International Conference on Innovations in Family Engagement:

Continuing the Learning on Differential Response, Family Group Decision Making and Other Reforms

REGISTRATION BROCHURE

VAIL, CO

October 17-20, 2017
About this Conference

For two decades, the current Kempe Center faculty have been supporting the implementation of innovation in systems and communities that work with vulnerable children, youth and families. Three of these more well-known innovations are family group decision making (FGDM), family engagement and differential response. Disseminator, evaluator, conference and webinar organizer, trainer, technical assistance provider and thought leader, the Kempe Center fuels leaders’ quests to adapt systems to increasingly center on achieving safety, permanency and well-being through family engagement.

The Conference on FGDM and Family Engagement has been an annual event since 1997 that has served as an invigorating learning platform for thousands who have been engaged in the implementation of family meeting and engagement processes around the globe. In 2005, our team launched the Differential Response Conference, again attracting a global audience of innovators interested in restructuring and revamping the CPS system through the implementation of differential response. Over time, we found the topics, audiences, and interests of these two conferences began to converge so we merged them in 2015 into the International Conference on Innovations in Family Engagement.

Defined as collaboration, partnership, inclusion, involvement, compliance and cooperation, what is meant by engagement is inherently complex. What is clear, however, is that “engagement” is a worthwhile pursuit when working with vulnerable populations. The “engagement process” begins with the first “hello”, knock on the door, or telephone call, and it continues throughout the entire relationship between service providers and families. It often extends far beyond the engagement of a parent or caregiver and child to include the extended family/kin system known as the family group and their informal networks.

For more than a decade, public human service agencies, community-based organizations, and other institutions have been implementing numerous family engagement strategies and decision-making models as a way to provide inclusive and culturally respectful processes when working with families. The basic belief is that outcomes improve when service providers productively and positively engage the family group in matters that directly or indirectly involve them. This construct holds true across many systems including child welfare, juvenile justice, aging and adult protection, education, and mental health.

With the implementation of differential response, which restructures the front-end of the CPS system to create at least two different ways to respond to child abuse and neglect reports, there has been an increased emphasis on engaging caregivers, children and their family network during the assessment or investigation processes. Various family engagement strategies and techniques, including some forms of family meetings, are being embedded into child welfare practice in the intake-investigation stages of involvement. As families’ involvement with the child welfare system becomes longer-term, there are many formal and informal opportunities to advance family engagement practices.
One of the strategies that human service systems use as a formal engagement mechanism are various types of family meetings. Such models as family group conferences, family team meetings, team decision meetings, family team conferences, child permanency mediation, child and family teams, family decision meetings, restorative conferences, family safety planning meetings, wraparound services, and family team decision making are some other commonly used family engagement approaches in human service systems. What is true in all of these approaches is that none of these are possible without finding and engaging family. With this, we strongly support the interplay between family finding and family engagement at this conference.

While Family Group Decision Making is an umbrella term that encapsulates a number of family engagement models, this system reform was defined in a seminal paper titled “Family Group Decision Making in Child Welfare: Purpose, Values and Processes” (2008; 2013). The document, developed in partnership with FGDM leaders worldwide, provides a clear definition of FGDM, thus enabling the accurate classification of family-engagement approaches as being FGDM. With this conference, we are wanting to identify and showcase practices, policies, implementation structures, advocacy efforts and research that elevates these notions:

- At the very least, family groups need to be included in decision-making, and at most, formal systems need to strive to implement processes whereby family groups lead decision-making
- Family groups are experts on their own lives
- Engaging natural resources and supports
- Through partnership and engagement with the family and their support system greater child safety and well-being is possible

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Our previous conferences have sported multi-disciplinary audiences who have represented numerous formal, informal, and community systems and have drawn from child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health agencies. They typically represent 35 states, numerous tribal communities, many Canadian provinces, and, on average, six other countries. Specifically, target audiences for this event include representatives from public and private child welfare agencies, such as administrators, program managers, supervisors, and specialists; intake, assessment/investigation, ongoing, permanency, foster care, and adoption caseworkers; family meeting coordinators or facilitators, family meeting supervisors, family finders, kinship navigators, policymakers, researchers and evaluators, child and family advocates, family members, foster parents, community members, parent mentors, and community leaders; and those from partnering systems and community providers, such as juvenile and family courts (judges, court staff, attorneys, and other legal professionals), faith-based services, domestic/family violence services, substance abuse services, and mental health services. Independent of where you sit and what you do in relation to innovation in human service systems, you will find your niche at this one-of-a-kind event.
Session Themes

Participants do not have to select which sessions they would like to attend when registering for the conference. Each session is open on a first come, first serve basis. Workshops and seminars are divided into the following five broad themes, as a way to help learners navigate the conference and find the sessions of most interest to them.

PRACTICE
As the populations served by child and family systems change, and research informs practice and policy development in these systems, there is a need to advance skill acquisition for practitioners who are the agency ambassadors. Sessions under this theme focus on a key topic and translate the knowledge into skill development.

MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS
It is imperative for child and family systems and their community partners to identify and recognize the marginalized groups that may be overlooked or underrepresented in family engagement processes or overrepresented in these systems. Some examples, though not an exclusive list, are families of color, American Indian/Alaskan Native families, impoverished communities, fathers, paternal relatives, same-sex partners, faith communities, grandparents, kinship system, extended family, and others that systems may not traditionally include at the table.

WORKFORCE
Supervising, managing, and leading in child and family service systems are unique roles due to the intense subject matter, resources, community expectations, and accountability. Sessions in this theme focus on the support and leadership needed to develop and sustain an engaging workforce in innovations like family engagement and differential response.

SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE
Embedding family engagement into the everyday fabric of child and family service systems is more than “holding a family meeting,” “soliciting a caregiver’s opinion,” “sharing information with family members,” or “engaging a family in a family assessment or an investigation”—all which can get diluted to solely “an event.” In turn, events can become routinized, mechanical, and beholden to system pressures, with the principles of family engagement becoming unattainable. Aligning systems with family engagement principles requires attention to infrastructure, policies, implementation, and collaboration.

POLICY, RESEARCH, AND EVALUATION
There is a growing body of international knowledge about family engagement practices and policies, as well as differential response implementation. There are random control trial research studies, formal quantitative and qualitative evaluations, fidelity instrumentation, family satisfaction surveys, administrative data, and other analytics that help us understand the knowledge that can be gleaned. Understanding research and analyzing existing data sources help to inform the implementation and sustainability of family engagement practices and processes, and they can be used to formulate policy.

The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, a historical train, continues to provide year round train service.
**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

*Event times may be slightly adjusted in the final program, and registered participants will be notified.

**Tuesday, October 17, 2017**

**9:00am - 4:00pm**

**Pre-Conference Institutes and Seminars**

**Why am I so Tired? Managing Emotional Labor in Child Welfare to Avoid Burnout**

*Ida Drury, Kempe Center University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO*

We’ve all heard of physical labor: doing the heavy lifting, building, and tearing down. Child welfare, though, is done through emotional labor. This is the work we do to mask or manipulate our emotions, or the help we give others to de-escalate or make personal change. Just like physical labor, we feel pride in a job well done, but too much leaves us exhausted. In fact, we may even become burned out and ultimately leave the work that used to fill us up. Participants will take a self-assessment of emotional labor performance, emotional exhaustion, and burnout. Using the information gained, they will develop a concrete strategy for avoiding or alleviating burnout which they can take back to field. It’s not all doom and gloom! Sometimes putting words to what we’re feeling is just what the doctor ordered. Come to this institute to learn about the research behind emotional labor and the strategies you need to keep you (and the people you work with) healthy and happy in emotionally intense positions. Be prepared to get to know your peers, laugh, and learn!

**Leading Organizational Change**

*Eric Fenner, Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA; Kasey Matz, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO; and Carole Wilcox, Butler Institute, University of Denver, Denver, CO*

This all-day institute will provide a rich opportunity for child welfare leaders to think critically and comprehensively with their peers about how to situate their human service systems to implement Differential Response effectively and efficiently. Together we will explore topics such as: messaging DR internally and externally; preparing community partners for collaboratively serving children, youth, and families; structuring the workforce in a manner that maximizes strengths and skills; operationalizing CQI systems; and generating conscious leadership to sustain change. While the DR model discussed will be primarily based in Colorado’s Social Work Practices and Organizational Processes, those outside of Colorado are welcome to attend. Registrants will receive and be asked to complete a short 5-question electronic survey at the time of registration. Survey responses will be used to tailor the content and process of this institute in an effort to exceed the expectations of session participants.

**Introduction to Working with Men as Parents: Fathers’ Parenting Choices Matter**

*David Mandel, Safe & Together Institute, Canton, CT*

If we want to work with families, we cannot just work with women and children. We need to be able to work with men. This is important for all families but may be even more important for families from poor and historically oppressed communities. To do this correctly, we need to approach fathers, in a manner consistent with domestic violence-informed practice. This means approaching men with high expectations, and the willingness to learn new approaches and practices. Working with men requires being able to understand male parental development and how men’s choices and behaviors impacts child and family functioning. It involves understanding how to use this information to engage men and to development meaningful child and family focused interventions. It also involves being able to integrate these understandings into our work with women and children. In this course we will be considering all these items from the perspective of domestic violence informed policy and practice, diverse communities and different disciplines. Throughout this workshop, we will highlight specific connections to the Safe and Together Model Principles, Critical Components, Multiple Pathways to Harm and Practice Tools.
Becoming the Change We Wish to See in the World
Dan Comer and Lauren Hutto, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO
This institute will provide supervisors and caseworkers the opportunity to work thoughtfully together as they explore possibilities and plan strategic ways to best fulfill their unique roles within a transition to Differential Response. This institute will merge and activate two critical and parallel concepts: “leading organizational change” and “partnering with families in DR” through a framework of person-centered coaching.

