

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

FAMILY FIRST READINESS ASSESSMENT, PLANNING, AND INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

CONTEXT

Chapin Hall's suite of Family First readiness assessment, planning, and implementation tools are designed to be used by jurisdictions to assess system-wide readiness for provisions of the Family First Prevention Services Act ('Family First') and guide the development of a plan for implementation. The larger transformational opportunities imbedded in the law's provisions were considered in developing these tools, such as expanding prevention services and reducing reliance on congregate care. However, the components of child welfare system work, rather than specific provisions of Family First, are the focus, which make the tools suitable to implement any major policy changes the jurisdiction seeks to implement in child welfare.

OVERVIEW OF GOVERNANCE

We recommend that each jurisdiction should form a **Family First leadership team**, comprising agency leadership and key internal programmatic and operational leads, to provide guidance and oversight for diverse efforts to plan and implement the provisions of FFPSA throughout the agency. To launch the process of readiness assessment, planning and implementation, the leadership team will use the first section of the *Assessment, Planning and Implementation Tool* (described further below) to articulate the jurisdiction's vision, strategies, and desired outcomes for Family First. The *Assessment, Planning and Implementation Tool* will also guide the leadership team to ensure alignment of FFPSA with other priorities and system redesign efforts underway, and to form provision workgroups to advance each provision. This preliminary work will guide and establish the necessary context for FFPSA planning efforts and decision-making. Subsequently, the leadership team will shift to overseeing, guiding, and providing support and resources to ensure the success of each provision workgroup.

We recommend that the agency develop a **provision workgroup** (or repurpose an existing workgroup) for each provision of Family First the agency wishes to advance, and develop a re-occurring meeting schedule. Members should comprise representatives from the following internal functional areas as needed: relevant programmatic areas, fiscal, contracts, training, policy, CQI, communications, human resources, and information technology. Additionally, relevant external stakeholders should be engaged as appropriate, such as contracted providers, sister agency staff, community members, and clients. The provision workgroup(s) will use the second section of the *Assessment, Planning and Implementation Tool* and follow the guidance from the leadership team to engage in the assessment, planning and initial planning work for each provision. The provision workgroups' major decisions and plans should be brought back to the leadership team to integrate and sequence work, and to authorize resources and action.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

FAMILY FIRST READINESS ASSESSMENT, PLANNING, AND INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

If needed, a jurisdiction may wish to form additional groups dedicated to carrying out action items related to specific agency functions. For example, a data subgroup comprising analytic staff may be formed to help provision workgroups obtain and understand data to inform decision-making; an IT subgroup may be formed to carry out changes to existing IT systems and/or lead the development of new features or systems. Formation of such subgroups can streamline meeting attendance and reduce workgroup membership redundancy.

SEQUENCING

We suggest the following steps:

- 1) Identify and form a Family First leadership team to complete the leadership section of the *Assessment, Planning and Implementation Tool* and form and launch provision workgroups.
- 2) Identify provision workgroup members needed to inform and complete each component area discussion within the provision section of the *Assessment, Planning and Implementation Tool*.
- 3) Develop a re-occurring meeting schedule.
- 4) Identify a facilitator and scribe for the process.
- 5) Complete and document responses to all questions through a series of facilitated and engaging meetings, focusing on the actions needed to assess, plan and ready for implementation.
- 6) Convert responses from the provision section of the *Assessment, Planning and Implementation* into actionable steps in the *Provision Plan* (described further below)
- 7) Engage the leadership team in making decisions on the *Provision Plan* that integrate content, sequence work and guide implementation.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

FAMILY FIRST READINESS ASSESSMENT, PLANNING, AND INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

OVERVIEW OF TOOLS

A common element in all of the tools is that the guiding questions are organized in to 21 discrete components, representing major areas that must be considered when planning and implementing Family First. The components are divided in to two sections, specific to the leadership team and the provision workgroups. We have sequenced the components intentionally so that administrative considerations follow programmatic discussions and decisions. A description of each tool follows.

Component Briefs

Designed to be provided to provision workgroup members as background reading material. Each component brief introduces the component area, provides a brief description of relevant provisions from the law that relate to the component area and contains the set of questions to guide the provision workgroups through an understanding of current capacity and action planning.

Assessment and Planning Deck

Designed to be used in discussion and action planning sessions with the leadership team (first section) and provision workgroups (second section). The deck introduces each component area and includes the set of questions to guide the leadership team/governing group and the provision workgroups through an understanding of current capacity and action planning.

Assessment, Planning and Implementation Tool and Provision Plan

Capture tool, allowing the scribe to document, in brief, the discussions of the relevant groups and the actions that will lead to implementation. The 'Assessment Tool' tab includes the same questions from the deck and the one-pagers on leadership and provision component areas. This includes a space for responses and action items to questions on the tool. The 'Provision Plan' tab allows for additional translation of the assessment tool content to an implementation plan, allowing further refinement of action steps, assignment of action items by functional area, and inclusion of responsible parties, start, target and actual dates.

Prevention Plan Theory of Change Template

This tool can be used by the leadership team and provision teams to articulate, document, and communicate the agency's theory of change for the Title IV-E Prevention Provision of Family First, describing how key aspects of the law together will lead to systems and outcomes improvement. The resulting theory of change will directly support the development of a Prevention Services and Programs Five Year Plan and is aligned with Title IV-E requirements for quality assurance.