



FLORIDA INSTITUTE FOR CHILD WELFARE

AT FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

FY 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted to:

Governor Ron DeSantis
Bill Galvano, *Senate President*
Jose Oliva, *Speaker of the House*

October 1, 2020



College of Social Work
Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida

MISSION

The Florida Institute for Child Welfare seeks to promote safety, permanency, and well-being among the children and families of Florida that are involved with the child welfare system. To accomplish this mission, the Institute sponsors and supports interdisciplinary research projects and program evaluation initiatives that contribute to a dynamic knowledge base relevant for enhancing Florida's child welfare outcomes. The Institute collaborates with community agencies across all sectors and other important organizations in order to translate knowledge generated through ecologically valid research, policy analysis, and program evaluation.

October 1, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor
PL-05 State Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

On behalf of Florida State University and the Florida Institute for Child Welfare, I submit this annual report, which includes Institute activities, budget plan, and research and evaluation efforts for FFY 2019-2020. Research-informed recommendations are included.

The statewide affiliate network continues to grow, and with their partnership, our Institute upholds the responsibility of providing the most robust and relevant research to inform child welfare policy. We added new affiliates and created more cohesion by providing monthly updates exclusively to them, as well as creating multiple sub-groups within the larger network to create momentum around certain topics. In FFY 2020-2021, we will continue the partnerships we formed with the community-based care lead agencies, Department of Children and Families, and other state agencies.

Over this past year, our team has made strides in research in multiple areas, some including child welfare workforce, human trafficking screening, racial equity, kinship care services, and culminating the evaluation of the pre-service training curriculum. In addition, we have met the need for virtual learning by hosting webinar events related to family engagement and co-parenting with foster parents and biological parents.

We have been engaged in strategy conversations regarding our State's implementation of the Family First Prevention and Services Act and are currently working to provide virtual webinars related to educating our State on readiness and execution of evaluations toward evidence-based service provision.

It has been a productive year. Our child welfare system is creating a safer community for our children and their families and it is my privilege to contribute to this work.

Sincerely,



Jessica A. Pryce, Ph.D., MSW
Director
Florida Institute for Child Welfare

Contents

Mission	2
Section I: Executive Summary	6
Section II: Overall Recommendations	7
Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families	7
Pre-Service Training Evaluation	7
Overall Recommendations	8
Child Welfare Education and Certification	8
SECTION III: Florida Institute for Child Welfare	9
Background	9
Institute Affiliate Network	9
Affiliate Workgroups	9
Affiliate Meetings	10
Updates to the Memorandum of Understanding	10
Annual and Monthly Affiliate Surveys	11
New Application Process for Potential Affiliates	11
Workgroups Mandated by Statute	11
Critical Incident Rapid Response Team (CIRRT)	11
Results Oriented Accountability	12
SECTION IV: Research Conducted by the Institute	13
Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families	13
Key Findings	13
Next Steps	14
Group Care Quality Standards Assessment	15
Preliminary Findings	15
Summary and Next Steps	16
Human Trafficking	16
Progress and Next Steps	16
Inventory of Kinship Practices in Florida – Phase II	17
Children’s Home Network	17
Kids Central, Inc.	19
Next Steps	19
Racial Equity and Inclusion	20

Children’s Services Council of Broward County Community Participatory Action Research.....	20
University of South Florida An Examination of Racial Disparities.....	21
Examining the Health, Economic, and Professional Impacts of COVID-19 on workers.....	22
Key Findings	22
Next Steps	23
SECTION V: Upcoming Research and Evaluation	24
Workforce Well-being and Enhancement	24
Mindfulness-Based Training for Child Welfare Workers	24
Early Childhood Court Evaluation	25
SECTION VI: Technical Assistance and Training	26
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coaching/Consulting	26
Process Evaluation	26
Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA).....	26
Family First Prevention Services Act	26
Virtual Training and Podcast Series	27
Webinars	27
Videos with the experts	27
Florida Institute for Child Welfare Podcast Series	27
Appendix A Institute Budget Information	29
Appendix B Institute Organizational Chart.....	32
Appendix C Institute Illustration of Activities	33
Appendix D Contributions by Institute Affiliates	34
Appendix E Minutes from Institute Affiliate Meetings and Conference Calls	38
Appendix F Institute’s Dissemination Activities	49
Appendix G Stakeholder Meetings.....	51
References	52

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with section 1004.615, Florida Statutes, the Florida Institute for Child Welfare (hereafter referred to as the Institute), submits this annual report to the Governor. The Institute was created to provide research and evaluation that contributes to a more sustainable, accountable, and effective child welfare system. This report covers the period of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 and provides current research findings and policy and practice recommendations. In addition, there is a summary of activities and an update on the budget expenditures for the state FY 2019-2020.

The Institute has maintained partnerships with the Department of Children and Families (hereafter referred to as DCF, Department) and the community-based care (CBC) lead agencies. The inherent challenges of using research to inform the legislative process cannot be overstated. The Institute intends to bridge the gap between the creation of knowledge and its utilization. Working to ensure that child welfare research is both rigorous and useful to policymakers to enhance evidence-based decision-making is the Institute's foremost goal.

As the state prepares for the implementation of the Family First Legislation, the Institute is poised to be an ongoing partner by providing training, technical assistance, and evaluation research. For instance, we are currently engaged in a partnership with DCF relating to kinship care with the goal of enhancing the evidence base for its effectiveness.

The Institute faculty and research affiliates work under the premise that effective and rigorous research can inform the solutions to the most intractable social issues. The goal of this report is to present dispassionate analysis of our child welfare system and to provide research-informed recommendations that can assist in the development of long-term social policy goals of our state.

Overall recommendations pertain to the following key areas related to the workforce:

- ◆ Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families
- ◆ Child Welfare Pre-Service Training Evaluation
- ◆ Child Welfare Education and Certification

SECTION II: OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families

The Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families (FSPSF), a longitudinal study of child welfare workers in Florida, has completed data collection. The FSPSF followed a cohort of 1,500 Child Protection Investigators (CPIs) and Dependency Case Managers (CMs) who were in preservice training between September 1, 2015 and December 31, 2016 at one of 17 community-based care organizations, 6 DCF regions, or 6 sheriffs' offices. Participants received surveys approximately every six months, regardless of their current employment. Gift cards were provided to participants upon completion of each wave of data collection. Response rates were very high at each wave, with an average of 80.6 percent (range: 77% to 87%). Nearly two-thirds (62%, $n = 929$) of participants responded at every wave. In addition to the surveys, the research team collected qualitative interview data with a subset of participants to address specific topics (i.e., training and transition, client-perpetrated violence).