Putting Children Back at the Center: Involving Children and Young People in their Family Group Conference
Sharon Inglis, Circles Training & Consultancy Limited, United Kingdom
This institute will give participants an opportunity to consider the benefits and complexities of involving children and young people in the family group conference process. We will explore, examine, and consider: the key principles and theories underpinning children’s involvement in decision making; the issues of power and its effects on children’s participation; the research evidence on ‘what works’; what best practice might look like when involving children of different ages in FGCs; and think about how children might be involved in developing and evaluating FGC services. Those implementing other decision making processes that involve children and young people (e.g., facilitated family meetings, PRTs, and others) are encouraged to participate as the concepts will be transferable.
Opening Keynote

**Moving Beyond the “Either-Or”: Envisioning Flexible and Responsive Child Welfare Systems by Eric Fenner**

Eric Fenner retired as the Executive Director of Franklin County Children Services in April of 2011. In 32 years of public service, Eric has worked 20 years in child welfare. Eric’s experience includes work as a Court Administrator for the Franklin County Juvenile Court, the Deputy Director of Franklin County Department of Jobs and Family Services and State Associate State Director of Ohio Youth Advocates. Eric was the first African American Executive Director in his final 5 years at Franklin County Children Services. Eric also served as President of the Board of Trustees for the Public Children Services Association of Ohio, and a member of the Metropolitan Board of Trustees of the YMCA of Columbus Ohio.

Under Eric’s leadership, Franklin County launched several new initiatives aimed at increasing family engagement and assuring permanency for youth, including alternative response and team decision making. The result in Franklin County was a 29% reduction in the number of children in foster care over his last 3 years as the Executive Director.

Eric is presently a Managing Director at Casey Family Programs where he oversees a team of professional consultants and support staff who build relationships and provide technical assistance in support of child welfare systems in 14 states.

Safety Planning and Preparation in Family Group Decision Making

*Rita Burgoyne, Burgoyne Consulting Services, Leamington, Ontario*

This presentation will focus on how Coordinators prepare for and deal with safety issues before, during and after the Family Group Decision Making Conference. We will consider a few actual scenarios and complete a few activities to see how group dynamics and family dynamics can impact the safety and the comfort level of all of the participants. Additionally we will discuss “what if” scenarios and how to manage safety issues in the moment. This is an interactive workshop which includes participants in the learning.

**TRACK:** Family Group Decision Making

**THEME:** Practice

Building Sustainable Safety through Meaningful Parenting Time

*Lori Oswald and Alyssa Berge, Arapahoe County DHS, Aurora, CO*

Parenting time visitation is an invaluable and underutilized resource in reunifying parents and children involved in the child welfare system. In 2011, Arapahoe County Department of Human Services developed and launched a Parenting Time Program focusing on creating meaningful parenting time for parents and children who are separated due to abuse or neglect. This workshop will introduce the program model which includes an initial contact process, utilizing preparation and feedback sessions with parents, orientation, appraisals, parent coaching and group parenting time. The presenters will share the successes and challenges experienced in implementation of the program as well as outcomes.

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations

**THEME:** Practice
Supervising for Partnership and Safety, Part 1: Assessment
Phil Decter, NCCD Children’s Research Center, Madison, WI

It is well documented that the quality of relationship between social workers and families - as well as the relationship between child protection agencies and partnering agencies – have a great deal to do with enhancing outcomes for children, youth and families. Equally well known is the critical role supervision plays both in ensuring quality control and in supporting skill development of front-line staff. This workshop, part 1 of 2, focuses on the role supervisors can and should play with staff to ensure all are equipped with the skills to create good working relationships and to ensure staff are conducting rigorous and balanced assessments with their clients. Specific supervisory strategies, tools and key questions will be demonstrated and participants’ own best practices will be elicited and shared. Participants will leave with new strategies that can begin to utilize immediately. Note: While this workshop is designed for those providing supervision, anyone is welcome.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: Practice

Building Safety for Children and Youth, Through Family Engagement
Colorado Department of Child Welfare Staff and County Department Panelists

A panel of County and State Child Welfare staff will discuss the importance of building child safety at the forefront of an assessment when a family is involved in the Child Welfare System. Using techniques embedded into on current family engagement practices, roles in family meetings, skills for hold a successful family meeting, and overcoming challenges that may arise. Each of these areas will focus on keeping child safety as the primary goal. This presentation is designed to provide language, tools, and skills for engagement in family meetings. The panel discussion is intended to promote interactive discussion with the audience.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Building Cultural Safety: Having Courageous Conversations
Claudia Kearney, NC State University, Center for Family and Community Engagement, Raleigh, NC

Have you ever left a conversation feeling offended, upset, like it just did not go well? You may have experienced a Cultural Clash. In this interactive foundational training, participants will develop personal awareness by exploring their own cultural lenses, uncovering implicit biases and automatic assumptions and examining the potential impact of these factors on professional and personal relationships. Participants will gain a shared knowledge on how Cultural Safety is a critical first step in not only developing best practices with diverse families, but also in creating an inclusive supportive environment to have cross-cultural conversations.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Marginalized Populations

Engaging Youth Using Youth Mentors
Michael Rauso, Jackie Mizell-Burt, Blanca Vega, and Youth TBD, Los Angeles County DCFS, Los Angeles, CA

Child Welfare (DCFS) is often a difficult place to navigate for parents, but especially so for youth. In 2006, LA County DCFS implemented Parents in Partnership (PIP), which paired new parents with former DCFS parents. The program has been extremely successful, so now LA County is implementing Youth in Partnership (YIP), which pairs former foster youth with current DCFS youth. YIP is a multi-agency effort between Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Mental Health, DCFS, California Youth Connection (CYC) and other community providers.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Workforce
Starting from the Top: Developing a State Level Child Welfare Family Advisory Council
Kara Allen-Eckard, Center for Family and Community Engagement at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC; Kristin O’Connor, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Raleigh, NC; and Denise Moore, Iowa Parent Partner Program, Des Moines, IA

Family engagement was identified as an area of need in the 2015 NC Child and Family Services Review. At the time, North Carolina had a robust Child and Family Team meeting policy designed to support family engagement at the individual case level. Recognizing the need for family engagement to be modeled from the top down, the NC Division of Social Services committed to the development of a state level family advisory council model. This presentation will discuss the work and findings of the state workgroup designing and initiating the North Carolina Child Welfare Family Advisory Council.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
Theme: System Infrastructure

Using Implementation Science to Create Lasting Change
Shannon Deinhart, Waiting Child Fund, Cleveland, OH; and Dave Henwood, Fairfield County Protective Services, Lancaster, OH

This interactive session will help participants to understand the importance of utilizing an Implementation Science approach to program design and service delivery. Knowing you want to change is only the beginning. Understanding what is needed to make lasting change is critical for the success of your staff and the families and children they serve. The workshop will highlight the public and private agency partnership of three Ohio agencies and the process used to design and implement a unique Family Finding and Family Group Decision Making model.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: System Infrastructure

Evaluating Facilitated Family Engagement Meetings in Colorado: Linking County Implementation, Intervention Case Level Fidelity, and Child Safety and Permanency Outcomes
Alli Schisler and Greg Forehand, Human Services Research Institute, Tualatin, OR; and Helen Holmquist-Johnson, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO

Under Colorado’s Title IV-E Waiver, nearly 40 county child welfare agencies across the state have implemented facilitated family engagement meetings. This model calls for regularly held, facilitated meetings with families, professionals, and family-identified support people. State and county investment in this intervention has been high, yet implementing the intervention with fidelity is challenging given community and agency constraints. Using an annual survey, the evaluation team has examined core implementation drivers as a tangible way for agencies and practitioners to influence fidelity of the intervention and thereby enhance child and youth safety and permanency outcomes. Findings and implications will be shared.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

Colorado has 222 state wildlife areas.
From Managing Services to Managing Transformations for Youth and Families: The Casey Practice Model

Jorge Cabrera, Casey Family Programs, San Diego, CA; Stephen Shimshock, Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA; and Jennifer Bowman, Casey Family Programs, Oakland, CA

This workshop describes Casey Family Programs’ Practice Model: A Safe and Permanent Family for Every Youth, its core principles and how it has catalyzed increased numbers of youth served by Casey attaining safe, legal permanence and improved well-being and a cultural shift from managing “services” to managing transformations. Two examples of the model in action are detailed: Facilitated Collaborative Inquiry, a Continuous Quality Improvement approach to engaging practitioners in data driven and reflective inquiry activities that promote a “best practitioners” culture; and Trauma and Healing Informed Practice, describing engagement approaches and neuro-developmental based interventions with youth and families, and its connection to permanency outcomes.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Towards Good Practice in Engaging Families in Preventive Family Support

Irene de Haan, School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work, University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

This session presents results of a recent New Zealand practice research project focusing on exploring and documenting successful, practical strategies for engaging and partnering with families in preventive, holistic family support work. Participants will be invited to consider and discuss skills required for good practice in this field, including how to work constructively and safely with family members who have caused harm and how to avoid ‘traps’ that beset family support work, such as enmeshment, collusion or being misled by disguised compliance.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Facilitating Collaborative Support Planning during Family Engagement Meetings

Paul Gamino, Larimer County, Colorado DHS, Fort Collins, CO

When Support Plans are developed early in the case, they can be used to measure success and help determine case closure. An important aspect of developing good support plans is to include the family and support network in the process so they can begin practicing the plan when the areas of concern are active. Support plans can be reviewed in subsequent meetings and consults to help caseworkers present the work with “real-life” examples they family has practiced to keep children safe. In this training, participants will learn skills and strategies when facilitating meetings where Support Plans are created and reviewed.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

The Psychological Impact of Kinship Care on the Family System

William Nunnally and John Van Horn, Heartland for Children, Bartow, FL

Kinship care placements of dependent children breakdown at a generally higher rate than licensed foster care placements. This is often due to the lack of support kinship caregivers are provided by the system. Professionals can prevent many of these breakdowns by developing a supportive relationship with the caregiver and the family system starting at the initial meeting. Linking kin caregivers to their natural supports can also have very positive outcomes. This session provides the professional worker with tools and strategies for engaging the entire family system. Additionally, the presenters will review the Kinship Care community project launched two years ago in Florida’s Judicial Circuit 10 and discuss family stability outcomes as well as future planning.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice
Colorado contains 75% of the land area of the U.S. with an altitude over 10,000 feet.

**Doing Engagement in a Context of Racism and White Privilege**  
*Anna Rockhill and Carrie Furrer, Portland State University, Portland, OR*

Taking engagement seriously means acknowledging racism, white privilege, and the many other sources of marginalization/oppression that work against shared decision-making, inclusion, and shared power in child welfare. In this workshop we: describe our emerging understanding of the mechanisms of marginalization/oppression that are relevant to our FGDM project; share some of our efforts to identify and challenge them; and invite workshop participants to share their successes, challenges, and insights regarding this important work.  

