



Date: October 6, 2018

To: Members of the Coalition of Residential Excellence

From: Don Forrester, Executive Director

Subject: September 2018 CORE Monthly Report

2018 CORE National Conference -

Obviously, much of the activity during the month of September has been regarding preparations for the 2018 CORE National Conference scheduled for October 9-11 in Waco, TX. I look forward to a chance to visit in person with you next week. Consequently, the monthly report for September will be abbreviated from my usual format.

The 2018 CORE National Conference is being held at the Texas Ranger's Museum. The address is 100 Texas Ranger Trail, Waco, TX. For more information, please check the CORE website www.CORE-DC.org

Conference Call Related to Families First Prevention Services Act-

Many of you participated in the conference call regarding the Families First Prevention Services Act on September 7, 2018. I am attaching a copy of the power point presentation that was presented by Ryan Martin, Senior Human

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Services Advisor, Majority, U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, Anne DeCesaro, Majority Staff Director, Subcommittee on Human Resources, U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means, and Morna Miller, Minority Staff Director, Subcommittee on Human Resources, U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means. From the feedback I received, most thought the information gleaned on the conference call was worthy of the investment in time.

Of significant interest was the definition of foster care provided by the panel. They identified that the capacity of a foster family home was limited to six IV-E eligible placements, but that the family could also have other children in placement who were not receiving care through the use of IV-E dollars. I've never heard that concept mentioned before.

Legislation –

Legislatively, things are not that different from last month's report. I will make a more comprehensive report at the end of October. However, there are a couple of issues that merit mentioning now.

Push Back On Provisions for IV-E Resources by States-

Early in September, I noticed an article in the Chronicles of Social Change related to the Senate confirmation of Lynn Johnson to lead the Administration for Children and Families. Reference was made that Johnson would oversee the child welfare reforms including Title IV-E entitlement once limited to foster care and adoption. As you are aware, the FFPSA added the provision of prevention services.

Dr. Jerry Milner, Associate Commissioner for the Children's Bureau, was referenced in the article as having recently testified before the House Ways and Means Committee regarding progress in preparation for implementation of the law. Reportedly, Dr. Miller stated: "The administration also proposed in

its most recent budget plan an alternative to Family first in which states could opt for a more flexible but capped allocation of child welfare funds”.

I recently had an opportunity to ask Dr. Miller if the need for flexibility relates to the issues around expiration of waivers in 2019 that permit states to have more discretion in how they use IV-E dollars. Dr. Miller confirmed that there is a desire for more flexibility. Of course, it will take an act of Congress to offer states that privilege. A bill that carves out more flexible options has been drafted, but has yet to be introduced.

Prevention Services-

The other issue that I want to highlight may not be new information to you. Perhaps, I am behind the times in connecting the dots. Initially when FFPSA came out, I read through the legislation four times. Each time I read through it, I had more questions than answers. My primary interest obviously related to the residential care portion of the legislation, but I had more than a passing interest in prevention services.

So how did I read through the legislation and come away with a mistaken assumption regarding the intent? Obviously, the title of the bill could have influenced my thought processes. “Families First Prevention Services Act” seems to indicate a program designed to prevent child abuse. Obviously, my definition of children at risk is far broader than the intent of the legislation.

So at the end of the day, who is eligible to receive prevention services and who is not? It seems ironic to me that the criterion for being eligible to receive prevention services is contingent of first being abused or neglected.

In fact, the child has to be at imminent risk for foster care before entitlement for prevention services can be made available to the family under IV-E

funding requirements. Consequently, the after-the-fact provision of wrap-around services to a family seems more like an intervention than it does prevention.