td>Increased funding to assist youth in healthy transitions from 70 million to 140 million to help youth become independent</td>
<td>Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents and foster parents</td>
<td>The act requires child welfare agencies to help youth make a transition plan 90 days prior to their emancipation.</td>
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## Common Key Issues

- Incarceration
- Beating the Odds

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Roundtable Discussion

• In small groups,
  – Answer the questions
    • How do these three CW policies relate to the HTI as it pertains to common key issues and challenges in your state?
    • What can be done to implement/support national policies in your state to improve outcomes for youth with mental health issues who are also aging out of the child welfare system?
The Dream Team

- Are all the right people on your team?
- Who else should be included?