**TRACK:** Family Group Decision Making  
**THEME:** Marginalized Populations

**Seek, Share, Soar: Take Off and Transform Through Person-Centered Coaching**  
*Lauren Hutto and Kasey Matz, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO*

Coaching is emerging as a prolific form of professional development in child welfare systems. The chosen coach approach determines the depth and breadth of desired change. Come aboard and fasten your seat belts—we will soar to new heights and explore the land of person-centered coaching—where you are the pilot of your life’s plane and you are the navigator of change. Together, we will travel to places where the time is now and the temperature is warm.  

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** Workforce

**Engagement in the Context of Families with Substance Use Disorders**  
*Linda Newton-Curtis, Human Services Research Institute, Tualatin, OR; Beth Kinney, Summit County Children Services, Akron, OH; and Mary M. Martell, Summit County Health Department, Akron, OH*

Funded through a Regional Partnership Grant, ‘STARS’ is a multi-system collaboration between county human service agencies for drug- or alcohol-affected child welfare-involved families; a particularly high risk, high needs population. A year after implementation a family drug court was added as an adjunct for some STARS families. We describe the programs’ evolution, the strategies taken to engage and maintain engagement of family members and the infrastructure and service changes that emerged as necessary to fully support family engagement over time. Finally we present visitation ‘training briefs’ that we developed and are starting to use to re-engage some caregivers with visitation.  

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** System Infrastructure

**Family Finding: It Takes Time, Results from a Family Finding Pilot**  
*David Crampton and Chris Stormann, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH*

Family Finders hope that making family connections helps children in foster care return to their parents or find a permanent placement with another family member. Yet, early evaluations of Family Finding do not demonstrate these benefits (Vandivere and Malm, 2015). A recent pilot evaluation in Cuyahoga County, Ohio suggests that it takes time for Family Finding to achieve permanency outcomes. It takes time for an agency delivering Family Finding to establish a productive working relationship with a public child welfare agency and for engaged family members to help encourage permanency. In this workshop, we will present the pilot results and engage workshop participants in a discussion of taking time in Family Finding. The taking time hypothesis may be useful for interpreting the results of Family Finding evaluations and for helping Family Finders understand the practice.  

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** Policy, Research & Evaluation
Predicting and Promoting Staff Support of Differential Response in Child Welfare Agencies

Michael T. Braun and Yu-Ling Chiu, Children and Family Research Center, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL; Stacy Lake, Oregon Department of Human Services, Salem, OR; and Julie Murphy, Pacific Research & Evaluation, Portland, OR

Child welfare agencies that adopt evidence-supported interventions (ESIs) such as Differential Response (DR) may use concepts from implementation science to guide translation of ESIs into worker practice. The success of these efforts depends in part on worker support for the intervention. This presentation explores the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) staged rollout of DR and associated staff support for the program. It includes description of Oregon’s efforts to build support for DR, as well as quantitative and qualitative data collected from the Children and Family Research Center’s evaluation of Oregon’s DR implementation.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

3:30pm - 5:00pm  Breakout Sessions

Building Family Engagement and Inclusion through Parent Leadership in Australia

Jessica Cocks, Life Without Barriers, Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia

Family engagement is recognized in Australia as a pathway to better child outcomes. Despite the availability of family group conferencing and other models, family engagement and inclusion remains relatively low. This workshop will first provide an overview of family engagement in Australian child welfare systems. Secondly the work of a parent and worker coalition to improve family inclusion will be described using a case study approach. Through this, family inclusive practice, including learning from the lived experience of parents who have had children removed, will be conceptualized as both a set of family engagement strategies and as a way to improve agency culture.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Looking Deeper: Tools and Concepts to Achieve Greater Insight and Intervention

Michelle Dossey, Arapahoe County DHS, Aurora, CO

This session will use lessons learned from one local county’s internal reviews of child fatalities, near fatalities and egregious harm cases. The goal is to help child welfare professionals learn to gather an accurate picture of the history in order to better prepare for and inform the assessment/case, and to deepen the understanding of how history should impact our interventions. We will discuss well known risk factors and predictive indicators, and spend time encouraging less incident focused assessments. This session will teach child welfare professionals the importance of spending more time clinically assessing the root causes of abuse/neglect, clarifying contributing factors, patterns and themes, with the ultimate goal of breaking the cycle of abuse and neglect and preventing recurrence.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice
The Ground We Stand On: The Role of Presence and Values in Effective Engagement
Wilma Friesema, EPIC O’hana, Inc., Honolulu, HI

Engagement is enhanced when we skillfully use techniques such as: active listening, empathy, reframing, and summarizing. Beneath those techniques, however, is you and your capacity to be present and authentic. Your ability to show up (presence), and what you show up with (values), directly impacts the quality and depth of the engagement that you have with families, providers, and co-workers. In this workshop, through exercises and discussion, we will talk about presence and how to deepen that capacity within. The Presenter will also share the wisdom of two universal Hawaiian values that support effective engagement.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Supervising for Partnership and Safety, Part 2: Planning
Phil Decter, NCCD Children’s Research Center, Madison, WI

It is well documented that the quality of relationship between social workers and families has a great deal to do with enhancing outcomes for clients. Equally well know is the critical role supervision plays in ensuring quality control and in supporting worker skill development. This workshop, part 2 of 2, focuses on the role supervisors can and should play with staff to ensure all are equipped to create collaboratively made, behaviorally based, network supported plans with the children, youth and families they serve. Distinctions and similarities between safety plans, support plans and treatment or case plans will be discussed. Specific supervisory strategies tools will be demonstrated that allow supervisors to ensure staff are creating meaningful and useful plans for the problems families are facing. Note: While this workshop will build on the elements of part 1, it is not required that participants attend the first part to come to this.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: Practice

Wažoki Means Family: Family Group Decision Making with Winnebago Families
Dondieneita Fleary-Simmons and Connie Bear-King, National Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation (QIC-AG), Southfield, MI; Chiara Cournoyer Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska; Winnebago, NE and Rowena Fong, University of Texas, Austin, TX

Winnebago Human Services is partnering with the QIC-AG to develop culturally-congruent practices that increase permanency outcomes for children. Ho-Chunk values and teachings support a collective practice for ensuring that children are loved, nurtured, taught and protected within families, clans, and the tribe. This session explores the process of adapting Family Group Conferencing to support Winnebago families in making permanency decisions. Adaptations were drawn from the wisdom of elders, and reflect the Ho-Chunk language and the roles ascribed to family members. We will also consider the efficacy of using linear Western implementation strategies in an indigenous community.

TRACK: Family Group Decision Making
THEME: Marginalized Populations

Learning Family Engagement Child Welfare Practice: An Agency-University Teaching and Learning Collaboration
Nancy Freymond and Katie Drysdale, Wilfrid Laurier University, Brantford, Ontario Canada

This interactive workshop invites participants to explore how students and new workers learn family engagement child welfare practice. We discuss a child welfare agency-university teaching and learning collaboration where the values of family engagement child welfare practice are central. Students are encouraged to critically reflect on their own values, beliefs and assumptions, make connections to their families, participate in visits to child welfare sites and engage in intensive discussions with service users and workers. The teaching is a collaborative process involving services users, child welfare workers, members of the broader child welfare community and professors. In addition to sharing the results of an evaluation of student learning, we reflect on how this collaboration is transforming the organizational cultures of our institutions.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Workforce
Putting All the Pieces Together: Coaching to a Paradigm Shift
Christa M Doty, Butler Institute for Families at the University of Denver, Denver, CO; and Sandra Davidson and Michael Dunbar, Administration of Children Services, New York, NY

Have you ever seen a person putting together a puzzle without patience, perseverance and a plan…they usually give up in 5 minutes! Shifting to a Differential Response approach can be like starting with a bunch of jigsaw pieces randomly on a table and hoping to end with a successful paradigm shift that supports children and families. In this lively, active workshop you will hear how Butler Institute and Administration of Children Services in New York City has utilized coaching at all levels within the system to create plans, providing space for patience in the process and support perseverance in challenging environments.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: System Infrastructure

Are We Doing What We Think We’re Doing? Assessing FGDM Fidelity in Multiple Jurisdictions
Lisa Merkel-Holguin, Heather Allan, Dana Hollinshead, Dustin Currie, and John Fluke, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO

Family meetings are a ubiquitous feature of child welfare practice both nationally and internationally. While many types of family meetings exist, each with their own goals, structure, participants, and degree of decision-making authority granted to families, little is known about the degree to which meetings adhere to their core components and how different types of participants (i.e. family versus service providers) perceive them – not only within agencies, but across agencies. Simply put, does FGDM look the same in Texas as it does in Minnesota? Does it look the same to Mom as it does to the child welfare caseworker? This session explores the development of an FGDM fidelity tool and its use in multiple U.S. jurisdictions in addition to discussing findings. Interpretations and implications regarding parallel and disparate findings will be discussed.