The FSPSF utilized three broad strategies to answer several different research questions. First, respondents were surveyed every 6-7 months with a core instrument. Second, in addition to the core instrument, three in-depth modules were rotated during the data collection period. Modules included a focus on 1) supervision and organizational functioning; 2) work/family life balance; and 3) mental health. The study rendered consistent findings related to the challenges that new workers experience as they matriculate through pre-service training and onboarding, which confirms much of the findings from the Pre-Service Evaluation.

Pre-Service Training Evaluation

In accordance with Senate Bill 1666, the Institute funded and monitored the evaluation of the scope and effectiveness of child welfare pre-service training, as well as skill transfer from training to the field. The Institute kept the DCF informed of the ongoing findings from the pre-service evaluation with the goal of informing their efforts to improve the curriculum. Specifically, the purpose of the evaluation was to determine the training's impacts on job readiness, knowledge gain and transfer, and work environment. Multiple methods were used to conduct this evaluation, including on-site observation, focus groups, electronic surveys, phone interviews, and the Family Functioning Assessments (FFA) review.

The study was conducted across nine sites throughout the state, which included six case management organizations (CMOs), two DCF circuits, and one sheriff's office that provided child protective investigations. Evaluation activities followed cohorts of pre-service trainees from each site from pre-service training through one year on the job. Thorough evaluation of these efforts, as outlined in the evaluation plan, will help to highlight areas of strength as well as opportunities for improvement, and it is likely that findings will shed light on the relationship between pre-service training and job readiness, performance, and satisfaction.

Both the FSPSF and the Pre-Service Evaluation report will be available on the Institute website on November 1, 2020. Research findings from both reports informed the recommendations in the next section.

Overall Recommendations

- ◆ The de-centralized nature of the training presents challenges to consistency. There is a need for on-going communication to ensure consistency between the information provided in the pre-service training and the agency-specific practice protocol.
- ◆ Increase the number of field days and identify processes to ensure trainees have productive field experiences during pre-service training. Additionally, emphasize hands-on learning strategies in training such as mock cases and trials, role-plays, and FSFN practice.
- ◆ Identify formal supports (i.e., a designated training liaison or peer coaching) to monitor the transitional period for new workers. This position could be an employee who is already working with the agency, or a newly hired employee. The research has pinpointed this onboarding process as essential to enhancing the workforce.
- ◆ Incorporate time management or disaster planning/coping strategies into the pre-service training.
- ◆ Provide clarification during pre-service training on the function and importance of Family Functioning Assessments (FFAs) for CPIs and ensure dedicated in-service training on FFAs is available on a continuous basis.

Child Welfare Education and Certification

After five years of studying a cohort of new workers through the Florida Study for Professionals for Safe Families, as well as nearly two years of evaluating the impact of the Department's pre-service training on job readiness and child welfare skills, the Institute recommends that our state begin strides toward systemic change to improve the workforce. The Institute aims to enhance child welfare so every professional who is working with a child does so effectively with the highest levels of knowledge, ethics, skills, and compassion. The Institute recommends a three-pronged approach to system-wide change. First, redesign social work curriculum at universities; second, create meaningful and incentivized certification and specialized pathways for child welfare professionals; and third, deploy expert teams to a cohort of child welfare agencies for intensive and holistic consulting to improve the organizational environment.

- ◆ Re-design child welfare curriculum that includes content that is relevant and closely connected to the actual complexity of child welfare work. In addition, the social work curriculum should include information from other disciplines such as criminal justice and psychology. This interdisciplinary focus will create opportunities for students from fields other than social work to learn basic social work values and components and bring their levels of expertise as well.
- ◆ Create a career-long, certification pathway for child welfare employees. The Institute aims to create a strong workforce with well-educated and skilled professionals who view child welfare as a rewarding and specialized career path.
- ◆ Cultivate better child welfare work environments by offering expert consultation to agency sites. This initiative will use Continuous Quality Improvement approaches for monitoring the sustainability of a healthier organizational climate and enhanced capacity to innovate.

SECTION III: FLORIDA INSTITUTE FOR CHILD WELFARE

Background

In 2014, the Florida Legislature established the Florida Institute for Child Welfare at the Florida State University College of Social Work. The mission of the Institute is to promote safety, permanency, and well-being among the children and families of Florida that are involved with the child welfare system. To accomplish this mission, the Institute supports interdisciplinary research projects and program evaluation initiatives to improve Florida's child welfare outcomes. The Institute has expanded our efforts to collaborate with community and state agencies to better translate research into effective policy implementation.

The Institute's original goals and priorities were specified in section 1004.615, Florida Statutes, with an overarching mandate to make practice and policy recommendations. Additional statutory amendments in 2017, 2019, and 2020 have expanded our ability to improve the performance of child protection and child welfare services through research, policy, analysis, evaluation, and leadership development.

The four pillars that provide the framework of the Institute's foundation are: Partnerships, Research, Technical Assistance/Training, and Policy. This framework guides all our work in order to inform and contribute to policy recommendations. An illustration of the Institute's current activities is in Appendix C.

Institute Affiliate Network

In FY19-20, 47 affiliates contributed to the network, representing 15 universities and five organizations. During this time, the Institute prioritized increasing both the involvement of our affiliates in our work and the visibility of our affiliates to our stakeholders. Notably, over half of our affiliates made substantive contributions to the Institute, such as leading research projects, participating in filmed interviews on special child welfare topics, co-hosting translational research presentations, and providing brief video clips for social media introducing themselves and their child welfare work. In addition, through our new topical infographics, we were able to highlight, often multiple times, our affiliates with relevant expertise. A list of FY19-20 affiliate contributions and inclusion in infographic highlights is available in the Appendix D.

Affiliate Workgroups

In addition to the contributions noted above and in Appendix D, the Institute convened two workgroups of affiliates. First, the Legislative Workgroup met twice during FY19-20 to discuss with and provide input to the Institute regarding ongoing child welfare legislative efforts. This culminated in "breakout" discussions during our virtual annual affiliate meeting, with each breakout group of affiliates addressing a component of S.B. 1326: curriculum redesign, professional certification, and workforce well-being and enhancement. Though funding for these initiatives was ultimately vetoed for FY20-21, several affiliates offered creative ideas and meaningful feedback for implementation of the initiatives, which we will take into consideration. Notably, the Institute is moving forward with the Workforce Well-being and Enhancement (WWE) initiative and, as such, will continue to seek input from our affiliates with the appropriate expertise.

