

New England Convening on Youth Permanence

FROM PLANNING TO ACTION



November 29 and 30, 2011

Devens Common Center
Devens, Massachusetts

SPONSORED BY THE NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF CHILD WELFARE COMMISSIONERS AND DIRECTORS,
THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION/CASEY FAMILY SERVICES, AND CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES:

Welcome to the third New England Convening on Youth Permanence.

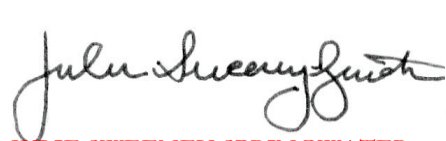
The Annie E. Casey Foundation/Casey Family Services and Casey Family Programs are pleased to join the New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors in hosting this third gathering, the “New England Convening on Youth Permanence: From Planning to Action.” We welcome child welfare leaders from across the region, as well as youth and families, attorneys and judges, mental health practitioners, educators, and policymakers. In the next two days, we will have an extraordinary series of candid discussions, peer learning opportunities, and targeted work sessions.

Over the next two days, we have an opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other. We will hear about emerging data on youth permanence, what is working to create legal permanence for youth in foster care, and what more needs to be done. We also will engage with parents and youth, underscoring our commitment to raising the voices of consumers in finding solutions to the challenges that they face. We intend for this event to further the state-level public policies and practice that support every child’s need for, and right to, family.

This convening is significant, for it brings together state teams, and it is at the state level that the complex work of ensuring permanent families for youth in foster care happens. The decisions to bring children into care, identify relatives and other resource families, and provide services that support permanence are made at the state level with community partners. Therefore, in order to intensify our efforts to ensure permanent families for youth in foster care, we recognize the importance of creating a space for state teams to reflect, recharge, learn, and grow. We hope the next two days will bring all of this to fruition for every state team.

This year, we welcome as our special guests, a team from Oklahoma representing parents and youth, the judiciary, and the child welfare agency. They will give us their perspectives on the passage and implementation of a state law regarding the reinstatement of parental rights after termination has occurred – a topic of great interest at last year’s convening.

We salute the six New England state teams that have joined us. Together we make a powerful statement about the relevance of this work to the well-being of older children and youth in care, to families, and to society as a whole. Each of us recognizes that family permanence for all older children and youth in foster care is the ideal, and, on many levels, a legal and moral mandate. Today, we will plan how to put this aspiration into action.



JULIE SWEENEY-SPRINGWATER
Executive Director
New England Association of Child
Welfare Commissioners and Directors



RAYMOND L. TORRES
Vice President
Annie E. Casey Foundation &
Executive Director
Casey Family Services



ZEINAB CHAHINE
Managing Director
Casey Family Programs

CONVENING PURPOSE, GOALS, AND SUCCESS

Defining the Purpose

Working in collaboration with the Annie E. Casey Foundation/Casey Family Services and Casey Family Programs, the New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors invites you to participate in a regional discussion on improving legal permanency outcomes for youth in foster care throughout New England. This convening will offer participants – up to ten from each state – an opportunity to share state’s successes with improved youth permanency strategies and outcomes, and to use state data and shared learning to identify areas that need improvement and/or sustained or renewed attention.

Meeting the Goals

The convening will provide state teams with the opportunity to:

- Hear from youth, families, and state partners about what works to achieve better permanency outcomes
- Review progress on/challenges of meeting state benchmarks for increased youth permanence
- Share successful approaches to increasing the engagement of youth and families and other important people in their lives in a team planning process
- Demonstrate strategies for including youth and family involvement in child welfare planning and policy development
- Learn about recent state permanency policy changes (in past two years) and impact on improving youth permanency outcomes
- Explore options for assuring that youth and families are connected to needed ongoing supports that help sustain permanence
- Share successful approaches to reducing disparities in permanency outcomes for youth of color
- Strengthen state action plans to achieve and sustain legal permanence and healthy adult relationships with youth exiting foster care

Measuring Success

The success of this event and resulting action plans will be measured using the following criteria:

- An increase in the numbers of youth (under and over age 18) who exit foster care with legal permanence
- A decrease in the re-entries of youth in foster care
- A decrease in the numbers of youth who have long-term foster care goals, such as APPLA
- A decrease in disparities in permanency outcomes for youth of color
- A decrease in the numbers of youth in congregate care

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Unless otherwise stated, all events occur in the Solarium Ballroom. Please sit with your state team.

