2022 Fall Forum
Agenda

- Welcome
- DCF Strategic Plan 2022-2024
- Early Childhood Initiative
- Peer to Peer Mentoring
- Fatherhood Council/Child Support
- NJ Statewide Student Support Services Network – NJ4S
- Race Equity Update
- Family First Prevention Services Act
- Closing
Welcome

Christine Norbut Beyer
Commissioner
NJ DCF
NJ DCF Strategic Plan:
Navigating our System’s Future
The Journey So Far . . .

Consent Order Timeline

1999
Lawsuit filed: Charlie & Nadine H. v. Whitman

2003
Establishment of Settlement Agreement

2006
Modified Settlement Agreement

2008
Creation of Child Health Units.

2010
OPMA created to allow for self-monitoring

2012
IDD pop transitions; DOW transitions.

2014
Keeping Families Together (KFT) Pilot
Launched with 10 families (expanded in 2018 to serve 604)

2015
Sustainability and Exit Plan

2018
Commissioner Beyer Sworn in; begins work on new Strategic Plan; Office of Family Voice created.

2019
OSHW, DCF Youth Council, Fatherhood Engagement and Race Equity Steering Committee

2020
Office of Monitoring, NJ Statewide ACEs Action Plan, Universal Home Visiting signed into law.

2021

2022

DCF Timeline

2006
DCF created as Cabinet-Level Dept. of NJ State Govt.

2007
Roll-out of Case-Practice Model; Expansion of Home Visiting

2008
Creation of Child Health Units.

2015
Sustainability and Exit Plan

2019

2020

2022

OSHW, DCF Youth Council, Fatherhood Engagement and Race Equity Steering Committee

Office of Monitoring, NJ Statewide ACEs Action Plan, Universal Home Visiting signed into law.
Context for the Next Strategic Plan

- Projected end of federal oversight
- COVID-19
- Youth Mental Health Crisis
- Other Family Stressors (economic, public health, race equity)
- Ongoing system transformation
- Changing federal administrative landscape (Family First Act)
- 3 years remaining
Guiding Principles in Developing the Next Plan

- Iterative (building on the success of the last Strategic Plan)
- Reflective of our work and priorities
- Maintaining Service Excellence
- Nimble / Agile in Response
- Temporary / Future-Oriented
- Collaborative
Structure of the Strategic Plan

- Vision and Mission
- Organizational Values
- Core Approaches
- Transformational Goals
- Foundational Programs
2019-2021 Organizational Values

- Collaboration
- Equity
- Evidence
- Family
- Integrity
2019-2021 Core Approaches

- Race Equity
- Healing Centered Practice
- Protective Factors Framework
- Family Voice
- Culture of Safety
2019-2021 Transformational Goals

- Primary prevention of maltreatment and maltreatment-related fatalities
- Preserving kinship connections
- Staff health and wellness
- A fully integrated and inclusive Children's System of Care (CSOC)
2019-2021 Strategic Focus

Build / Maintain Service Excellence:

• Timely Permanency
• Resource Family work
• Promoting empowerment for women and girls
• Promoting integrated health in primary and behavioral healthcare systems
• High quality, community-engaged primary prevention programs
• Thriving & interdependence

Systems Transformation / Transformative Goals

• Primary prevention of maltreatment & fatalities
• Preserving kinship connections
• Staff health and wellness
• CSOC integrated healthcare
NEW -- Foundational Programs

- 40 Program Areas administered within DCF units
- Tactile engagement with children, youth, and families reflecting our Department’s vision, mission, values, approaches and goals.
- Developed with an eye towards Service Excellence and Systems Transformation, utilizing Implementation Science
- May include contracted services and CPP case practice.
- “Improvement” guided by program plans designed within the unit and DCF Office of Strategic Development
# NEW -- Foundational Programs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>FCP – 14</th>
<th>CSOC- 10</th>
<th>DOW- 6</th>
<th>OOE -3</th>
<th>CPP – 7</th>
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</table>
| • Family Preservation Services  
• Family Success Centers  
• Family Support Services  
• Connecting NJ (formerly Central Intake)  
• Keeping Families Together  
• Kinship Navigator Program  
• Life Skills Youth Thrive  
• Pathways to Academic and Career Exploration to Success (PACES)  
• Parent Leadership Curriculum  
• Peer Mentoring  
• NJ4S  
• Supportive Visitation Services  
• Universal Newborn Home Visiting  
• Youth Housing | • Child & Family Nurse Program  
• Family Support Organizations  
• Infant Mental Health  
• In-Home Recovery  
• Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: In-Home Model  
• Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Family Support Services  
• Intensive In-Home/DIR  
• Mobile Response Stabilization Services: Law Enforcement Collaboration  
• Residential Services for Behavioral Health & Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
• Zero Suicide Initiative | • Address Confidentiality  
• Batterer’s Intervention Program  
• Domestic Violence Liaison  
• DV Direct  
• Culturally Specific DV / SV  
• SV Direct | • English Language Learners  
• Nurtured Heart Approach  
• Project TEACH | • Binti  
• Kinship OKRs  
• Pre-Adoptive  
• Lifeset  
• Residential Services  
• Resource Care: Redesign Tools and Practice  
• Solution Based Casework |
Co-development of NJ’s Peer2Peer Program: Enlightenment