TRACK: Family Group Decision Making
Theme: Policy, Research & Evaluation

Family Assessment Response in Connecticut: Lessons Learned from Implementation and Evaluation Findings
Patricia M Carlson, Brenda Kurz, UConn School of Social Work, West Hartford CT; and Kimberly Nilson, CT Department of Children and Families, Hartford CT

This presentation will trace the implementation of Connecticut’s statewide Differential Response (DR) model, Family Assessment Response (FAR), including its partnership with a Performance Improvement Center (PIC) which provides continuous quality improvement services. Families served by FAR and its related Community Support for Families Program, level of family engagement, the extent of their satisfaction with Connecticut’s model, and families’ risk assessment profiles will be described and outcomes including rates of subsequent and subsequent substantiated reports of child maltreatment will be shared. How the Connecticut model relates to DR’s core elements, lessons learned, and relevance to other jurisdictions will be discussed.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation
Integrating Narrative Practices within the Family Finding Approach
Bob Friend and Mike Mertz, National Institute for Permanent Family Connectedness, Seneca Family of Agencies, Oakland, CA

This seminar will briefly outline the purpose and intent of integrating Narrative practice activities into the Family Finding approach, and then provide the opportunity for participants to learn and apply Appreciative Inquiry, Intentional Strengths and the Tree of Life in their work. Mike Mertz and Bob Friend will facilitate attendees’ participation in each of these activities further their understanding of the approach and assist them to bring these activities back to their work. Handouts detailing the Tree of Life and Intentional Strengths will also be provided.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Domestic Violence-Informed Supervisory Practice: Coaching Workers toward More Child-Centered Practice in Domestic Violence Cases
Heidi Rankin, Safe & Together Institute, Canton, CT

Domestic violence is one of the most challenging issues workers face on their caseload. Fears for their safety, the safety of women and children, and a lack of confidence, experience and skills working with perpetrators are frequent issues. Supervisors can help their workers using coaching that balances off support, critical review of the case work and domestic violence-informed practice guidance. Using videos that demonstrate domestic violence-informed supervisory practice, this session will offer practical coaching tips for supervisors who want to help their workers perform more effectively in domestic violence cases.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Motivating for Change
Missy Berglund and Nicole Overfield, Butler Institute for Families, University of Denver, Denver, CO

When working with families, our goal is to empower and support them if a path of change is necessary to ensure the safety of children. Thus, understanding the cycle of change and how to meet families where they are on their path is essential. Join us as we explore how the techniques of Motivational Interviewing can support us as we collaborate with families.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: Practice

Coaching Parents in “Present Moment Parenting” to Stabilize Families
Tina Fegigal, Center for the Challenging Child and Anu Family Services, Inc., St. Paul, MN

Ever wonder why typical parenting, therapy, and teaching techniques are ineffective with some children? Parenting these children can be such a challenge, and often results in disruptions in family life that leave everyone exhausted and hopeless. Parent coaching is highly effective in “coming alongside” adults as they learn the real origins of unwanted behavior (it’s not disrespect) and how to connect with their children in unique and healthy ways. Present Moment Parenting applies to all children, ages 2-18, but is especially helpful for children with ADHD, ODD, autism, or any child whose behavior does not improve with typical methods.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice
Signs of Safety: An Engagement Model Across Programs
Courtney Smith and Lindley Myers, Blue Spiral Consulting, Black Mountain, NC

Signs of Safety is first and foremost a model based on family engagement in which building a relationship with the family involves including them in the planning process and supporting them in finding natural and community supports (rather than just formal services) to improve the situation they find themselves in. The presenters will talk about their work in Wilson County, NC where the local DSS’s implementation of Signs of Safety has led to a dramatic decrease in foster care placements and recidivism. Participants will have an opportunity examine the framework of the Signs of Safety model as well as the comprehensive suite of tools, available to capture the child’s voice and the family’s plan, including a three column tool for mapping cases and for supervision and a four-step framework to motivate families. The presenters will demonstrate how it merges seamlessly with the philosophical views of Differential Response and other programs as well as how it is being used in Wilson County as a unifying engagement model for all DSS Programs and community providers.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: Practice

Creating and Sustaining a Thriving Workforce: What’s Neuroscience, Reflection and Engagement Got to Do with It?
Stefanie Nieto Johnson, Independent Executive Coach and Trainer, San Jose, California; Karri Biehle, Independent Executive Coach and Trainer, Berkeley, California

Engagement is a word commonly used to describe a practice that should be used by practitioners who serve youth and families, but engaging staff at all levels of an organization is just as important to create and maintain a strong, resilient and thriving workforce. In this workshop participants will: learn the role neuroscience plays in how we engage with others; practice creating an environment that encourages reflection and supports dialogue that identifies barriers to engagement; and leave with tools and strategies that they can apply immediately to create meaningful conversations.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Workforce

What’s Me Got to Do With It?
Michelle Howard, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO

Have you ever deeply considered what has drawn you to the work that you do? Is it the pay? Likely not. What about you helps you to do your job well? What sets you apart from others? Working in human services and in particular the child welfare field, requires a unique, well-honed set of skills that enables you to guide families towards creating safety, stability and well-being for children in their care. The best work comes from skills that are cultivated from the inside and manifested outwardly in the work. Whether you are charged with convening formal family meetings, such as family group conferences or family team meetings, or meeting informally with families to complete family assessments and engage in strength based child welfare practice; this workshop is for you. To support you in your journey toward providing superior service to children and families, you will engage in a self-directed process of learning to bring the best of you to the work and leverage opportunities to bring out the best in families in an authentic and culturally inclusive way. This session invites you to take a look at you!

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Workforce
Using the Science of Happiness to Retain Staff
Dan Comer, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO

How many of the difficulties you face can be traced back to the loss of staff? Are your retention efforts working as you would like? This session will guide learners to using the new science of happiness to build resilient teams. Learners will develop creative action plans for their teams as they explore and experience the various components (relationships, acts of kindness, physical well-being, flow, meaning, strengths, and mindsets) of the science of happiness. You will leave engaged, energized, and encouraged.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Workforce

Angela Braxton, Dee Bonnick, Sherry Tomlinson, and Tanya Long, Independent Parent Consultant Group, Kansas City, KS

Independent Parent Consultants is an innovative approach to birth parent involvement whereby agencies partner with nationally recognized parents to integrate authentic expertise in their improvement efforts. This seminar provides an overview of the role of Parent Consultants and participants will have the opportunity to work with consultants to identify and address infrastructure developments or enhancements that truly embed and sustain birth parent engagement. This seminar is suited for managers and senior administrators who are interested in implementing meaningful parent involvement strategies, or who have experienced challenges in achieving successful involvement practices.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: System Infrastructure

11:30am - 1:00pm   Lunch and Keynote

“It’s All Relative … But It’s My Relative” by Nancy Parker

Nancy Parker was one of the first female standup comedians in the early seventies in New York City. Along with Elayne Boosler and Emily Levine she helped pave the way for other female comedians to follow. She managed to succeed while attending the all boys’ club and has appeared on major talk shows such as Arsenio Hall, Merv Griffin, and Don Kirschner’s Rock Concert, to name a few, as well as a recurring role on ABC’s show, SLEDGEHAMMER.

She was an opening act for Johnny Mathis, and the Pointer Sisters, and has performed her comedy at Carnegie Hall in January, 1980. In the early nineties her well known impressions of celebrities made the circuit of morning zoos on the radio. For over five years, she was one of the main writers and performers at the American Comedy Network, which provided comedy routines for hundreds of radio stations around the country. Twenty four years ago she adopted her daughter Rebecca and pretty much retired from showbiz. She then entered the world of medical advertising and for fifteen years she ran all the classified advertising for over 450,000 physicians, clinicians and pharmacists at McMahon Publishing. After that Nancy worked at NAMI NYC Metro as their in house Parent Advocate for over three years, and started their parent’s support group over fifteen years ago.

Cut to the present – At the moment Nancy is the Director of Parent Advocates at CHDFS, (Center for Human Development and Family Services.) When there is a concern for a child’s safety in the home, ACS holds an initial child safety conference. The Parent Advocates at CHDFS attend these conferences with the parents to offer support and resources. There are just about forty parent advocates that work in Manhattan, Staten Island, and the Bronx. As if this is not enough, Nancy is attending Hunter College at night to get a Bachelor’s degree in Sociology.

As a playwright Nancy has had readings of her plays at the famed Abingdon Theater in NYC, and her play, UNCONDITIONAL LOVE…ON ONE CONDITION about her journeys through the mental health system with her daughter was performed at Rockland Psychiatric Hospital for clinicians and family members, where a panel discussion followed after. Finally, Nancy never really left show business behind as she has held quite a few fundraisers with the support of her friends, Joy Behar, Susie Essman, Mario Cantone, Colin Quinn, and Rosie O’Donnell.
The Family Group Conference (FGC) Series focuses on the New Zealand model of family group decision making, practiced all over the world. The Series offers workshops during each time slot of the conference. The workshops are sequentially structured to follow the FGC process from referral to follow-up and are based on the six core elements of FGDM. We invite you to attend any or all of the Series workshops, and if you decide to float in and out, we’d highly recommend that you attend the first workshop on Wednesday, October 18, as it will provide the foundational information about FGC on which the subsequent Series workshops will be based.

This Series will also be offered virtually, for those who unable to attend this year’s conference in person. This means that from anywhere in the world, with a computer, internet and phone line, and for a registration fee of $400 you can participate. Due to operational expenses, we will only be able to offer this virtual option if we have enough registrants to counter the cost. Please see the Registration page for more details.

Presenters include Marilee Sherry from Canada, Sharon Inglis from the United Kingdom and Kelli DeCook, Lisa Merkel-Holguin and Anita Horner from the United States.

WEDNESDAY, October 18, 2017

Session #1: Getting Grounded: An Overview of FGC 10:30am - 12:00pm MT
Lisa Merkel-Holguin, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO

The Family Group Conference (FGC) was first legislated in New Zealand in 1989 through the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act. Since then, the FGC has been implemented, at times with modifications, by child welfare systems in over 25 countries. In most other countries, the FGC is not legislatively enshrined; rather, it is guided by policy or considered a “best practice.” In addition to the FGC, it is common for child welfare agencies to implement a range of family meeting models. This opening session will lay the philosophical foundation for the FGC series, covering: the history of FGC; principles and philosophies; core elements of FGDM; and the FGC meeting structure, participants, and roles of service providers, family and the FGC Coordinator.

Session #2: Referrals to FGC: The First Step in the Preparation Process for a Family Group Conference 1:45-3:15pm MT
Marilee Sherry, Coordinator/Manager FGDM Team, Brant Family and Children’s Services, Brantford, ON Canada

The referral process is the first step in setting up a Family Group Conference for success through transparency of child welfare information and expectations, preparation of the child welfare team to support family leadership in the FGC process, and addressing the inherent power imbalance between family systems and agency systems. Come join us in exploring the following components of the referral process: criteria for a referral to FGC, child welfare team role, coordinator role, referral process, consents, gathering relevant information from the child welfare team, establishing ‘child welfare concerns to be addressed in order to accept the FGC plan’, confirming accuracy of the child welfare information and concerns to be addressed, timelines, and acceptance of referral.
Session #3: Widening the Circle  
Kelli DeCook, Family Service Rochester, Rochester, MN

Widening a child’s circle of support is a key component to a Family Group Conference. In this session, discovery tools and resources, along with engagement skills and techniques to partner with family and providers, will be explored. Participants will be able to identify how referring workers, coordinators, parents and family can partner in identifying extended family and supports and what strategies can be used to engage family members who are hesitant to the idea of widening the circle. Additionally, this session will expand on how to creatively use the internet and social media sites in finding family members, how Mobility Mapping is used to engage participants in the process and how technology can assist geographically separated families to be more closely involved in the process.