Second, the Institute convened the Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) workgroup to contribute to Florida's preparation for FFPSA implementation in September 2021. DCF leadership expressed a need for Institute support around several FFPSA components. The FFPSA workgroup

discussed ways in which the Institute could best assist by leveraging the expertise of its affiliates. The workgroup decided the Institute should develop a three-part webinar series on preparing for evaluation of services. Pairing researchers and practitioners, webinars will include content on:

- ◆ Services that have no evidence
- ◆ Services that are in place, but in need of a technical review by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse
- ◆ Fidelity monitoring and evaluation of evidence-based practices already on the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse, and how this aligns with continuous quality improvement

In addition, the Institute will dedicate a new season of its Podcast Series to FFPSA-related topics, incorporating the expertise of affiliates, community partners, and national experts, as needed. Topics are currently in development, but tentatively include:

- ◆ Residential group care quality standards' alignment with FFPSA
- ◆ Planning for evaluation of kinship navigator programs
- ◆ FFPSA implications for dependency court judges

Affiliate Meetings

Quarterly conference calls are held with the affiliates to provide an update from the Institute's program director, legislative and/or research updates from the director, and a presentation on research or evaluations conducted by the Institute or affiliates. During this reporting period, conference calls were held January 2020, April 2020, and September 2020.

The Institute holds an annual face-to-face meeting, with the objective of providing announcements, identifying gaps in research, disseminating research findings, and proposing future research priorities in areas mutually agreed upon by the affiliates. This year's annual meeting was held virtually in June 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and adherence with CDC recommended guidelines. The virtual meeting allowed the affiliates to gather and discuss topics regarding the Institute; past, present, and future research projects; and for the affiliates to share their individual projects and news from their universities or agencies. To review minutes from the conference calls and annual meeting, see Appendix E.

Updates to the Memorandum of Understanding

Our affiliates are an integral part of the Institute's success. As the Institute continues to grow both its workload and reputation, it is important to ensure a collaborative, well-engaged Affiliate Network. To promote this, we revised our Affiliate Memorandum of Understanding. Specifically, there are now specified requirements of the affiliate role, including:

- ◆ Participating in regularly scheduled affiliate meetings, including quarterly conference calls and the annual face-to-face meeting. Affiliates must attend 3 of 5 meetings to be considered "active."
- ◆ Completing the annual affiliate survey distributed in May.
- ◆ Notifying the Institute of their child welfare related research, presentations, and publications so that they can be shared through the Institute's distribution channels. The Institute will solicit affiliates' professional updates monthly via online survey.

- ◆ Making at least one Institute contribution during the fiscal year. Contributions can be initiated by either the affiliate or the Institute and will be agreed upon by both parties. Contributions might include but are not limited to co-hosting or participating in an Institute webinar or lunch and learn, being a guest on the Institute’s podcast, or filming a short video about their research.

These requirements are delineated from expectations, which include:

- ◆ Remaining updated on child welfare news and trends.
- ◆ Submitting child welfare-related abstracts to at least one conference per year.
- ◆ Taking initiative toward identifying gaps in child welfare practice, proposing new research, and forming partnerships within the affiliate network and beyond.
- ◆ Being willing to attend and represent the Institute at workgroup meetings and think tanks in their vicinity.
- ◆ Serving as ambassadors for the Institute, promoting its capacity to engage in research and evaluation that answers child welfare policy questions.

We maintain records of required affiliate activities. These records will help guide Institute decision-making regarding the affiliate network composition.

Annual and Monthly Affiliate Surveys

To better facilitate the affiliate experience, we now require that affiliates participate in an annual survey each May to help guide both our requested affiliate contributions as well as how we can further their professional development. We also provide affiliates an opportunity to participate in an optional brief monthly survey to inform us of any new projects, grants, promotions, etc. The link to this survey is embedded in a monthly affiliate-specific e-mail, which includes updates on pertinent child welfare topics (e.g., funding opportunities, upcoming trainings, updates from each other). Over 80 percent of those who completed the 2020 affiliate survey indicated they would like this type of monthly engagement.

New Application Process for Potential Affiliates

As of July 2020, the Institute established a new application process for potential affiliates. Previously, joining the affiliate network was largely an informal process, except for executing the memorandum of understanding. Now, interested persons can complete an online application, which is available on the Institute’s website, year-round. The leadership team will review applications semi-annually (March and September) or on an ad hoc basis. This formalized application process 1) provides clarity to potential affiliates as to the application process; 2) provides a centralized location for storing standardized application materials, which reduces the likelihood an application will be overlooked; and 3) promotes regular review of the affiliate network by Institute leadership.

Workgroups Mandated by Statute

Critical Incident Rapid Response Team

The director of the Institute sits on the Critical Incident Rapid Response Team (CIRRT) Advisory Committee and attends meetings regularly. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the last two meetings (4/6/2020; 7/22/2020) were virtual. The CIRRT reports provide an immediate, multiagency investigation of child deaths that meet the statutory criteria for review. Investigations are conducted to identify root causes, rapidly determine the need to change policies and practices related to child protection and improve Florida’s child welfare system. CIRRT reviews consider the family’s entire child welfare history, with specific attention to the most recent child welfare involvement and events surrounding the fatality,

including the most recent verified incident of abuse or neglect. The Institute's role on the CIRRT Advisory Committee has been centered on providing relevant research and identifying areas of potential research that could mitigate the risk of fatalities.

Results Oriented Accountability

Technical Advisory Panel

The director of the Institute sits on the Results-Oriented Accountability (ROA) Technical Advisory Panel and is involved in each meeting or sends a designee. During this reporting period the Institute's data analyst, who was co-located at the Department, provided technical assistance on several ad-hoc ROA related tasks.

SECTION IV: RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THE INSTITUTE

Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families

The Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families (FSPSF), a longitudinal study of child welfare workers in Florida, completed data collection in June 2020, nearly five years after the start of the Study. During FY19-20, the FSPSF team continued to explore turnover and client-perpetrated violence and undertook new analyses of self-care and validation of the Intimate Partner Violence Responder Collaboration Scale (IPVRCS). In addition, the FSPSF team explored the impacts of COVID-19 on health and human service workers. The COVID-19 project, including key findings, are discussed separately in Section IV.