With Blake Connor, Daniela Guarda, Jayden Feliz & Jordan Ivey
The Office of Family Voice uses innovative approaches to organize and elevate the voice of constituents, ensuring that policy, operations and practice throughout the Department of Children and Families are infused with the voices of those who have lived experience.
Youth council members work in partnership with DCF to achieve Shared Leadership, with the intent to accomplish a common vision and collaborative goals. The Youth Council helps to transform DCF policy and practice and, at the same time, empower youth to take action and make decisions on critical issues.
The Youth Council co-designed Enlightenment

DCF Youth Council Envision Peer Mentoring-Type Program

Recommendation to Commissioner Beyer and Executive Management

Youth Create Logic Model

Hexagon Tool: BLI is Selected as Best Model

Youth Participate in Request for Proposal

3 Providers Selected

Teaming Structure is Created

Feedback on the Readiness Assessment, Evaluation & Surveys

Youth Council Members Hired as Peer-to-Peer navigators

Youth Council Re-brands Enlightenment & Designs Logo
Program Development & Implementation Stages

**EXPLORATION**
- Explore Models
- Engage Stakeholders
- Identify Finances

**INSTALLATION**
- Refine or Develop Model
- RFP & Execute Contracts
- Form Teams
- Implementation Supports:
  - Job Descriptions & Interview Protocols
  - Policies & Procedures
  - Training/Coaching
  - Data Collection
  - Fidelity Tool
- Quality Monitoring Standard
- Evaluation Plan

**INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION**
- Launch Practice
- Manage Provider Network
- Initiate CQI & Monitoring Activities

**FULL IMPLEMENTATION**
- Manage & Monitor Provider Network
- CQI & Evaluation
- Track & Adjust Implementation Supports, as needed

2-4 Years
Peer2Peer Program, Enlightenment Teaming Structure

SAS Team Objective:
- Provide expertise to each of the teams
- Provide recommendations for implementation
- Partner with teams to provide youth perspective that will provide the optimal engagement and success of program
- Review and vet findings from evaluation as part of CQI

Participants:
- OFV Co-Leads
- Youth Council Members
A New Website, a Sibling bill of Rights and more...
Fatherhood Council/Child Support Reform

Blake Connor

Clarence Whittaker
Shared Leadership

Families and Youth with Lived Experience

Child Welfare Professionals

DCF Leadership

External Stakeholders

DCP&P, CSOC and FCP

Office of Adolescent Services

Legal Affairs

Office of Communications
Fathers: “We Need More Chances”
How It Impacts Families

- **Barrier to Reunification**
  - $100 in monthly child support associated with over a 6-month delay in reunification or other permanency

- **Penalizes Poverty**
  - Nationwide, 84% of youth enter foster care due to neglect, often due to poverty
    Casey Family Programs state-by-state data
  - In NJ, 73% of arrears owed by non-custodial parents with no quarterly earnings (44%) or annual earnings < $10,000 (29%)
    LSNJ Report (2016) - Mary McManus Smith

- **Punitive Enforcement Measures**
  - Suspension of licenses; bank levies, downgraded credit rating; incarceration; etc.
It's Really Inefficient

- **US Data**
  - Minnesota study: 24 to 40 cents received per dollar spent on recoupment efforts
  - Orange County CA study: 41 cents received per dollar spent on collection
  - Wisconsin study: < 3% of costs recouped

- **NJ Data**
  - FY 2021 – $7M owed – $2M paid
  - Total Arrearages – $30M owed – $3.3M paid
  - 6,146 open cases
    - 2,823 current obligations
    - 3,323 arrears only
So Why Are We Doing This?

- **Federal Law**
  - Where appropriate, states must take all steps to collect child support to reimburse maintenance costs
  
  
  42 USCS § 671

- **NJ State Law**
  - Parents liable for full or partial maintenance costs, as determined by DCPP

  NJSA 30:4C-29.1
Policy Defines Some Exceptions

Reasons DCPP may withhold a Child Support referral

- **Best Interest of Child** – domestic violence, pending adoption, etc.
- **Return Home Imminent** – per case plan
- **Low Potential for Collection** – long-term incarceration, disabled & receiving SS benefits, etc.
DCF’s Process is Refer to DFD
We brought the policy to the fathers and asked:

“How would you define Low Potential for Collection?”