THURSDAY, October 19, 2017

Session #4: Preparation, Preparation, Preparation: Enhancing Coordinator Skills
Kelli DeCook, Family Service Rochester, Rochester, MN and Marilee Sherry, Brant Family and Children’s Services, Brantford, ON Canada

Preparation of every participant in the FGC circle helps position the family group to assume leadership. Preparation is grounded in the right of family groups to have information about what has happened to their child/youth, the principle of transparency of child welfare information, the impartial and fair role of the coordinator, and the principle of no surprises from the child welfare agency during the FGC meeting itself. During this workshop we will explore best practices during the preparation phase of the FGC and discuss why preparation is best practice. The main focus of this workshop is to help enhance coordinator preparation skills in the following areas: how to prepare FGC participants, including parents, other family members, and children; and planning for a safe-enough space: commonly encountered challenges. Come join us for a lively discussion and for the opportunity to enhance your skills.

Session #5: The Conference – Opening, Information Sharing and Private Family Time
Sharon Inglis, Circles Training & Consultancy Limited, United Kingdom, and Anita Horner, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO

In preparation of the meeting our role as coordinators is to explore, identify and enthuse the family. In the meeting itself, our role is carefully and respectfully supporting the family in their meeting. This workshop will focus on the Opening, Information Sharing and Private Family Time stages of the FGC. We will be exploring: how we honor the leadership, values and cultures within the family group; how to ensure that they are provided with all information needed to make well-informed decisions and plans; how children and young people are included; how to address any potential power-imbalances in order to uphold that the FGC is family-driven; and how to understand when the family is ready for their private time and if and when to intervene.

Session #6: The Conference – Plan Finalization: “It’s Like Trying to Nail JELL-O to a Wall!” – The Complexities of the Third Stage of the FGC
Sharon Inglis, Circles Training & Consultancy Limited, United Kingdom

In training, it sounds so easy: “The family group will present their plan to the referring worker.” But rarely is the third stage of the family group conference so straightforward. It is, however, a critical part of the process, and the implementation of the plan can succeed or fail depending on how it is managed. This workshop will give participants an opportunity to examine the balance between respecting family leadership and decision making and acknowledging that the plan also has to fit into a bureaucratic process led organization. Participants will be encouraged to consider the roles of the coordinator, the family and the referring worker; to explore the challenges and barriers to good outcomes; and to share good practice.
Session #7: What’s Next? A Focus on Follow-Up
Anita Horner, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO
8:30-10:00am MT

Why is follow-up vital to the successful implementation of the plan? What does follow-up really entail? How does a follow-up conference differ from an initial conference? How can effective follow-up occur while continuing to support a family-driven process? This session will focus on defining and more thoroughly understanding the function and vital role of the follow-up component of the FGC process; how it directly impacts the successful implementation of the plan after a conference is held; and how to support and implement effective follow-up efforts, while maintaining a family-driven process that is reflective of FGC values and philosophy.

Session #8: Integrated Learning Discussion Group
Kelli DeCook, Family Service Rochester, Rochester, MN and Marilee Sherry, Brant Family and Children’s Services, Brantford, ON Canada
10:15-11:45am MT

Let’s gather together to share and debrief what we have learned about FGC during the FGDM conference and the FGC series. This session is open to all conference attendees, independent of whether you participated in one, some or all of the sessions that were part of the FGC series. Discussion questions will include: What did you learn about FGC during the conference that was new or reinforcing? What moments of insight did you have? What can I feasibly integrate about FGC into my community? What are the steps I can take when I get home? What is happening with FGC around the world? What does the FGC community need to do in order to support the installation, growth or sustainability of FGC in our communities? How can we work together to support FGC around the world, and what do we need to support our efforts? What themes have we identified during this series and/or conference?
PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES for the FGC SERIES

KELLI DECOOK has over 16 years of experience in the implementation of Family Group Decision Making and other Family Engagement Strategies. She has coordinated and facilitated over 500 family meetings, supervised a team of 9 independent coordinator/facilitators and has been a champion of family involvement in decision making in Olmsted County MN and throughout the state. She has presented at numerous national conferences and has provided training on FGDM and family engagement throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. She holds a MSW from the University of Minnesota and is currently the Director of Child Welfare Services at Family Service Rochester in Rochester MN.

ANITA HORNER began her work in Family Group Decision Making in 1996, and received training from several New Zealanders. She was a Family Group Conference (FGC) Coordinator at both Denver and Arapahoe Counties, and later supervised the FGC program at Arapahoe County for 3.5 years before becoming the Manager of the National Center on Family Group Decision Making in 2005. She provides training, consultation, coaching and technical assistance in Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) program implementation and practice to service providers and community leaders both nationally and internationally, in locations including Canada, Bermuda and New Zealand. Additionally, she is a Senior Instructor, Manager of Practice Advancements, and START Coordinator at the Kempe Center at the University of Colorado Denver. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Speech Communication from the University of Denver.

SHARON INGLIS has worked with children, families and social workers since 1991 and is passionate about putting decision making back into the hands of families. She is the founder and director of Circles Training & Consultancy, an agency established in 2006 to support the development and implementation of family group conferences. This has led to working in a restorative way with families, workers, leadership teams and communities - encouraging them to recognize and utilize their interconnectedness. Having worked with family systems for over 20 years, she recently graduated from Ashridge Business School with a Master’s degree in organizational change - using her experience with families to influence social work practice. Most recently she worked with Leeds City Council to develop their vision of a Child Friendly City by co-designing and delivering a restorative leadership program that enlivened the organizational culture. Subsequently Leeds has received national acclaim for its leadership and social work practice.

LISA MERKEL-HOLGUIN has over 25 years of experience in identifying, developing, and implementing innovative reforms into child welfare systems, particularly in areas of child safety and permanency. An Assistant Research Professor at the University of Colorado Denver, and the Director of the National Center on FGDM, she is regarded as playing an integral and leading role in two major reforms that U.S. child welfare systems have been broadly adopted—family group decision making and differential response. She supported the installation of these and other evidence-informed innovations in child welfare agencies in over 40 States and a number of Canadian provinces. As a principal investigator, senior research analyst and team member, she has involved with three Family Connection grants studying the impacts of different types of family meetings, and the National Quality Improvement Center on Differential Response in Child Protective Services. She holds an MSW from the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana.

MARILEE SHERRY MSW, RSW has been a FGC/FGDM Coordinator and Manager for Family Group Decision Making Team at Brant Family and Children’s Services, Brantford, Ontario Canada since 2005. She is a FGC/FGDM trainer and mentor for new coordinators in Ontario and has provided training for coordinators in New Brunswick and the US. Her passion is transforming child welfare through the leadership of the children and their families who are receiving child welfare services, particularly through FGC/FGDM, and has been focused on embedding these values and principles in the child welfare system locally and provincially. She spent seven years as a front-line child protection worker and manager. She has her MSW from Wilfrid Laurier University (Waterloo, Ontario) and has been employed with the Brant FACS since 1998.
1:15pm - 2:45pm (Thursday)  Breakout Sessions

**Partnership Training: Bridging the Gap between What We Say and What We Do**
Kara Allen-Eckard and Marcella Middleton, Center for Family and Community Engagement at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC

Partnership training promotes the development and delivery of training that includes the perspective of those who have received services and those who provide services. In North Carolina, the Family-Agency Collaborative Training Team (FACTT) has supported the development of these partnerships since 2007. Recognizing that family and youth are the consistent thread woven through all of our child serving systems, the FACTT group has worked with family partner trainers to develop resources that support equal partnership and voice in all system training efforts. This presentation will share resources developed by FACTT to support these training partnerships. These resources help to identify and remedy the power differentials often found in agency-family partnerships.

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** Practice

**Permanency Is All of Our Business**
Deb DeLuca-Forzley, Larimer County DHS, Fort Collins, CO; Kit Thompson, Boulder County Housing and Human Services, Boulder, CO; and Carrie Porter, Fremont County Department of Human Services, Canon City, CO

Have you tried to engage youth in planning for their future and found it difficult? Would you like to improve your outcomes for permanency and creating connections for youth? Come hear how three counties in Colorado are using permanency round tables to assure youth have a voice, have ownership of the plan and overcome barriers in getting to permanency. We will discuss how family engagement strategies and family finding have helped in the journey toward permanency for children and youth. You’ll also hear statements from youth who have been involved. Come share and learn all about Youth Voice Permanency Roundtables!

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** Practice

**Understanding Adolescent Brain Development to Effectively Support Youth Who Experience Foster Care**
Leslie Gross and Alexandra Lohrbach, Annie E Casey Foundation, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, Baltimore, MD, and Young Fellow TBD

This session is designed to address and reflect on the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative’s belief that better understanding adolescent development leads to more meaningful and effective child welfare and foster care engagement strategies. Presenters will share relevant adolescent brain development concepts on how adolescence is a unique period of time different from both early childhood and adulthood; how healthy adolescent development depends on opportunities and health relationships; the importance and interconnection between risk-taking and reward-seeking; and vital information needed for taking knowledge of the adolescent brain and putting it into daily practice.

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** Practice
Utilizing Advocacy Groups, Individuals and the Community to Engage Families: Prevention Strategies
Kecia S. Blackson, Child Placement Review Board, Wilmington, DE; and Ajawavi Ajavon, Dab Mediation Consultants, Wilmington, DE

In this session, participants will discuss innovative, creative and non-adversarial ways to engage parents and families before (prevention) allegations of child abuse and neglect are made as well as during the investigation and reunification processes. Particular focus will be given to often marginalized groups including fathers, immigrants, and parents re-entering the community from prison.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Marginalized Populations

Choosing Champions
Maryetta Clarkson, Family Links Consulting Group, LLC, Longwood, FL; Sonia Lynch-Dillard, Hope Connections Unlimited, LLC, Brooksville, FL; and Malveria Carter, Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health, Bushnell, FL

This workshop will address the importance of choosing the right individuals to facilitate Family Group Decision Making/Family Team Conference meetings. The workshop will focus on the knowledge, skills, attitude and character traits of effective facilitators, and it will explore screening and interview tools to identify these in perspective employees. The three presenters, who have been facilitating and/or training FGDM facilitators for more than nine years, will share their expertise in selecting facilitators. This will be accomplished by introducing interview tools, conducting a role play, and using interactive scenarios. Participants can expect to leave this session with strategies for Choosing Champions.