Key Findings

Turnover

Following the completion of data collection, the FSPSF team conducted preliminary analyses of turnover across the life of the Study:

- ◆ By the final wave of data, approximately 3.5 years post-baseline, 81 percent of workers had left their original child welfare agency.
- ◆ The most common time for departure is within the first 18 months. Approximately 57 percent of participants left during this time. More specifically, the most frequent time period for agency departure was between seven and 12 months on the job; approximately 23 percent of the cohort left their agency during this time.
- ◆ Although 81 percent of workers left their original child welfare agency, at wave 8, approximately 41 percent of the cohort remained working in a child welfare role.
- ◆ Across waves, participants primarily left these positions due to the job responsibilities or the agency environment.

To provide further context to early turnover data, the researchers qualitatively explored an open-ended general reflection item at the end of the wave 3 survey, approximately one year post-baseline, with attention to any differences between those who stayed in their agency ($n = 113$) and those who left ($n = 79$):

- ◆ Four primary themes emerged: 1) rewarding, but difficult; 2) unsupported (e.g., poor agency support, poor supervisory support); 3) overworked (e.g., high caseloads, burden of the frontline position); and 4) undervalued.
- ◆ Stayers and leavers generally shared similar sentiments, though some nuanced differences were noted. For example, both groups expressed being overworked, though stayers more frequently discussed unrealistic caseloads and unreasonable responsibilities (e.g., transporting, supervising children, using personal vehicle) while leavers focused on unrealistic hours (e.g., overtime or lack of allowed overtime, on call, working on days off).
- ◆ Notably, stayers, more than leavers, spoke highly of the supervisor and co-worker support they received, with some citing it as instrumental in their retention decision.

Client-Perpetrated Violence

In 2019, the FSPSF research team interviewed 34 child welfare workers about their experiences with client-perpetrated violence (CPV), including those who had ($n = 18$) and had not ($n = 16$) experienced physical violence by wave 5, approximately two-and-a-half-years post-baseline. Initial findings were provided in the FY18-19 annual report. The research team conducted additional analyses on these data during FY19-20:

- ◆ Workers' descriptions of CPV typically fell into one of two narratives: 1) the CPV was calculated, personal, and without agency support, which contributed to heightened psychological distress or burnout; or 2) the CPV was spontaneous, situational, and with agency support resulted in no lasting health consequences.
- ◆ Many frontline child welfare workers felt unprepared to address CPV. Those participants who felt prepared commonly cited on-the-job experiences, prior work experiences, or prior training in a tangential field (e.g., law enforcement, mental health) as instrumental in their preparation. Workers engage in a variety of precautionary safety strategies (e.g., awareness, field safety measures), though they felt less prepared to handle violence as it occurred and felt they had minimal self-protection skills. Most participants utilized law enforcement as a primary means of protection, though several noted this can introduce client hostility.

Self-Care

The research team explored child welfare workers' ($n = 970$) engagement in self-care at wave 3, approximately one-year post-baseline:

- ◆ About half of child welfare workers reported engaging in some type of self-care activity at least once per week, including physical (50.8%), emotional (51.4%), and spiritual (47.0%) health activities.
- ◆ Engagement in physical self-care activities predicted increased job satisfaction and work-life balance and decreased burnout, stress, and time pressure. The same was true for engagement in emotional health activities, which also predicted lower secondary traumatic stress. Engagement in spiritual self-care predicted increased work/life balance.

Validation of the Intimate Partner Violence Responder Collaboration Scale

The IPVRCS was initially developed to measure collaboration among professionals in the community who respond to cases involving intimate partner violence (e.g., victim advocates, law enforcement, etc.), though child welfare workers were excluded from initial validation efforts. Using the FSPSF sample, the reliability and validity of the IPVRCS was tested with child welfare workers ($n = 350$).

- ◆ An exploratory factor analysis indicated the IPVRCS measures three factors: Non-Territorialism, Leadership, and Camaraderie.
- ◆ Each factor demonstrated good to excellent internal consistency reliability (α from .827 to .901) with excellent reliability for the IPVRCS overall ($\alpha = .931$).
- ◆ Confirmatory factor analyses with additional child welfare workers and other responders are necessary to validate the IPVRCS.

Next Steps

Give the wealth of FSPSF data, analyses are ongoing. Further, the FSPSF team continues to prepare the data for public availability. As part of this effort, the team has partnered with the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) on a proposal to conduct a roundtable at the Society for Social Work and

Research’s January 2021 meeting. This roundtable would serve to 1) announce the forthcoming public availability of both FSPSF and NCWWI data; 2) introduce the methodologies of the respective studies; 3) explore supports needed to help social work researchers and students successfully access and use these data; and 4) invite participant discussion on how these data can be used to advance workforce health and stability. In addition, FSPSF findings are being used to inform, in part, the development of the Institute’s Workforce Well-being and Enhancement (WWE) Initiative. See Section V for more details on this initiative.

Group Care Quality Standards Assessment

Since 2015, the Institute has been developing the Group Care Quality Standards Assessment (GCQSA), a tool designed to operationalize and measure Quality Standards for Group Care.¹ In FY19-20, the Institute began the statewide validation and the inter-rater reliability and agreement studies of the GCQSA. First, the validation study is focused on establishing construct validity, which refers to whether the GCQSA measures the construct that it was designed to measure (i.e., residential care quality). Based on data from multiple participant types (i.e., youth, lead agency, direct care staff, director, licensing specialist), the Institute is examining: 1) if GCQSA scores are correlated with other measures or indicators designed to measure similar quality constructs (i.e., quality practice domains); and 2) if higher scores on the GCQSA (i.e., higher quality care) are correlated with fewer program-level incidents (e.g., staff or youth injury, youth runaway episodes, law enforcement calls, etc.). Two sets of validation measures were added to the GCQSA: eight single item indicators (SII) and seven program-level indicators. SIIs represent “direct, straightforward definitions of core constructs being validated.”² Example items for professionals and youth, respectively, include: “Overall, documented policies are followed promoting a positive peer culture, prohibiting coercive/abusive practices, and protecting youth from harm by peers or self,” and, “Overall, this is a safe place where staff make sure no one is abusive or at risk of being hurt.” Program-level quality indicators include specific incidents within the last 12 months (i.e., the number of physical restraints, hospitalizations, staff injuries, youth injuries, staff turnover, law enforcement calls, runaway episodes) as reported by the licensing specialists.