11 a.m. Registration and Lunch

12 p.m. Welcome

Julie Sweeney-Springwater, *Executive Director, New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors*

Cindy Walcott, *President, New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors, and Deputy Commissioner, Vermont Department for Children and Families*

Raymond Torres, *Vice President, Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Executive Director, Casey Family Services*

12:15 p.m. Conversations with Youth and Parents: What Works to Achieve Better Permanency Outcomes

Moderators: Sarah Greenblatt, *Senior Associate Director, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, and Anthony Barrows, Project Manager, New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors*

Youth: Joshua Calcia, Maine; Emily Quigley, New Hampshire; Alixes Rosado, Connecticut

Parents: Janier Caban-Hernandez, Connecticut; Karen Crowley, Vermont; Brenda Plante, New Hampshire

This panel of youth and parents will reflect on how to authentically engage young people and parents to achieve meaningful permanency outcomes. Panelists will speak from their own experiences about supporting positive youth development, building social connections, maintaining sibling connections, preparing youth and families for permanent family relationships, addressing disincentives to legal permanence, and what it takes to parent older youth who have experienced foster care.

1:15 p.m. Reinstatement of Parental Rights

Moderator: Susan Getman, *Senior Director, Casey Family Programs*

Honorable Judge Doris L. Fransein, *District Judge, Tulsa, Oklahoma*

Richard Hampton, Sr.; Richard Hampton, Jr.; and Ro'Deric Hampton; *Reunified Family*

Kimberly Lynn, *Child Welfare Specialist, Oklahoma Department of Human Services*

Amy White, *Programs Administrator, Oklahoma Department of Human Services*

A team of child welfare professionals, a reunified birth family, and a family court Judge will discuss why such a policy was needed and what they have learned in the course of creating the policy and its implementation.

2:30 p.m. Break

2:45 p.m.
to 4:15 p.m.

Workshops

Connecticut: Working with Youth between Ages 18 and 23
Second Floor, Executive Club C

Maine: Extreme Recruitment as Part of Maine’s Comprehensive Youth Permanency Strategy
First Floor, Salon B

Massachusetts: Engaging Fathers and Families to Improve Permanency Outcomes for Children and Youth
First Floor, Devens Club A & B

New Hampshire: Engaging Youth to Improve APPLA Outcomes in Child Protection and Juvenile Justice
Second Floor, Executive Club A & B

Rhode Island: Identifying Youth Who are at Risk of Aging Out
First Floor, Salon A

Vermont: The Use of Family Team Meetings to Increase Youth Permanence
Second Floor, Executive Board Room

Oklahoma: Reinstatement of Parental Rights: The Oklahoma Experience
First Floor, Solarium Ballroom

4:30 p.m.
to 5:30 p.m.

State Action Planning

State teams will engage in action planning to advance legal permanence for youth in foster care.

Connecticut: Second Floor, Executive Club C

Maine: First Floor, Salon B

Massachusetts: First Floor, Devens Club A & B

New Hampshire: Second Floor, Executive Club A & B

Rhode Island: First Floor, Salon A

Vermont: Second Floor, Executive Board Room

5:30 p.m.

Adjournment

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- 6 p.m. Networking Reception (cash bar)
Piano Lounge
- 6:30 p.m. Keynote Address
Mary Gambon, *Assistant Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Children and Families*
Keynote: Gerald P. Mallon, *Julia Lathrop Professor of Child Welfare and Executive Director of the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections at the Hunter College Social Work in New York City*
- 7 p.m. Dinner
- 8 p.m. Closing Comments
- Permanency Pact Signing
Julie Sweeney-Springwater, *Executive Director, New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors*
- 8:15 p.m. Youth and Parent Discussion Groups: Reflecting on the Day (optional)
Optional discussion groups for youth and parents to discuss what was learned during the day, their thoughts about their role during the convening, and any feedback that the group may want to provide to their teams the next day.
Youth: Devens Club A
Parents: Devens Club B

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Unless otherwise stated, all events occur in the Solarium Ballroom. Please sit with your state team.

7:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Welcome Back/Reflections

Zeinab Chahine, Managing Director, Strategic Consulting Services, Casey Family Programs

8:45 a.m. The Evolution of Data-Informed Practice in New England

Moderator: *Melissa Correia, Systems Improvement Advisor, Data Advocacy, Casey Family Programs*

Maggie Bishop, Director, Division of Children, Youth and Families, New Hampshire

Colleen Caron, Director of Data and Evaluation, Department of Children, Youth and Families, Rhode Island

Dan Despard, Child Welfare Director, Office of Child and Family Services, Maine

Angelo McClain, Commissioner, Department of Children and Families, Massachusetts

Susan Smith, Director, Office for Research and Evaluation, Department of Children and Families, Connecticut

Cindy Walcott, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Children and Families, Vermont

This panel of state child welfare leaders will discuss how their agencies use data to prioritize and plan for improvements, generate commitment to change, evaluate outcomes, and celebrate success. The panelists will share effective strategies and discuss challenges they face as they try to determine: Where do we need to improve? How do we know we've implemented our strategies? Have these changes in practice and policy had the desired effect on permanency outcomes? What else do we need to know?

Leveraging Forces for Change (*instructions for 10:30 session*)

Susan Getman, Senior Director, Casey Family Programs

This dynamic session will afford team members time to work more intensively on one or two changes that have been prioritized for 2012. As with any change worth undertaking, there are "forces AGAINST change" and "forces that SUPPORT change." Teams will work on identifying the interplay of these counter forces followed by a rapid fire generation of actions to leverage the forces FOR the desired changes.