TRACK: Family Group Decision Making
THEME: Workforce

Implementing Family Finding Down Under: Thoughts and Lessons from Three States in Australia
Jennifer McConachy, Berry Street, Richmond, Victoria, Australia; Pam Swinfield, Department of Family and Children’s Services, New South Wales, Australia; Melanie Samuels, Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Western Australia, Australia; and Lisa Curtis, Northern Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Preston, Victoria, Australia

This jointly prepared presentation aims to explore the strengths and challenges in different approaches to the implementation of Kevin Campbell’s Family Finding model in three different states in Australia. The audience will be invited to participate in discussion, reflection and planning throughout the presentation to enable them to tailor the information provided to their specific situations. This presentation will be of relevance to agencies who are thinking about or at the early stages of implementation, as well as offering a chance for reflection for agencies who have already commenced using the model.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: System Infrastructure

There are nearly 20 rivers whose headwaters begin in Colorado, with the Continental Divide directing each river’s course.
Engaging Families through Differential Response: Long-term Safety and Cost Outcomes from a Randomized Controlled Trial in Colorado
Marc Winokur, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO and Matt Holtman, Colorado Department of Human Services, Denver, CO

Five counties from Colorado participated in a multi-year randomized controlled trial (RCT) to examine the effect of Differential Response on child safety outcomes and child welfare costs. This workshop will describe key findings from a four-year follow-up of the RCT for families who received either a family assessment response or a traditional investigation response. Results from administrative data will be featured, and lessons learned for policy, research, and evaluation will be discussed. The purpose of this workshop is to assist jurisdictions in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this innovative approach to family engagement in child welfare.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

Methodology for Continuous Performance Improvement for Family Engagement Services in South Carolina
Emma Schmitt, National Youth Advocate Program, Charleston, SC; Cathy Milless, National Youth Advocate Program, Johns Island, SC; Pat Patrick South Carolina DSS, North Charleston, SC and Shaneka Oliver, South Carolina DSS, Columbia, SC

The continuous performance improvement structure for Family Engagement Services (FES) employed in South Carolina over the last two years since implementation in June 2015 is comprised of a number of interrelated but unique components that in coordination produce high quality service delivery. This structure and process is implemented in all 26 counties of South Carolina served with FES to ensure we benefit families through effective service delivery. All FES stakeholders, to include South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS), National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP), State Contract Monitors, and FES professionals are engaged in this process of evaluating FES service provider performance and implementing strategies for quality improvement.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

Know Thyself: The Genesis of Internal Evaluation at a Child Welfare Agency
Mollie Warren, Department of Human Services, City and County of Denver, CO

Implementing change, particularly the right change, is a constant need in the child welfare space. But how do you know which changes, if any, are needed in your organization? This panel will outline how the City and County of Denver’s Child Welfare division created an internal evaluation department dedicated to supporting data-driven decision making. Presenters will share the experience of building a research-focused team within a county-operated child welfare agency, including a brief overview of the team’s development and implementation. The session will include an open discussion focused on building internal evaluation programs and processes in any child welfare organization.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

In 1859, John Gregory discovered “The Gregory Lode”. Within two weeks, the gold rush was on. Within two months the population grew to 10,000 people.
**It Can’t Just be the Child: Trauma-Informed Parenting Interventions for Caregivers**

*Emily Ullrich and Lindsay Dickson, Specialized Alternatives for Family Youth (SAFY), Fort Collins, CO*

Often times, therapeutic treatment focuses on one identified individual’s needs. Challenging the idea that treatment can be effective if it only focuses on one person, this presentation will provide trauma-informed interventions to support caregivers in healing and treating the whole family. This presentation will also focus on common barriers encountered when working with a variety of primary caregivers and treatment foster parents including generational/age differences, traditional parenting techniques and service burnout.

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** Practice

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**Engaging Fathers: Improving Practice and Policy**

*Walter Johnson, Children’s Home Society of NC, Greensboro, NC*

Engaging fathers in child welfare efforts is critical, as research has shown their involvement to be a powerful influence on positive outcomes for youth. Yet this is easier said than done. Social workers and other professionals and volunteers working on behalf of youth may encounter numerous barriers to effective father engagement. This interactive workshop is designed to examine and address those barriers. Participants will be prompted to consider their own work and practices as they are guided through exercises that explore methods for encouraging a father’s participation.

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** Practice

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**Widening the Circle: Engaging and Sustaining Youth and Family Connections**

*Tess Mahnken-Weatherspoon and Michelle Belge, Hillside Children’s Center, Rochester, NY*

Family Finding is an evidence-informed model that has a significant healing effect on the lives of children, youth and families who have experienced trauma and become disconnected from one another. Just as relationships can hurt us most deeply, it is only through relationships that we can be most fully healed. Trauma-informed care encourages us to think not “what’s wrong with you?” but “what happened to you?” This presentation will review the Family Finding model and will share strategies and tools that can be used to help individuals, families and clinicians explore what happened to the youth/family by locating and engaging extended family members and other natural supports that can provide answers to those questions. Use of mobility mapping and connectedness maps will be reviewed and practiced. This presentation will provide an overview of the Family Finding model and how it offers opportunities for increased family engagement as it reconnects family members, and will provide an opportunity to experience some of the discovery and engagement activities that can be used to connect with families. The presentation will be both clinical and practice based.

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** Practice

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**Utilizing FGDM to Enhance Youth Transition Plans for Adolescents**

*Amy Carr, Justice Works Youth, Stroudsburg, PA and Colleen Cox, The Child Welfare Resource Center, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA*

This workshop will provide guidelines toward best practices to implement the Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) model into adolescent transition planning for those youth moving into adulthood. The Youth Transition Conference (YTC) framework encourages adolescents to take a leadership role in their own planning, recognizing that they do have caring adults who will be available as permanent connections in their life. YTC allows youth to set and plan for goals to ensure a successful transition to adulthood and future. This workshop will help participants see the importance of the supportive network identified and engaged during conferences, demonstrating the benefits of combining an established evidence-based model with a solid framework to enhance and ensure quality plans for youth, in addition to looking at continuous quality improvement around the ten planning domains for transition to adulthood.

**TRACK:** Family Group Decision Making  
**THEME:** Practice
Family Group Conferencing: Restoring Power Where It Belongs
Penelope Griffith, Collaborative Solutions for Communities, Washington, DC
The John Jay College of Criminal Justice Evaluation Center’s 2016 “Street by Street” evaluation of the Collaborative Solutions for Communities’ Youth Violence Intervention Program concludes, “Another strength was the effective implementation of specific services, such as employment assistance, critical incident response, and therapeutic interventions. The Collaborative used Solution-Focused Brief Therapy and Family Group Conferencing; these proved to be strong points of the Collaborative’s strategy.

TRACK: Family Group Decision Making
THEME: Marginalized Populations

Resilience Alliance: Helping Workers (and YOU) Bounce Back
Jennifer Lewis and Joanne Murphy, Larimer County Department of Human Services, Fort Collins, CO
Larimer County Department of Human Services, Children, Youth and Families works through a trauma informed lens to serve both clients AND employees. Resilience Alliance (RA) is a curriculum supported by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network that aims to address Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) at all organizational levels. This interactive presentation will provide program details and turnover outcomes, as well as guide participants through group activities, mindfulness exercises and other immediately implementable strategies to increase resilience and mitigate STS symptoms. These dynamic presenters will share from both a facilitation and participation lens to ensure a comprehensive learning experience.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Workforce

Abundant nesting and migrating birds provide a “world-class” watchable wildlife experience. Sandhill cranes can be seen at San Luis Lakes.
California’s Continuum of Care: Family Engagement and Integrated Core Practice Modeling as a Pathway to Foster Care Reform  
*Richard Knecht, Integrated Human Services Group, Sacramento, CA*

Family Engagement and principles of Family Group Decision Making have been central elements of California’s Foster Care and Juvenile Justice Reform work for more than 20 years. A number of engagement models have provided youth and family service agencies across the state with enhanced skills and learning, to better engage and deliver community centric and culturally competent care. In 2014, California embarked on the nation’s most auspicious and far reaching reforms of its foster care system, requiring legislative, fiscal, programmatic and management adaptation on every level and in every county. The state’s Continuum of Care Reform efforts have relied fundamentally on Family Engagement as the primary vehicle for transformation and change. This presentation will highlight the work in the nation’s largest foster and juvenile justice system, present lessons learned from design, development and stakeholder engagement work, engage participants in discussion of implications for large system reform, and identify early successes in some California counties.

**TRACK:** Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations  
**THEME:** System Infrastructure

Differential Response: How Much Is Too Much?  
*Kathryn A. Piper, VT*

This session will present the results of a study that examined the relationship between track assignment patterns and re-report rates for alternative response (AR) vs. traditional investigation response (TR) CPS cases in 13 states operating differential response programs using 2000-2012 NCANDS data. By definition families referred to the AR track should be at lower risk of recidivism than those on the TR track so one would expect to see a lower rate of re-reporting for AR cases compared to TR cases. However, the results of survival analysis showed this to be the case only in those states assigning less than 35% of cases to the AR track. This presentation will explore methods of DR implementation most likely to ensure that only lower risk cases are assigned to the AR.

**TRACK:** Differential Response  
**THEME:** Policy, Research & Evaluation

Program Theory for Family Group Decision Making: A Realist Synthesis of the Research Literature  
*Joan Pennell, Center for Family and Community Engagement, North Carolina State University; Lisa Merkel-Holguin, The Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO; Robin Sen, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom; David Crampton, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland OH; Anna Rockhill, Portland State University, Portland, OR; Gale Burford, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT; and Marlo Perry and Mary Beth Rauktis, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA*

This workshop examines emerging theories to explain where, how, and why FGDM works for different groups of families. The presenters applied a realist synthesis to check these theories against the strongest available research evidence. A realist approach identifies the program contexts and mechanisms that lead to divergent program outcomes. The presenters will describe realist synthesis, explain why FGDM lends itself to this review approach, describe their methodology, and outline their preliminary theories based on the research findings. They will engage workshop participants in a process of validating and refining these theories to improve FGDM practice, policy, and evaluation.