Second, the inter-rater reliability study is focused on whether the GCQSA provides a consistent representation of residential care quality. Inter-rater reliability and inter-rater agreement are examined to determine if constructs are consistently represented regardless of who is completing the measure. Given that licensing specialists are essential to the GCQSA, and that their assessments are likely weighed more heavily than others, the Institute is examining similarities in GCQSA ratings across pairs of licensing specialists by examining reliability (i.e., consistency) and agreement (i.e., assigning the same scores). Two licensing specialists from five participating DCF regions will serve as “raters” by completing the GCQSA for six identified group homes. Notably, the Northeast region is excluded from this study, as there is only one licensing specialist.

Preliminary Findings

Data collection for the inter-rater reliability and agreement study is underway, though due to the small number of completed forms, interim analyses could not be completed. Preliminary findings from the validation study are as follows:

- ◆ Mean domain and SII ratings are significantly, positively correlated. This provides initial evidence to support that the GCQSA scale scores provide valid representations of quality.

- ◆ The median number of past year incidents were low. However, the mean number of certain types of incidents varied considerably by program, including law enforcement calls and runaway episodes.
- ◆ Several mean GCQSA domain scores demonstrated negative, moderate correlations with program incidents, which suggests higher quality ratings within certain domains are associated with fewer incidents occurring at the program-level. Higher GCQSA scores were most strongly correlated with fewer calls to law enforcement, followed by fewer youth hospitalizations and runaway episodes.
- ◆ Consistency in ratings between direct care workers and directors on domains associated with law enforcement calls suggests quality practices spanning most domains might influence reliance on law enforcement intervention.
- ◆ Consistency in ratings between licensing specialists and youth indicate quality practices within two domains—Family, Culture, & Spirituality and Education, Skills, & Positive Outcomes—may be associated with fewer incidents of hospitalization and runaway episodes.

Summary and Next Steps

To date, the GCQSA represents the most rigorously developed and tested assessment of quality for residential care. The validation and inter-rater reliability and agreement studies are major milestones toward GCQSA validation. To our knowledge, the GCQSA is the first measure of its kind to be validated. Notably, the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on residential group care services (i.e., need for social distancing, need for rapid licensing of new residential placements to address placement shortages from limited foster home availability) necessitated the data collection time period be extended for two months for each study to allow participants adequate time to complete forms. Despite some setbacks, based on ongoing progress with data collection and promising interim results, the Institute recommends continuing efforts to complete both studies as planned and is currently on track to meet the legislative mandate to complete the Statewide Accountability System by July 2022.

Human Trafficking

The Institute began collaborating with DCF to validate the Human Trafficking Screening Tool (HTST, Tool) in 2017. Initial survey data from designated human trafficking screeners indicate most screeners perceive the Tool to be at least somewhat useful, though challenges remain (e.g., youth not being forthcoming, cumbersome to complete).³ Following, the Institute completed psychometric testing on the HTST. As noted in FY18-19 annual report, in its current form, the HTST is a promising tool for identifying trafficked youth, with a supported factor structure and evidence of predictive validity. However, the lack of internal consistency prevents validation. We suggested that with additional screener training, subsequent data collection, and new analyses, validation is possible.

Progress and Next Steps

In alignment with our recommendation in the FY18-19 report, we applied for and received a planning grant from the Florida State University Council on Research and Creativity (\$12,604) to support qualitative data collection from screeners. The following is an accounting of activities to date:

- ◆ We conducted 26 individual interviews with screeners from disparate DCF regions. Interview topics included, but were not limited to, designated screener training, the process of utilizing the HTST, determination of likelihood of trafficking, and interacting with youth.

- ◆ Five focus groups ($n = 10$) were completed in September 2020. We implemented a cognitive interviewing technique, which is used to ask a small group of individuals to provide information about survey items, as opposed to answering the items, to provide insight into the performance of those items.⁴ In the current study, screeners in the focus groups are able to share their thoughts on the HTST items, but are also asked targeted questions based on the language of the Tool (e.g., “What does an ‘unsafe living environment’ mean to you?”).
- ◆ The research team will spend Fall 2020 analyzing the qualitative data and will submit a final report to the University in December 2020. We anticipate sharing this report with DCF and publishing findings in one or more peer-reviewed journals.
- ◆ We anticipate seeking external funding following the planning grant period to support continued collaboration with DCF in improving the human trafficking screening process.

Inventory of Kinship Practices in Florida – Phase II

In FY19-20, DCF contracted the Institute to assess current kinship care services within Florida. Based on that [inventory report](#), DCF renewed the contract in fiscal FY20-21. The purpose of this renewal was to work with two agencies from the Inventory that had promising Kinship Navigator Programs: Children’s Home Network (CHN) and Kids Central, Inc. (KCI). Though the primary foci were different for each agency, in both instances, the Institute aided in the development of establishing evidence for their Kinship Navigator Programs. The Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse requires evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of kinship care programs,⁵ though no kinship navigator program has been deemed promising, supported, or well-supported at the time of this writing. Therefore, the Institute collaborated with both CHN and KCI toward the goal of adding to the evidence-base for Kinship Navigator Programs.

Children’s Home Network

Children’s Home Network has a well-established Kinship Navigator program, KinTECH, which was evaluated in 2015. In the current project, the Institute worked with CHN and the original lead evaluator to develop two manuscripts using the previously collected data. These manuscripts were submitted to peer-reviewed journals for review and possible publication. The Institute also developed a manuscript proposal, which was provided to both DCF and CHN, as a guide for a third potential manuscript based on the Clearinghouse’s priority child outcomes (i.e., permanency, safety).

Key Preliminary Findings

Protective Factors

The first manuscript examined the effectiveness of KinTECH in promoting protective factors among kinship caregivers. Protective factors are important to building resilient kinship care families. Identifying and supporting the protective factors among kinship care families can promote positive and productive outcomes for children placed in kinship care. The results indicate:

- ◆ Compared to services as usual, kinship navigator services aid in developing protective factors among kinship caregivers.
- ◆ Specifically, kinship navigator programs may increase:
 - Family functioning (i.e., family resiliency and family perseverance)

- Social supports (i.e., supports from family and friends that address the emotional needs of the caregivers)
- Concrete supports (i.e., tangible goods and services to help families cope)
- Nurturing and attachment (i.e., relationship between the caregiver and child).
- ◆ These results are promising despite the limitations of the study and demonstrate a need to further examine the benefits of kinship navigator programs in addressing the unique needs of kinship care families.

