

Promoting Stability in Foster Care: Why Children Move and How to Minimize Disruptions

Log of Q&A Chat Session

June 7, 2006

Web conference co-sponsored by Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago and the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Beth Locker - 10:29 am

Q: Did you look at the impact of early assessments to recommend a proper placement? We have a small study in GA that indicates if placement is done based on professional assessment recommendation, the child is more likely to have placement stability.

Andrew Zinn - 10:29 am

A: Not in this study.

Lucy Hudson - 10:29 am

Q: Do you have any data on stability for infants and toddlers, or more specifically average number of placements? Can you address any specific issues you think may be unique to this youngest population?

Jan DeCoursey - 10:29 am

A: In the Chapin Hall study, we learned that, generally, older children are more likely to experience change than younger children. However, infants are more likely to experience placement change in the first month in care than older children. See page 18.

Raelene Freitag - 10:39 am

Q: (to Andrew Zinn) - Did your survey touch on the impact of level of care and foster provider payments? Specifically, did children for whom level of care decreased result in placement changes?

Andrew Zinn - 10:39 am

A: In our statistical models, children moving from residential care (e.g., institutions, group homes) were much more likely to experience a subsequent move than children who moved from foster homes.

Treehouse for Kids - 10:33 am

Q: What data supports kinship care as a more stable placement than non-related foster homes?

Jan DeCoursey - 10:47 am

A: Chapin Hall looked at placement rates, timing of placement, and multi-variate analysis using type of placement as a variable. See pages 12-19 and 27-29 of the report.

Won-ok Kim - 10:43 am

Q: Question to Andrew Zinn: Regarding services recommended for stability, can you talk about how transportation assistance helps placement stability?

Jan DeCoursey - 10:52 am

A: In the Chapin Hall caseworker survey, 22% of workers said that transportation assistance would be helpful in maintaining a child's placement. See page 45 of the report.

Mary Ford - 10:16 am

Q: Does the "professionalization" of treatment foster care (good pay, adequate support, supervision, and training) discourage them from becoming adoptive parents? How can we change this, if true? North American Council on Adoptable Children

Amelia Franck Meyer - 10:59 am

A: I think this may depend on the state and their adoption assistance level. Certainly if adoption assistance is lower, there is a disincentive to adopt; however, in some states, payments are not significantly reduced; advocacy is needed

James Harrison - 10:57 am

Q: James Harrison, Deputy Director, Missouri Children's Division: Which states did well on the placement stability outcome and what themes were present for success?

Nina Williams-Mbengue - 10:59 am

A: I can email information on the states with the highest improvement in the placement stability outcome and the strategies they used to address the issue. My email is nina.mbengue@ncsl.org.

Aaron Velez - 10:53 am

Q: Andrew Zinn - What, if any, foster home or foster parent characteristics were associated with placement stability?

Andrew Zinn - 10:59 am

A: Foster parent age had a moderate influence. Also, the number of non-related children in the placement also increased the likelihood of instability.

Melissa LaLone - 11:00 am

Q: Is foster parent retention and recruitment being focused on successfully anywhere? Placement stability and retention of foster parents are closely related. What do we know about successfully retaining our foster parents? Children's Admin., WA.

Amelia Franck Meyer - 11:00 am

A: FFTA does have supports and research on this topic. Visit www.fftta.org.

D. Howard Collins - 10:44 am

Q: How can I obtain information on the Dedicated Family Homes Pilot Program in Colorado?
Norfolk Dept. of Human Services. Norfolk, Virginia.

Nina Williams-Mbengue - 11:00 am

A: Howard Collins - I can forward you information on this Colorado program.
nina.mbengue@ncsl.org

Sheila McLaughlin - 11:01 am

Q: Do you have any statistics regarding the success of Disruption Prevention Teams? I am a
GAL case coordinator in FL.

Amelia Franck Meyer - 11:01 am

A: I'm sorry, I don't have stats on those and many do them differently. I could give you
more info about how they are utilized if you wish. afanckmeyer@pathinc.org.