**TRACK:** Family Group Decision Making  
**THEME:** Policy, Research & Evaluation
Engaging Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in the FGDM Process
Malveria Carter and Stacey O’Rourke, Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health, Bushnell, FL; and Heidi Rankin, Safe and Together Institute, Canton, CT
This workshop will explain how Devereux Florida’s facilitators are using a combination of Family Team Conferences with components of David Mandel’s Safe and Together model to address domestic violence in child welfare. This collaborative effort not only serves the victims/survivors of Domestic Violence but also engages the perpetrator as a parent. This workshop will describe strategies used to engage the perpetrator in the FTC process by introducing a sample case, and will explore data about the use of the Safe and Together Model as a tool for perpetrator accountability in Child Welfare practice.
TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Empowering Families of Youth Involved with the Juvenile Justice System
Tammy Schneiderman and Elisa Hicks, Colorado Division of Youth Corrections, Denver, CO
This session will discuss shifting a juvenile justice system to a culture that embraces true family engagement. Families serve an integral role for any youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Engaging family members is one strategy to improve outcomes for youth by supporting positive relationships in the youth’s natural community. We will discuss the process of this culture shift for the Colorado Division of Youth Corrections including the role that family partners continue play as well as how barriers were identified and addressed. Time will be allowed for discussion and group learning.
TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Skills to Enhance Transparency with Families during Facilitated Meetings
Rebecca Trego, Gena Leonard-Johnson, and Kelly Karson-Davies, Boulder County Housing and Human Services, Boulder, CO
Do you want to improve your skills as a meeting facilitator? Have you ever wondered how you can ask more meaningful questions that promote transparency and respect in a family meeting? In this session the presenters will demonstrate how to use a framework to organize the group’s worries, family strengths, and create next steps during facilitated meetings. Participants will observe scripted role plays of family meetings to see firsthand which questions help caseworkers be clear about risks to children and also help participants clearly articulate safety goals. Participants will have an opportunity to give feedback after each role play about which questions and tools effectively engage families.
TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice
Parent Engagement through Anti-Oppressive Practice
Carrie Furrer and Anna Rockhill, Portland State University, Portland, OR

Parent engagement is a promising pathway for improving outcomes for children and families involved in the child welfare system. Although it sounds simple, the child welfare setting, an inherently coercive system that largely reflects dominant cultural norms, complicates engagement. Understanding engagement through an anti-oppressive practice lens could help child welfare workers support authentic parent engagement in this challenging context. The purpose of this session is to challenge assumptions about how parent engagement works, examine how child welfare practices can perpetuate oppression, and strategize to bring anti-oppressive practices into our work.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Marginalized Populations

Google Does It…Why Can’t We: Creating a Learning Culture for Success
Christa M Doty, and Carole Wilcox, Butler Institute for Families at the University of Denver, Denver, CO

Wouldn’t you like to be the Google of Human Services where the top talent scrambles to be hired by you? Where new and creative ideas are hatched every day through collaborative critical thinking? Come to this interactive workshop to explore how investing in a learning culture can support the workforce and our mission of safe and stable families. We will explore what a learning culture looks like, reflect on where your agency is in this journey, and explore ways you can directly influence this powerful philosophy.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Workforce

Engaging Parents and Preventing Maltreatment with Evidence-Based Home Visiting: An Evaluation of SafeCare Colorado
Rebecca Orsi, Kristy Beachy-Quick, and Helen Holmquist-Johnson, Social Work Research Center, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO and Julia Blomberg, Colorado Office of Early Childhood, Denver, CO

SafeCare® is an evidence-based home visiting curriculum that engages caregivers of children 0-5 through skills training for parenting, child safety and health. SafeCare Colorado was implemented by the Office of Early Childhood and the Kempe Center. Researchers at Colorado State University have evaluated SafeCare Colorado. Results provide an understanding of links between program referral sources and caregiver participation outcomes. Caregiver surveys and focus groups suggest high satisfaction with the program. Preliminary results from a propensity-matched study with administrative data suggest that caregivers completing SafeCare® may experience lower rates of future child welfare involvement than do caregivers in a comparison group.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

Hidden in Plain Sight: A Policy Position for the Involvement of Extended Family in Family Support Services. Exploring How to Make Strengths Based, Collaborative Practice a Reality
Jennifer McConachy, Monash University, Caulfield East, Victoria, Australia

This workshop begins by presenting the results of a recent PhD study that yielded a new policy position for family services, which emphasizes a collaborative, strengths based approach and recognizes the high value of relationships both within the family, and between the family and workers. The last hour of the session promotes audience participation in discussing the areas of contention identified in the study - including, should training or supervision be required of the family? How do workers juggle support to parents with support to a kinship placement? How do we manage demand? How do we evaluate the work?

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation
Building a Theory of Change for Family Assessment Response: The Foundation for Continuous Quality Improvement

Sandra Davidson, Administration for Children Services, New York, NY; and Krista Thomas, Chapin Hall, Chicago, IL

During this session, New York City Administrative staff and consultants will chronicle the process of developing a Theory of Change for Family Assessment Response (FAR) in New York City through a collaborative process that facilitates shared planning and consensus building about the FAR approach, and yields a tool that can be used to guide implementation, continuous quality improvement, and communication. The team will also share tools and tips with audience members hoping to undergo a similar process. If time permits, local teams will be given a chance to break out and plan their own logic model development processes, and then share the fruits of their discussions with the larger group.

TRACK: Differential Response
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

Using Mediation Tools to Manage Conflict within the Child Welfare System

Gary A Crist and Julie Smith, Larimer County Department of Human Services, Fort Collins, CO

Having the ability to understand and manage conflict can be the difference between a conflict spiraling out of control or being managed in a way that parties feel understood, valued, and engaged. In many family engagement encounters, conflicts are either poorly managed or ignored altogether with the repercussions sometimes affecting child safety. This training provides the basic knowledge and skills needed to understand and manage conflicts within your family engagement process. Learn how to understand conflict as a natural organic process and use mediation tools such as meeting purpose, breaks, understanding positions and interests, and group agreements to mindfully manage conflictual situations.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Behind Every Engaged Father…

Michelle Howard, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO

…is a committed practitioner. For several years there has been a more intense focus on father engagement in child welfare and other child and family serving agencies. This of course is great but how has it changed your agencies practices? How has it changed you? How has it improved the outcomes for the children you serve? This workshop will take you a step beyond the statistics, tools, tips and strategies and engage you in an exploration of application. Attendees are encouraged to bring their case experiences, both successes and opportunities, to share during this engaging learner-led workshop. Workshop attendee’s will: discover internal values and biases held and how those values and biases support or hinder success with engaging fathers; and employ critical thinking and participate in targeted discussions while employing critical thinking that generates insight and father engagement skill development. Come develop your vision for your next steps in father engagement.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice

Family Finding and Engagement Project: Results from a One-Year Program Evaluation

Liat Shklarski, City University of New York and the Graduate Center, New York, NY and Vincent Madera, The Children’s Village, New York, NY

The presentation is based on results from a one-year evaluation program testing the fidelity and effectiveness of the Family Finding Engagement Intervention. This intervention is targeted at helping youth who are in care to reconnect with their families, expand their social-support network, and their lifelong connections. The presentation will cover the key practical elements in the intervention and the analysis of their success in engaging families and creating connections. It will conclude with a short hands-on workshop on utilizing specific techniques that have been proven to be successful in the intervention evaluation.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Practice
Youth-Driven Transition Planning with Young Adults Exiting the Foster Care System
Dondieneita Fleary-Simmons, Lee Annes and Rebecca Barboza, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, and Youth TBD, Chicago, IL

Using the Illinois D-CIPP model we’ll explore what it means to authentically engage and support youth through the process of “aging-out” from foster care. By the time youth reach 18, many have spent most of their lives in systems that distrust and disengage families. However, most will return “home” as they transition from care. Helping young adults to set goals and plan towards futures that they cannot see for themselves is challenging. Re/integrating families in new adult-child relationship is necessary. The work requires a genuine perspective-shift that recognizes implicit bias, generational trauma, and that values the restoration of families.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Marginalized Populations

Building Family Search and Engagement from the Ground Up: A Public-Private Collaboration
Jill McCormick, CASA of the Pikes Peak Region, Colorado Springs, CO and Marian Percy, CYFS, El Paso County DHS, Colorado Springs, CO

This session will outline steps taken to improve family finding and engagement practices in El Paso County, Colorado through a community-based public-private agency partnership. Learn how the Life Long Links Program (at CASA of the Pikes Peak Region) has partnered with El Paso County DHS to improve kin placement and participation using implementation science principles and a little determination. The presenters will share how we have built a continuum of service linking the county Kinship unit and the Life Long Links program, the steps we have taken to implement this partnership, our challenges and successes, and where we are headed as we continually improve our day to day practice and policies.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: System Infrastructure

Statewide Implementation of an FGDM Evaluation: Marching towards Continuous Quality Improvement
Rhonda Johnson and Colleen Cox, Child Welfare Resource Center, Mechanicsburg, PA

Sharing findings from the Pennsylvania FGDM Statewide Evaluation, this session will present data related to model fidelity and child outcomes. Results suggest there is high adherence to the FGDM model. Also, after participating in FGDM conferences a greater number of children resided in homes with their parents or informal/formal kin. Additional results regarding participant experiences and outcomes will be discussed. While the evaluation has yielded valuable information, it has also highlighted additional opportunities for collaboration between statewide evaluators and practitioners. This session will engage participants in a discussion focused on identifying the ways in which evaluators and practitioners can work together to improve practice and strengthen evaluation efforts.

TRACK: Family Group Decision Making
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation
Helping Families Before They Come to Us: Colorado Community Response
Aaron Miller, Colorado Office of Early Childhood, Department of Human Services, Denver, CO; and Heather Allan, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO

This session will discuss a pilot program being implemented by the Colorado Office of Early Childhood that serves screened out families and those who received an assessment with no provision of ongoing services in over 30 counties throughout the state. The program seeks to address the link between poverty and maltreatment by connecting families to vital economic supports and financial decision-making tools through family-driven goal setting and provision of concrete services and community referrals. Lessons learned and the results from a recently completed evaluation, including results from the protective factors survey and Colorado Family Support Assessment (CFSA), as well as child welfare re-involvement findings, will be shared.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

John Fluke, Dana Hollinshead, and Heather Allan, Kempe Center, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO; and Mindy Vanderloo, Social Research Institute, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT

Decision making in child welfare is characterized by low reliability and considerable variability across casework staff and organizational work units. This variability not only threatens the fidelity with which interventions are implemented but has serious implications for children and families. This session will present common methodological approaches from three child welfare evaluations exploring decision making informed by the Decision Making Ecology (DME) in Texas, Tennessee and Utah. Using common instrumentation which examined factors such as staff characteristics and attitudes about child welfare work, workload, organizational culture and climate, these evaluations highlight the importance of considering decision maker characteristics and their context when assessing implementation and outcomes from FGDM and other IV-E Waiver interventions.