Peer-to-Peer Kinship Navigation

The second manuscript examined differences in kinship caregivers' application for and enrollment in certain benefits. Specifically, the authors compared two kinship navigator models within KinTECH: traditional kinship services and peer-to-peer kinship services. Traditional kinship navigation services provide information, referral, and follow-up services for kinship care families. The peer-to-peer model employs someone who had a lived kinship caregiving experience to provide peer support to those currently serving as kinship caregivers. The results indicate:

- ◆ The peer-to-peer model had a higher percentage of families that applied for and enrolled in benefits compared to those in the traditional kinship group.
- ◆ Results highlight the benefits of employing and utilizing peers to help support kinship care families, which is supported by other literature.
- ◆ Future research could investigate the barriers and facilitators to using peers with other kinship navigator programs, which might aid other programs in utilizing peers to better support kinship care families.

Child Outcomes

Lastly, a research proposal was developed as a guide for a potential third manuscript focusing specifically on child outcomes. Using the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse guidelines for priority outcomes for kinship navigator programs,⁵ there are three child-related outcomes of interest for the research proposal: child permanency, child safety, and child well-being. Using the DCF child welfare dashboard, several variables of interest were identified for each outcome:

- ◆ Child Permanency
 - Placement length
 - Placement disruption
 - Discharge placement type
- ◆ Child Safety
 - Re-reports of maltreatment
 - Substantiated re-maltreatment
 - Children with no recurrence of maltreatment
- ◆ Child Well-being
 - Dental and medical care
 - Incidents of delinquent behavior

The CHN provided the Institute and DCF with a list of 263 families from their original KINTECH evaluation. The research proposal recommends examining these outcomes prior to the family/child entering into the study and at 6-month, 12-month, 24-month, 36-month, 48-month, and 60-month follow-up from

the time of program completion to determine what impact the KINTech program has on child outcomes over a five-year period.

Kids Central, Inc.

Kids Central, Inc. implemented their kinship navigator program more than 10 years ago, with an evaluation completed in 2010. However, since that time, there have been revisions and adaptations of their kinship program. Therefore, the Institute collaborated with KCI to develop an evaluation plan based on the current functioning of the program. To develop this evaluation plan, the Institute reviewed the current documentation available for Kids Central, Inc. as well as conducted focus groups with kinship caregivers and case managers within the kinship program. These document review and focus groups were used to determine the current functioning of the program and develop recommendations prior to the implementation of a new evaluation.

Key Preliminary Findings

According to the FY19-20 Inventory of Kinship Practices in Florida, KCI's program had 88 percent of the best-practice services available based on the Family First Prevention Services Act and published literature on services that should be available in kinship navigator programs.⁶ In the current project, the Institute provided an assessment of the program to ensure it meets the criteria for a Kinship Navigator Program, including: having a program manual and documentation regarding implementation of the program; provides assistance to kinship caregivers to learn about, find, and use programs and services; provides support services; and collaborates with community agencies.⁷

During this assessment, the Institute recommended that KCI should:

- ◆ Develop/revise their theory of change for the program
- ◆ Develop/revise a logic model for the program
- ◆ Finalize their program manual to include an update of resources
- ◆ Continue to explore and strengthen community collaborations
- ◆ Collaborate with kinship care families

With these recommendations in mind, the Institute suggested that KCI move forward with an evaluation, as the program is functioning based on the recommendations of the Families First Prevention Services Act. Using the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse as a guide, the Institute recommended KCI undergo an evaluation of both processes (e.g., program functioning, fidelity), outcomes, both intermediate (e.g., enhanced caregiver protective factors, reduced caregiver stress), and long-term (e.g., improved child and family well-being). Priority outcomes of the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse should be addressed,⁸ including child safety, child permanency, adult well-being, access to services, and referral to services. The evaluation should follow participants for a minimum of six months, per the recommendations of the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse.

Next Steps

At the time of this writing, the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse has yet to designate any kinship navigator program as a promising, supported, or well-supported intervention. Continuing to support CHN and KCI in their evaluation efforts will provide the programs with opportunities to establish evidence to support the use of their kinship navigator programs and aid these programs in being recognized as best practices. Under the Families First Prevention Services Act, a best practice distinction

allows for Title IV-E funds to support a program's use, and in this case, could enhance kinship care services across the state as more agencies/regions could implement the programs. The [report](#) can be found on the Institute's website.

Racial Equity and Inclusion

In September 2018, the Institute released an invitation for entities to propose research that examines biases that result in disparity within the child welfare system or among dually served/crossover youth in Florida. Out of seven proposals, the Institute awarded two \$50,000 grants to the Children's Services Council of Broward County and the University of South Florida. Both projects began July 1, 2019 and concluded June 30, 2020.

Children's Services Council of Broward County | Community Participatory Action Research: Co-Researching Disparities with Broward's Child Welfare Participants and System Partners

This project examined the racial disparity in Broward County's child welfare removals through a Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR) framework that employs a racial equity lens. The Children's Services Council's CPAR project enabled a grassroots qualitative examination of Broward's child welfare system by the community partners operating the system alongside former child welfare system participants. This CPAR framework's goal was to 1) guide the research objectives designed to reduce the racial disparity present in the policies and decisions to remove children; 2) co-create racial equity in the relationships among the community partners that develop, implement, administer, and evaluate Broward's child welfare system and its participants; and 3) build the capacity of service system participants to exercise community authority over the child welfare system.

The Children's Services Council's CPAR project created two CPAR teams: Very Important Parents (VIP) and Youth Leaders in Action Project (YLAP). The VIP group consisted of child welfare professionals and parents with lived experiences in the child welfare system. The VIP group's research goal was to determine how to best develop and implement parent prevention services to help families in need of services thrive, so they do not enter the child welfare system. The VIP group produced a short video and created a list of family resources to be included in the [video](#).