10:15 a.m. Break

If you have not done so, please check out of your hotel room.

10:30 a.m.
to 11:30 a.m.

Leveraging Forces for Change

Connecticut: Second Floor, Executive Club C

Maine: First Floor, Devens Club A

Massachusetts: First Floor, Devens Club B

New Hampshire: Second Floor, Executive Club A

Rhode Island: Second Floor, Executive Club B

Vermont: Second Floor, Executive Board Room

11:30 a.m.
to 1:45 p.m.

State Action Planning (working lunch)

Connecticut: Second Floor, Executive Club C

Maine: First Floor, Devens Club A

Massachusetts: First Floor, Devens Club B

New Hampshire: Second Floor, Executive Club A

Rhode Island: Second Floor, Executive Club B

Vermont: Second Floor, Executive Board Room

2 p.m.

Action Plan Highlights

Julie Sweeney-Springwater, *Executive Director, New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors*

Each team will present their key strategies for improving legal permanence for youth.

2:30 p.m.

Closing Comments/Next Steps

Cindy Walcott, *President, New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors, and Deputy Commissioner, Vermont Department for Children and Families*

2:45 p.m.

Adjournment

CONVENING ADVISORS

Anthony Barrows, *Project Manager, New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors*

Roye Anastasio-Bourke, *Senior Communications Manager, Annie E. Casey Foundation*

Barbara Claire, *Agency Legal Director, Connecticut Department of Children and Families*

Melissa Correia, *Systems Improvement Advisor, Data Advocacy, Casey Family Programs*

Diane Dexter, *Adoption Manager, Vermont Family Services Division*

Joy Duva, *Deputy Executive Director of Planning and Program Development, Annie E. Casey Foundation/ Casey Family Services*

Mary Gambon, *Assistant Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Children and Families*

Susan Getman, *Senior Director, Casey Family Programs*

Sarah Greenblatt, *Senior Associate Director, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative*

Dulcey Laberge, *Youth Transition Coordinator, Maine Office of Child and Family Services*

Patricia Lindquist, *Permanency Program Specialist, New Hampshire Division of Children, Youth and Families*

Eugene Marchand, *Program Director, Adolescent Development Team, Connecticut Department of Children and Families*

Nicole McKelvey-Walsh, *Sr. Program Associate, Casey Family Services*

Kevin Savage, *Administrator for Licensing and Regulation, Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families*

Julie Sweeney-Springwater, *Executive Director, New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors*

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Gerald P. Mallon, DSW, is the Julia Lathrop Professor of Child Welfare and Executive Director of the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections at the Hunter College Social Work in New York City. Dr. Mallon also works in Louisiana where he provided extensive technical assistance with the Louisiana State Child Welfare system in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Gustav.

For more than 35 years, Dr. Mallon has been a child welfare practitioner, advocate, educator, and researcher. He is the author or editor of 22 books and numerous peer reviewed publications in professional journals. Dr. Mallon is also the Senior Editor of the professional journal, Child Welfare.

Dr. Mallon earned his doctorate in Social Welfare from the City University of New York at Hunter College and holds an MSW from Fordham University and a BSW from Dominican College.

Dr. Mallon has lectured extensively in the United States, Ireland, Cuba, Indonesia, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

SPONSORS

The New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors

The New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors is a consortium of child welfare agency leaders and staff members from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Agency leaders created the Association in an effort to develop and implement policies that promote competent child welfare practices. The Association's work is grounded in the position that developing effective services for children and families requires sharing information, discussing mutual issues and concerns, and learning from each other's experience with past and current policy and practice implementation. The Association also published *Common Ground*, a child-welfare-focused newsletter. www.jbcc.harvard.edu/advocacy/neassoc.htm

The Annie E. Casey Foundation/Casey Family Services

The Annie E. Casey Foundation fosters public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. The Foundation makes grants that help states, cities, and neighborhoods fashion more innovative, cost-effective responses to these needs. Casey Family Services, the direct service agency of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, provides a broad range of permanency-focused services to meet the changing needs of vulnerable children and families: foster care, adoption, post-permanency, preservation, and reunification services. www.aecf.org and www.caseyfamilyservices.org

Casey Family Programs

Casey Family Programs' mission is to provide and improve – and ultimately to prevent the need for – foster care. The organization provides direct services, and promotes advances in child-welfare practice and policy. It collaborates with foster, kinship, and adoptive parents to provide safe, loving homes for youth. Drawing on four decades of front-line work with families and alumni of foster care, Casey Family Programs develops tools, practices, and policies to nurture all youth in case and to help parents strengthen families at risk of needing foster care. www.casey.org

Materials from this convening will be placed on the Judge Baker Children's Center website.

jbcc.harvard.edu