TRACK: Additional Family Engagement Processes and Other Innovations
THEME: Policy, Research & Evaluation

The Colorado Rockies are part of the North American Cordillera. There are 52 “Fourteeners” over 14,000 feet.
ABOUT VAIL, CO

Vail is world renowned for being winter’s playground, but the locals will tell you that fall is an especially lovely time to visit. It is quiet and peaceful and depending on the weather, you will see the bright colors of fall or some of the first light snowflakes of the season. Vail offers some fabulous dining options with well-known chefs and restaurants and since it is off-season, many offer great discounts to entice you. There are many hikes and bike trails available for those searching for a connection with nature. For those looking for some retail therapy, there are more than enough shops and boutiques to keep you busy.

LODGING

This year’s conference will be held at the Vail Marriott Mountain Resort in the Lionshead Village of Vail, Colorado. The resort offers a full service spa, an indoor pool and hot tub, several outdoor hot tubs, a rental center for bikes and other fall gear, as well as a full service restaurant. The Vail Marriott Mountain Resort is walking distance from the heart of the village or a free shuttle is available to the Village. We have secured a reduced rate of $105 per night, plus 9.8% taxes. Room rates booked outside the room block will be at the Hotel’s discretion and available space. **Reservations must be made by Friday, September 22, 2017.** After that time, the hotel will not guarantee this rate. This rate includes high speed internet. All reservations will be charged a one-night deposit on September 22, 2017. If reservation is cancelled after Friday, September 22, 2017, you will forfeit the deposit equal to one night’s room and tax. Make your reservation by September 22, 2017 online at [https://aws.passkey.com/go/kempevail17](https://aws.passkey.com/go/kempevail17) or call 877-622-3140.

TRAVEL to VAIL and the HOTEL

If you are traveling by air, you can fly into Denver (DEN) or Eagle (EGE). Vail is about a 2-hour drive west of the Denver International Airport off of I-70 and about a 30 minute drive east of Eagle. All major airlines serve Denver International Airport including several budget-friendly airlines. Once you arrive at either airport, you can either secure a car rental or group shuttle. There are numerous rental car companies located a 5 minute shuttle ride away from the airport. Driving directions are available at: [http://www.marriott.com/hotels/maps/travel/whrco-vail-marriott-mountain-resort/](http://www.marriott.com/hotels/maps/travel/whrco-vail-marriott-mountain-resort/). Valet parking is available at the Vail Marriott Mountain Resort at a reduced rate of $15 per day or complimentary self-parking is available nearby.

We have an arrangement with the Colorado Mountain Express (CME) shuttle company to transport participants from the Denver International Airport to the Vail Marriott Mountain Resort. CME has created a discounted booking link for you to use. Simply click on the link to be brought through the booking process with the discount attached: [http://coloradomountainexpress.hudsonltd.net/rwd?USERIDENTRY=KEMPE&LOGON=GO](http://coloradomountainexpress.hudsonltd.net/rwd?USERIDENTRY=KEMPE&LOGON=GO). You may also book over the phone by calling 970-754-7433 and mentioning group code “KEMPE”. Discounted rates from DIA range from $72/person for a shuttle van to $379 for a 10 passenger private vehicle (charter van). Discounted rates from Eagle County (Vail) range from $40/person for a shuttle van to $206 for a 10 passenger private vehicle (charter van). Keep in mind, the Shared Ride Shuttle rates are **per-person, one-way** and the Private Vehicle rates are **per-vehicle, one-way**. Private Vehicle rates are inclusive of gratuity.

ELEVATION and WEATHER

Vail is a mountain town at about 8000 feet above sea level. Some people are more sensitive to the elevation than others. We recommend you drink lots of water before you travel into the mountains and while you are there to help prevent any symptoms of altitude sickness. Symptoms: headache, nausea and vomiting, dizziness, tiredness, loss of appetite, upset stomach, feeling unsteady, shortness of breath, increased heart rate, difficulty sleeping and generally feeling unwell. Mountain weather can be extreme at times with warmer temperatures during the day and colder temperatures at night, but in October the temperature is usually 40 - 50 degrees during the day and 10 - 20 degrees at night. We suggest you check the weather before traveling.

ATTIRE

Business casual attire is encouraged at this event. The temperatures in the conference rooms will be monitored for your comfort, but we do recommend that you bring a shawl or sweater with you, as it does take a while to adjust the temperatures, and the conference rooms are often quite cool at the beginning of the day.

REGISTRATION COST

Registration is only $375 if you register before September 5, 2017. Registration includes your attendance to all of the breakout sessions on Tuesday evening through Friday. Included in your registration fee are all conference materials and two meals provided at the event. If you are interested in registering for the Pre-Conference Institutes on October 17, 2017, please see the sections describing the program and additional fee. Participants who register between September 6 and October 10 will pay $425. Registration any time after October 11, 2017 will have to be done on-site and will cost $450. There is a $50 discount for presenters.
PRE-CONFERENCE INSTITUTES
This year, we are offering five, day-long pre-conference institutes for an additional fee of $125. This fee includes registration for a full day institute, some of which will be capped at 25 participants each. Lunch will also be provided. These pre-conference institutes will all take place on Tuesday, October 17, from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. When you register, please select the two institutes you would like to attend. If an institute has fewer than 10 registrants on September 6, 2017, we reserve the right to cancel the institute. If this occurs, we will notify you to see if you are interested in attending a different institute or if you would prefer to be refunded your fee.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES STAFF OF COLORADO
The Colorado Department of Human Services is providing scholarship dollars to cover the conference registration fees for approximately 180 individuals who work in Colorado county child welfare and/or facilitate family meetings. For the pre-conference institutes, an additional 80 scholarships are available for Colorado county child welfare staff. The scholarships do not compensate for any travel costs including hotel, meals, mileage, airfare or incidentals. The scholarship application process and guidelines will be available on the Kempe website at www.KempeConference.org on June 1. Completed scholarship applications will be due by August 1, 2017. Decisions to grant scholarships will be based on a number of criteria, including but not limited to the number of applications received, staff roles/positions, agency size, and a level of involvement in Differential Response, facilitated family engagement meetings, and Permanency Round Tables (PRTs). Kempe, in partnership with CDHS, will notify all applicants about scholarship decisions by August 15.

CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS (CEUs)
Participants may earn up to 14 CEUs by the Washington Chapter, National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for Licensed Social Workers, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapists, and Licensed Mental Health Counselors. If attending the Skills Institutes, you can earn an additional 6 credits. CEUs are available for $25. Participants will be required to collect a presenter’s signature at each session they attend.

EXHIBITORS
Are you interested in exhibiting at the conference? With hundreds of professionals in child welfare attending the conference, it is a great way to share your resources, knowledge and professional services! Please keep the first two sentences of the Exhibitor section, and change the rest to say: Exhibitors will be charged $500 (non-profit), $600 (for profit). This fee includes one registration for the conference for a booth in the center of the conference activities and be listed in the conference program. Detailed information, along with the exhibitor registration form can be found at www.KempeConference.org

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS
There are two ways to register and pay for the Conference:
Online: https://kempecenter.regfox.com/2017-conference-on-innovations. Online registration offers the option to pay by credit card or check for individuals and groups. You can also print an invoice directly from the portal.
1. Mailed registration: Use the form found at the conclusion of this Registration brochure and follow the instructions and mail your form and payment to:

   Edie Bridge
   The Kempe Center, Gary Pavilion
   13123 East 16th Ave, B390
   Aurora, CO 80045

   QUESTIONS
   Questions about the conference should be directed to Edie.Bridge@ucdenver.edu or by calling 303-864-5337.

   CANCELLATIONS
   Any request for a refund must be submitted in writing to the Kempe Center by September 15, 2017. A service fee of $100 will be charged for all cancellations received after September 15, 2017. Cancellations after September 15, 2017, and before October 9, 2017 will be charged one-half the conference registration fee. Cancellations notifications received after October 10, 2017 are not eligible for refunds. You may transfer your registration to another person without charge. Please send substitutions and cancellation notices to Edie.Bridge@ucdenver.edu.
The International Conference on Innovations in Family Engagement - October 17-20, 2017

Paper Registration Form (for those not registering online)

Online registration: https://kempecenter.regfox.com/2017-conference-on-innovations

Are you registering more than one person? Please fill out one form per registrant with the registrant information portion. Only one form needs to include the payment method information.

Registrant Information (PLEASE PRINT)

Name ____________________________________________________________

Title ____________________________________________________________

Agency/Organization _____________________________________________

Mailing Address ________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State/Province/Country _____________

Zip/Postal Code __________________________________________________

Phone __________________________ Email ___________________________

If you need special accommodations or meals, please indicate how we may accommodate you:

_________________________________________________________________

Registration Fees: The conference registration fee covers conference materials, all sessions, and two meals. The fee for the Pre-Conference Institutes on Tuesday includes lunch. Please choose registration type and any additional fees, and list your total dollar amount on the TOTAL line. ($50 off for presenters, deducted automatically before your credit card is charged.)

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<td>Registration On-Site at Conference Only (starting October 11, 2017)</td>
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*Pre-Conference Institutes Registrants ONLY: Please note your first and second choices. Some institutes are limited to approximately 25 individuals and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. The Kempe Center reserves the right to cancel institutes that do not register a minimum of 10 participants. The Kempe Center will give registrants advance notice (one month) if neither of their selected sessions reaches the minimum registration requirement.

First Choice ________________________________________________________

Second Choice ______________________________________________________
Payment Method
Check - Make Checks Payable to: THE KEMPE FOUNDATION
Credit Card □ Visa □ Mastercard □ Discover □ American Express
Expiration Date _____________________
Card Number ___________________________________________________________
Billing Address __________________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State/Providence/Country _______________________
Zip/Postal Code ___________________________________________________________
Name as it Appears on the Card ______________________________________________
Cardholder Signature _______________________________________________________

Mail, fax, or Email your completed Registration Form with form of payment included.

Mail

Edie Bridge
The Kempe Center, Gary Pavilion
13123 East 16th Avenue, B390
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