- Create a defined poverty level
- People that are on government assistance should not have to pay
- Anyone who is eligible for a public defender has already proved they don’t have the money to pay
- **U.S. DHHS - Administration for Children and Families (ACF)**
  - June 2022

- Almost never case that securing rights to child support is in best interests of child in title IV-E foster care.

- Title IV-E agencies should consider not referring parents for child support, except in rare instances where child support won’t adversely affect child or impede successful achievement of permanency.
Real Support is Relief from Child Support
Next Steps for NJ

- Governor’s Office approval
- Work with DFD, AOC, & AG’s Office to address related measures:
  - Terminate existing cases
  - Vacate arrearages
  - Vacate judgments
- ID target date for rollout of new child support policy/practice and related measures
BREAK TIME
Youth are in crisis

- Surgeon General says from 2009 to 2019, one in three school aged children reported persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness.
- CDC says 1 in 4 youth were treated for mental health during pandemic.
- Calls to CSOC in February and March were 14k and 18k.
- Public health emergency requires statewide response.
Current Resources

- Administration has advanced, expanded, initiated solutions for youth mental health
  - Increased provider rates
  - Increased funding for NJ Pediatric Psychiatric Collaborative
  - Participating in DREAMS with DOE
  - Garrett Lee Smith suicide prevention initiative
  - Launched 988
  - School Based Youth Services
NJ4S

- Groundbreaking proposal with national interest
- Creates a statewide network of supports for students and their families
- 15 hubs/unlimited spokes
- Standard set of supports and services with local adaptations
- Local Advisory Councils to guide services and supports
- Integrate with existing statewide and community-based services for youth
- Primary focus is prevention/brief intervention
Providing programs and linking students and their families to services in school and community.

NJ Student Support Services (NJ4S) Hub
Prevention Specialists & Mental Health Counselors

- School
- Residential Home
- Library
- Faith Based Organization
- Community-Based Center
- Social Service Agency
Myth busting

- Hubs are not necessarily a physical location
- In-school services WILL continue but statewide
- Workforce challenges exist
- SBYS cannot be scaled
We want to hear from you

- Read the concept paper at: https://www.state.nj.us/dcf/documents/NJ4S_Concept.pdf
- Send your thoughts to: NJ4SFeedback@DCF.nj.gov
Race Equity Update

Kathy Haggerty
Program Manager
Office of Diversity, Equity & Belonging
We changed our name from DEI to DEB, why?
Family separation remained low through 2021

Out of Home Trends
Source: NJ Spirit & CYBER

- CP&P Annual Entries
- CSOC PIT OOH

- 2017: 3,856
- 2018: 3,446
- 2019: 2,624
- 2020: 1,664
- 2021: 1,568

59% decrease
31% decrease
Black children continue to be more likely to enter out of home placement.

In 2021, Black children were $2.5x$ as likely as Hispanic children and $4x$ as likely as White children to enter OOH placement.
Phase 3 in 2022:  
JJC Ground  
Water Analysis (GWA)

Began January 2022
9 cohorts so far (approx. 225 participants)
Each 4-day Cohort develops specific strategies
All ideas from GWA considered for DEB Strategic Plan

“We are committed to breaking down the walls of institutional and structural racism.”

~Joyce James Consulting
9 Overall Strategy Categories

1. **Communications** (internal & external)
2. **Contracts, Resources, Prevention** (e.g., RFP process)
3. **Culture** (e.g., Courageous Convs, Safe Spaces, Gatekeeper)
4. **Data** (e.g., Family Preservation Services, ‘credible reporters’)
5. **Family & Community Voice** (inc. Resource Families)
6. **Human Resources** (e.g., Culture Climate Survey, policy/proced)
7. **Policy & Practice** (inc. best practices and SBC)
8. **Training** (inc. staff safety, racialized trauma)
9. **Systems Collaboration** (all systems, esp. housing, schools, L/E)
Brief Summary of GWA’s Cohort Ideas

**Communications:**
Newsletter: Incorporate LGBTQ Strategies

**Contracts/Services/Prevention:**
RFP Overhaul

**Culture Change:**
Culture Climate Survey ($); Courageous C’s/Safe Spaces/Affinity Groups; Regional/County Advisory Groups

**Data:**
Analyze assessments from credible reporters; Family Preservation Services

**Families & Community Voices:**
Safe Spaces; Racial Equity Workshops; AA/B Parenting Classes; OCOC & Ministry of Caring to assist in RP recruitment (all $)

