



News out of Washington is filled with issues related to children

The federal government is scurrying to come up with a plan or at least locate a place to shift unaccompanied migrant children from the border to elsewhere in the nation.

In terms of urgency, the unmet needs for thousands of young people seeking asylum and safety is a legitimate concern and one for which there are obviously no easy answers or solutions.

That being said, I suspect we have turned a blind eye to the crisis the nation potentially faces on October 1, 2021. It has to do with legislation orchestrated three years ago with passage of the Family First Prevention Services Act in 2018. Currently, over 50% of the nation is still not subject to provisions of the act, since they opted for a waiver that carries them through September 30, 2021.

**We Have
Turned a
Blind Eye**

By October 1, 2021, Title IV-E funds dedicated for the care of children not needing treatment services for serious emotional or behavior disorders will be primarily limited to foster homes. Children needing treatment services for serious emotional or behavior disorders can be served in other settings if the facility is a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP).

In addition, Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) are on a time line to get their population of children with “serious emotional or behavior disorders” ready for discharge within 12-months unless the head of the State agency validates the need for continued treatment.

I predict the coming crisis will probably not make headlines in the news. In fact, it will virtually go unnoticed. Yet, already because of a lack of available foster homes or kinship care resources, it is not uncommon for children to sleep in worker’s offices or hotel rooms. It is also not uncommon for sibling groups to be separated in order to accommodate their need for placement in a foster home. However, I am told there are some states choosing to put more than six children in a foster family home to keep siblings together.

Orchestrating change to avert the crisis will require active participation by everyone who knows and values the favorable difference children's homes and residential schools can make in the lives of children and families from hard places.

This past month we have attempted to influence legislative committee staff to consider the merits of legislation to add the cottage home model (that functions more like an enhanced foster care home) back into the continuum of care. It is an environment where lots of professional support staff interact and are available to children and cottage parent staff on a daily basis. Consequently, there are lots of check-and-balance systems designed to keep children safe. Care is provided by full-time cottage parents whose only task is to nurture and provide support and supervision to children who need a safe environment

Long-story-short, it is not an easy sell. Too many of our success stories reportedly seem anecdotal. CORE is currently in the process of pulling together hard data that substantiates outcomes, (i.e. educational gains, for high school graduates – the numbers in college, vocational schools or gainfully employed. Do alumni have stable housing? Are they steering clear of high risk behaviors? What percentage have health care benefits, etc.? Do they have a family member or best friend to call for support in a time of need?

New Report: Families Over Facilities

Late last month, I saw an announcement posted by the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC). It was entitled: **“New Report: Families over Facilities”**. The report highlights the 2021 report by the same name developed by Children's Right's Inc. The name of their report is: **“FAMILIES OVER FACILITIES: ENDING THE HARMFUL USE OF INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER GROUP FACILITIES IN CHILD WELFARE SYSTEMS – REPORT 2021”**.

NACC affirmed that they are joining Children's Rights in calling for the end of institutions in the child welfare system. The announcement includes a link to the Children's Rights report.

<https://www.naccchildlaw.org/news/554431/New-Report-Families-Over-Facilities.htm>

This week, I ran across another report entitled: **“EXPECTATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND REALITY – How Family First Prevention Services Act Invests in Prevention and Supports Families.**

The report provides a good overview of the expectations in contrast to the actual realities of the services provided through FFPSA. For example, the first expectation mentioned is this:

“The Federal Government will let states claim IV-E reimbursement for services to prevent child maltreatment”.

In contrast, the reality is this:

“Family First allows states to claim IV-E reimbursement for services to prevent entry into foster care (not to prevent the maltreatment in the first instance). Federal reimbursement is further limited to the subset of children who are at the point of meeting the existing federal definition of “candidates for foster care”.

The report succinctly identifies several expectations associated to FFPSA in contrast the the realities that are actually available through FFPSA.

The one thing included in the report that I found questionable are the highlighted assertions.

**YOUTH IN
CONGREGATE CARE
ARE THREE TIMES
MORE LIKELY THAN
THEIR PEERS IN
FOSTER CARE TO
HAVE A MENTAL
HEALTH PROBLEM
AND SIX TIMES
MORE LIKELY TO
HAVE BEHAVIOR
PROBLEMS**

https://law.duke.edu/sites/default/files/centers/publiclaw/hughes_ffpsa-Expectations_Limitations_and_Reality.pdf

A SPECIAL INVITATION has been sent to CORE members to join us for an important TEAMs Meeting on April 21, 2021 from 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

If you have not responded to the RSVP, please email me for the link.
don@CORE-DC.org

CALL FOR PRESENTER PROPOSALS

2021 CORE National Conference | Mooseheart Child City School
October 12-14 , 2021

Conference Theme:

EMPOWER – Get Connected

Deadline for Submission of Conference Proposal: **June 15, 2021**

Length of Workshops: **One hour and thirty minutes | Three Hours**

Forward Thinking – Best Practice – Outcome Focused – Effective

Suggested Topics Include, but are not limited to:

Story Branding – Donor Acquisition and Fund Raising – Orchestrating Legislative Change – Ethics – Tracking Outcomes – Independent Living – Attachment – Sensory Integration – Thrift Stores – Are They Worth The Investment – Innovation and Thinking Outside the Box – Working with Boards and Selection of Board Members – The Use of Volunteers – Supporting a Normalized Home Environment for Children – Drug Use and Misuse – Promoting Best Practice in a FFPSA Environment – Continuous Quality Improvement Processes – Using Alumni To Share The Agency’s Story and Impact Legislative Change - Promoting Educational Excellence – Keeping Children Safe – The Use of Volunteers In Enrichment Activities for Children – Cottage Parent Recruitment, Training and Retention, Trauma Informed Care Issues – An Executive Leadership Track

Workshop Proposal:

We welcome your submission of a workshop proposal. Please submit a written proposal including the title of the workshop and a brief synopsis not to exceed 200 words.

Submission:

All Workshop proposals must be submitted for consideration by June 15, 2021.
Please submit the workshop title and synopsis to Don Forrester, Executive Director
at Don@CORE-DC.org.



If you have not yet submitted your
2021 Membership dues to the Coalition of Residential Excel-
lence, it would be greatly appreciated.

