



**Positioning Public Child Welfare Initiative:**

Strengthening Families in the 21st Century

# Operating Parameter

- o Values and Principles

- Shared Responsibility

Supporting the well-being of children, youth, and families is a shared government and community responsibility. The field of public child welfare supports well-being by promoting the safety and permanency of children and youth whose families are unwilling or unable to meet their needs or protect them. Public child welfare also serves as a catalyst in identifying the role and responsibility of the community to assist these same children, youth, and families.

- Child Centered

Children are entitled to live in a safe and permanent home and need families to be successful.

# Operating Parameter

- o Values and Principles

- Family Focused

Families of origin have the right and the responsibility to raise their children. The field recognizes its responsibility to provide a range of preventative and/or supportive services to families having difficulty in providing a safe and permanent environment.

- Culturally Competent

The field has a responsibility to understand and serve children, youth and families within the context of their unique beliefs, values, race, ethnicity, history, culture, religion and language.

# Operating Parameter

- o Values and Principles

- Inclusive

The field of public child welfare recognizes value in the child, the biological family, and individuals in the child's life participating in the assessment, planning and service delivery/treatment processes. These processes should be designed to optimize active participation and promote the expression of individual choices.

- Trustworthy

The field of public child welfare recognizes that it must be benevolent, act with integrity, perform reliably and demonstrate competence in all interactions.

# Operating Parameter

- o Values and Principles

- Accountable

The field of public child welfare recognizes its responsibility to itself and its stakeholders to assess and manage its performance, self-correct, innovate and enhance its ability to achieve positive outcomes.

- Collaborative

The field of public child welfare recognizes the need to work in collaboration with stakeholders and the community to promote safety, permanency and well-being for children, youth and families.

# Operating Parameter

- o Values and Principles

- Transparent

The field of public child welfare recognizes the need for all practices, service delivery, communications and behaviors to be easily understood, fully defined and explained, candid and open.

- Data and Evidence Informed

The field of public child welfare recognizes that the use of data and evidence informed practice is critical for effective decision-making on behalf of children, youth and families.

# Operating Parameter

- o Disparities and Disproportionality

- Disproportionality is a pervasive issue throughout the child welfare system. Disparate treatment related to the need for, access to, utilization of, and/or quality of services received by children of color and certain other cohorts of children impacts the occurrence of disproportionality. Because this issue holds such significance for the field of public child welfare, its occurrence is addressed within each domain of the analytic framework. A subcommittee on disproportionality was established to examine the relationship between disproportionality and the field of public child welfare, and to develop guidance on how to address it. It is the expectation that the work of this subcommittee will inform the work of all other subcommittees. Additionally, each other subcommittee will develop guidance on the subject of disproportionality from the perspective of their own domain.

# Operating Parameter

- Target Population for whom public child welfare has primary responsibility:
  - Children, youth and families where allegations of abuse and/or neglect have been made
  - Children, youth and families where there is a high risk of abuse and/or neglect
  - Children and youth who are in the custody of the public child welfare system and their families
  - Children, youth and their families who are not in the custody of the public child welfare system, but for who the provision of services or ongoing oversight is mandated by a court

# Operating Parameter

- Target Population for whom public child welfare has a shared responsibility with the community:
  - Children, youth and families where need is self identified or allegations have not risen to a founded case but may still need services
  - Children and youth who were in custody of the public child welfare system and their families (refers to children and youth in adoptive homes, in kinship and guardianship, etc.)
  - Youth who are emancipated or transitioned

# Operating Parameter

- Role of Public Child Welfare related to its primary population:
  - To identify and prevent child abuse and neglect
  - To secure a basic level of care commensurate with the needs of the target population to include the following:
    - To investigate abuse and neglect
    - To assess the overall functioning of families who come to the attention of public child welfare
    - To determine the safety, risk, and permanency needs of children and youth
    - To develop, implement and monitor a service plan designed to achieve the identified outcomes for children, youth and families
  - To engage and empower children, youth and families as they navigate the public child welfare system
  - To advocate for and provide from both the public and private sector to the target population

# Operating Parameter

- Role of Public Child Welfare in conjunction with the community in a “shared responsibility” relationship:
  - To provide education and awareness of child welfare issues
  - To identify and prevent child abuse and neglect
  - To protect children and youth from abuse and neglect
  - To pursue services in a variety of areas of need for emancipated or transitioned youth

# Environmental Parameters

- The increasing diversity of human service customers and workforce
- The increased awareness of child abuse and neglect issues within the community
- A greater emphasis on evidence and research based practice
- The impact of unions on workforce and practice issues in child welfare
- The change in the how families are viewed by the public child welfare system, e.g. more engagement in the planning process
- The impact of leadership turnover in the child welfare system
- Awareness of poor outcomes as a result of disparate treatment in the quality of care, access to care and the utilization of services
- The rapidly changing expectations and needs of clients, communities and critical stakeholders
- Rapid advances in technology and increasing user sophistication
- Increasing reality of major disruption of services due to national disaster, e.g., flu pandemic
- Increasing need to partner with private agencies in the provision of services

# Environmental Parameters

- An increasingly challenging relationship with the federal government including increased oversight and penalties
- The increasing complexity of the work of public child welfare
- Widening of human service “portfolio” to include non-traditional areas, e.g., immigration; juvenile justice, etc.
- The ongoing insufficient investment of resources for human services, in particular, child welfare services
- The diversity of issues, challenges and expectations specific to state- and county- administered systems
- The differences in needs of states and localities, depending on size and location
- The impact that litigation has on public child welfare agencies and their ability to be transparent and flexible in delivering effective services to children, youth and families
- Risk management needs to be considered