The YLAP team was comprised of nine members: five youth, a FAU graduate student, and three system professionals who remained active during the entire data analysis and product development process. This team's research goal was to identify system gaps, quality issues, and policy changes to improve the child welfare system and the outcomes for system-involved youth. The YLAP team created and implemented a youth and system professional organizing effort (Youth System Organizers of Broward – YSO). The stated goal of the YSO is that through collective action, youth transitioning to independence and likeminded system professionals will gain power in the child welfare system to ensure systemic responsiveness to the voices, concerns, and needs of system involved youth.

The researchers found the CPAR framework, implemented with a racial equity lens, to be a successful method for bringing system professionals and people with lived experiences in the child welfare system together to co-identify systemic issues and co-create solutions to improve the quality of living and outcomes for children and families in the child welfare system.

Key findings and recommendations

- ◆ Youth in and transitioning out of the child welfare system feel powerless in the system.
- ◆ Most system professionals lack the lived experiences as a child in the system to be truly empathetic to the children/youth they serve.
- ◆ Youth transitioning to independent living and likeminded system professionals need to adopt community organizing strategies to empower the YSO youth, so they can work together to help ensure program quality, shared system accountability, and foster trusting relationships between system-involved children/youth and system professionals.
- ◆ Improving access to support services is necessary to prevent families from entering the child welfare system.
- ◆ System professionals need help to better understand the de-humanization parents feel as they navigate the child welfare system to reunify with their children.

For a research brief, please visit <https://ficw.fsu.edu/REI>.

University of South Florida | An Examination of Racial Disparities in the Experiences and Outcomes of Crossover Youth

Crossover youth are a vulnerable population of minors who are involved, or are at risk of involvement, with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. This mixed methods study examined whether different models of treatment programs for these youth are effective in meeting the needs of minority families and producing equitable outcomes across racial and ethnic groups.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the essential components of the National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP) in Jacksonville and Children’s Home Society (CHS) in Tampa Bay, particularly the services that have been adapted or designed to meet the needs of crossover youth from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds?
2. What program components contribute to positive experiences and outcomes for minority youth and families? What are the perceptions of families regarding the appropriateness, effectiveness, and cultural responsiveness of treatment planning and/or service provision in the programs?
3. What are the similarities and differences in outcomes for minority youth based on program type? Specifically, do the treatment programs produce equitable outcomes in terms of recidivism, recurrence of maltreatment, treatment completion, and self-reported academic/vocational engagement?

The research team collaborated with two agencies that are contracted with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) to offer treatment programs specifically for crossover youth and their families: National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP) in Jacksonville and Children’s Home Society (CHS) in Tampa Bay. Data were gathered from focus groups with staff and reviews of agency documents, staff and caregiver surveys, case files, and administrative records. The results suggest that both programs share similar goals and were successful in preventing recidivism in youth during treatment. Caregiver satisfaction and youth outcomes did not differ significantly across racial and ethnic groups. However, there were important differences between agencies in perceptions of obstacles, displays of materials promoting cultural diversity, and types of services provided.

Overall, results suggest the CHS program (Promoting Stability for Youth) and the NYAP (Constant and Never Ending Improvement) are very similar.

Key findings

- ◆ CHS staff shared that they had a 98 percent success rate in preventing recidivism in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, while NYAP noted 93 percent of youth were free of new juvenile justice involvement.
- ◆ NYAP staff and administrators were more likely to enhance their physical environment with materials and resources to promote cultural diversity and cultural competency (e.g., displaying representative materials and providing culturally sensitive meals during assessments).
- ◆ CHS was more likely to identify the special needs of the child and family as well as the youth's perspective of his/her strengths.
- ◆ Results also indicated that CHS was more likely than NYAP to offer family counseling whereas NYAP was more likely to offer parental skill building and independent living training.

Recommendations

Due to the vulnerability of crossover youth, specialized community resources like the ones in this study should continue to be piloted and scaled up throughout the state. It would be beneficial if additional research explored the outcomes of crossover youth in traditional programs (programs that work with all youth), compared to the outcomes for specialized programs, which only serve crossover youth. In addition, follow up from these specialized programs was not explored in this study. Therefore, further research on long-term outcomes for crossover youth are needed. For the full report please visit <https://ficw.fsu.edu/REI>.

Examining the Health, Economic, and Professional Impacts of COVID-19 on Health and Human Service Workers

In partnership with the FSPSF co-investigators, Drs. Wilke and Radey, Institute staff developed a proposal for the Florida State University Collaborative Collision: COVID-19 Seed Fund grant opportunity presented in Spring 2020. The project, which was funded in May 2020, allowed for rapid data analysis of short-response qualitative items related to COVID-19, which were presented to the FSPSF sample in April 2020. Specifically, workers were asked about the impacts of COVID-19 on their physical, emotional, and financial well-being; changes in job responsibilities; and perceived impacts on clientele.

Key Findings

- ◆ Of the 531 child welfare and health and human services workers, over two-thirds (69.9%, $n = 371$) reported at least one personal impact.
- ◆ Emotional impacts were most prevalent (79.2%, $n = 294$), followed by financial (33.4%, $n = 124$), other (25.3%, $n = 94$), and physical (17%, $n = 63$) impacts.
- ◆ Though some participants expressed that these impacts were minimal, and expressed gratitude for that, most workers reported multiple, frequently intersecting impacts on their well-being.
- ◆ Thematic analyses indicated the presence of three major themes: Challenges to Agency Functioning and Service Provision, Biopsychosocial Impacts on Workers, and Exacerbated Vulnerability of Clientele.

- ◆ The research team is developing a model using a social-ecological framework to frame the findings and inform future research in this area.

Next Steps

The research team has one manuscript in development for a special issue on COVID-19 for the journal *Social Work*. Additional manuscripts are anticipated, including one led by the Institute on workers' perceptions of the breakdown of the referral system during the pandemic, with specific attention to child welfare workers' perceptions when feasible. In addition, affiliates Drs. Wilke and Radey are actively seeking external funding to support the continuation of this work.

SECTION V: UPCOMING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Workforce Well-being and Enhancement

The Institute has spent the last five years researching the multifaceted experiences of new frontline workers in Florida's child welfare system through the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families (FSPSF). The FSPSF team has reported on several workforce related issues such as turnover, burnout, training, organizational factors, and perception of mental and physical health. We have kept our child welfare partners and collaborators updated on this research throughout the life of the project, and we have reported these findings to the Florida Legislature. Now that the five-year study is coming to the end of data collection, the Institute desires to continue to focus on the workforce.