**Human Resources:**
Review all personnel policies/practices; HR skill development

**Practice:**
Incorporate Racialized Trauma into SBC; evaluate Child & Family Home Services Program through equity lens

**Policy:**
Evaluation Tool; Re-define Imminent Risk; Accommodations Policy; Remove Poverty as Removal Reason

**Training ($):**
All Staff Receive GWA/Undoing Racism Training ($); racialized trauma
DEB Vision

- Cultural Transformation
  - Human Resources
  - Tools & Resources
  - Ongoing Learning

- Operational Transformation
  - Policies & Practices
  - Equity in Outcomes
  - Data Driven

- Community Transformation
  - Truth & Transformation
  - Community Healing
  - & Partnerships
A collaboration to co-design a family and community-driven model that will advance the creation of a bold, new, child and family well-being system in New Jersey and obsolete the need for non-kin foster care placement.

**Office of Family Voice (OFV)**
- Engages DCF youth and families as consultants to improve our system, e.g., Wisdom Council & Youth Council.

**Office of Resilience (OoR)**
- Vision is to eradicate ACEs through grass-roots and community-led efforts.

**Office of Diversity, Equity and Belonging (DEB)**
- Provides support to all DCF offices and departments to ensure a racial equity lens is infused throughout DCF, works collaboratively w/RESC to pilot & implement changes and programs.

**OHR-Office of Diversity**
- Ensures equity in all aspects of personnel policy & practice; receive and respond to staff complaints & concerns.

**Office of Staff Health & Wellness (OSHW)**
- Engages staff in resources and supports that foster overall health, strong morale, and building a culture of inclusivity and empowerment.
RESC Subcommittees

**Data & Evaluation**
- Decision Points
- Redlining Analyses
- CQI

**Policy & Practice**
- Child Support
- Expungement

**Contracts, Resources & Prevention**
- Policy Tool
- RFP Process front to end

**Training**
- Phase 3 – GWA
- Courageous Conversations

**Truth & Transformation**
- Commission on Truth & Reconciliation in Child Welfare
- Partner with PFPC
Next Steps for Office of DEB

- Finalize Strategic Plan and Staffing Model
- On-board the DEB Team by December
- Build Capacity of all Subcommittees
- Hit the Ground Running January 2023
Contact the Office of DEB

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DCF | Diversity, Equity & Belonging (nj.gov)
https://www.nj.gov/dcf/deb.html
Family First
Prevention Services Act

Angela Phillips
Manager, Special Projects
DCF
Passed in February 2018, FFA is extensive, bipartisan legislation that amends Title IV-E and IV-B to provide states, jurisdictions and tribes with new funding opportunities.

But the Family First Act goes beyond funding...

“provides an opportunity for states to dramatically re-think how they service children and families...

...creates an impetus to focus attention on prevention and strengthening families as our primary goals, rather than foster care placement as our main intervention...

...encourages all states ... to envision and advance a vastly improved way of serving children and families, one that focuses on strengthening their protective and nurturing capacities instead of separating them.”
Challenges FFA Hopes to Address

- An inflexible funding structure where the majority of federal funding is only available once children are removed from their home.
- Consensus about the need for upfront services to strengthen families.
- Over reliance on congregate care with negative outcomes.

Key provisions can be broken down into three categories:

1. Increased and Improved Prevention Services
2. Use of Appropriate Placements
3. Promotion of Safety, Permanency and Well-Being
DCF has extensive prevention portfolio; FFA provides opportunity to (1) bring in revenues on some of those services, which can then be reinvested, and (2) to closely re-visit our portfolio to ensure it meets the need of NJ’s children and families.

DCF plans to submit a federal prevention plan by December 31, 2022.
Closing

Christine Norbut Beyer
Commissioner
NJ DCF
Federal Lawsuit Timeline

Consent Order Timeline

1999
- Lawsuit filed: Charlie & Nadine H. v. Whitman

2003
- Establishment of Settlement Agreement

2006
- Modified Settlement Agreement
  - Jan 2009 – Nov. 2015
  - Phase 1
  - Phase 2

2015
- Sustainability and Exit Plan

2022
SEP Exit Agreement

- Agreed to by the plaintiff, monitor, court and DCF in March
- Signifies meaningful progress
- Brings to close over 20 years of reforms and transformation
- Outlines priority provisions for state to continue moving forward
- Fairness hearing on or around December 30\textsuperscript{th}
- Provides for a transition period
SORS Legislation

- A-3707 Coughlin/Jimenez; S-2395 Scutari/Ruiz
- Makes various changes to New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect; establishes child protection worker caseload standards.
- Identifies the Staffing and Oversight Review Subcommittee of the NJ Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect to review department’s performance in key areas as listed in the exit agreement.
- Passed Assembly Human Services Committee yesterday.
Thank you!