The National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) leads an Initiative known as *Workforce Excellence Sites*. A NCWWI team works with five agencies around the country to engage in intensive work around tailored objectives and goals directed at improving the child welfare workforce. Our Institute will spend the next year creating a similar initiative for Florida's child welfare system.

The Workforce Well-being and Enhancement (WWE) planning team, consisting of Institute staff and two faculty affiliates, Drs. Dina Wilke and Karen Randolph (Florida State University), has developed a work plan for FY20-21. We have sought guidance from NCWWI leadership to inform our efforts and, in Fall 2020, we will seek both informal and formal feedback from stakeholders in Florida. This feedback will inform the initiative's logic model and theory of change, implementation strategies, and evaluation efforts. We plan to develop a request for proposals to be released in Spring 2020. Pending budgetary considerations, our goal is to select three to four pilot sites, with a start date of July 1, 2021.

Mindfulness-Based Training for Child Welfare Workers

In July 2020, the Institute approved funding for affiliate Dr. Marleen Milner (Southeastern University) to develop, implement, and evaluate a program to train child welfare workers to use mindfulness-based strategies to moderate the impact of work-related stress, compassion fatigue, and burnout. The overarching goal of this pilot project is to examine if workplace mindfulness-based strategies can support and sustain child welfare workers' well-being and reduce frontline staff turnover. Dr. Milner will collaborate with community-based care agency Heartland for Children, led by Institute affiliate Teri Saunders, to carry out this project

The intervention includes a half-day training in compassion fatigue, self-care, and mindfulness followed by eight weeks of instruction, small group support, and mindfulness practices. Pre- and posttest instruments will measure professional quality of life, perceived stress, mindful attention and awareness, and self-compassion. In addition, participants will be asked to keep mindfulness practice logs and participate in a virtual focus group to provide additional insight. Participants will be recruited from three agencies within Polk County on a first-come, first-served basis, with a cap of 16 participants. Those who express interest in participation after the cap is reached will be placed on a waitlist and asked to serve as the control group and complete the pre- and posttest measures. Participants in the control group will be given the opportunity to participate in the Mindfulness Based Training the next time it is offered.

The start date was planned for August 2020. However, due to COVID-19-related concerns, Dr. Milner and her collaborators have decided to postpone implementation until January 2021.

Early Childhood Court Evaluation

Per legislation passed in the 2020 session (section 39.01304 (2) F.S.), “the Office of the State Courts Administrator shall contract for an evaluation of the early childhood court programs to ensure the quality, accountability, and fidelity of the programs’ evidence-based treatment.” Given the Institute’s lead on the 2018-2019 Early Childhood Court (ECC) Evaluation, in August 2020, Carrie Toy, Senior Court Operations Consultant at the Office of the State Courts Administrator, requested to meet with the Institute to discuss the possibility of contracting for this new evaluation. Upon reviewing the “next steps” provided by the Institute in their previous evaluation final report, Ms. Toy requested the Institute submit a formal proposal, with a priority focus on evaluation of the effectiveness of therapeutic modalities used within ECC. Pending the budget, additional priorities (in ranked order) include: seeking additional client input, exploring the role of ECCs in promoting equity for disadvantaged groups in the dependency court system, identifying client characteristics or circumstances most likely to benefit from the ECC approach, and examining longitudinal outcomes. In September 2020, Institute staff submitted a proposal in alignment with these priorities.

SECTION VI: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coaching/Consulting

Racial inequities are well documented concerning access to quality early learning programs and workforce advancement within early learning centers. The Office of Early Learning has contracted with the Institute to investigate and address race equity issues at a coalition level; three racial equity consultants have been hired to lead learning communities at 16 early learning coalitions and one Office of Early Learning group in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The long-term goal is to develop learning communities that think critically about the design and implementation of policies and procedures centered on equitable access to quality early learning for families and workforce opportunities for early learning workers.

Process Evaluation

At the individual level, equity coaching offers opportunities for deep reflection, re-remembering, and a way to act against racial oppression. The three equity coaches worked with the Florida Institute of Child Welfare to develop and implement a strategic work plan to guide the equity coaching toward meeting the following objectives: 1) building community, 2) interrogating self and leadership, and 3) surfacing and examining knowledge and ideologies. These short-term objectives are being monitored through pre/post-test surveys and ongoing qualitative data on session feedback from both participants and consultants. As a new initiative, the process evaluation aims to: 1) evaluate the learning environment, instruction, and progress toward individual and group goals of ELC leader-participants and facilitators; and 2) create a roadmap of challenges and improvements to replicating the racial coaching/consulting program.

Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA)

The Race Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) is a tool that assists decision-makers in evaluating the short- and long-term impact of existing and proposed policies on families of color. The consultants will work with each early learning coalition to evaluate their current policies using this assessment and develop policies to improve equity in their respective regions. The impact of this work will be evaluated for two years during and after the implementation of new policies.

Family First Prevention Services Act

This Institute has recently engaged in dialogue with the Department on how we can provide technical assistance to the workforce on Florida's implementation of the Family First Preservation Services Act (FFPSA). As a courtesy to the Department, we will provide a webinar series on educating the community-based care lead agencies on how to prepare for evaluation of their services depending on where they are in stages of implementation. In addition, the Institute will host three podcast recordings on the [Family First Prevention Services Act & the Group Care Quality Standards Assessment](#); and the process for building evidence for the kinship care navigator program. The podcasts will be recorded in the fall and aired in early 2021.

To assist in the development of these training opportunities as well as future technical assistance, the Institute has convened a workgroup of six faculty affiliates. The workgroup met twice in August and plan to meet monthly to propose additional avenues in which the Institute can assist the Department as it embarks on implementing the FFPSA.

Virtual Training and Podcast Series

Webinars

The Institute recorded two webinars last fall. Recognizing that better collaboration between our child welfare and early childhood systems is crucial for improving outcomes for children 0-5 who are dually served. State and national experts held a webinar on Enhancing Collaboration Between Child Welfare and Early Childhood Systems. The Equity in the Center was engaged to host a webinar to help participants learn new insights and best practices that organizations can use to measurably shift organizational culture, operationalize equity and move from a dominant organizational cultural to a race equity one. In January, a live webinar was hosted in conjunction with affiliate Chris Groeber, as well as three community experts from Voices for Florida: Robyn Metcalf, Tracy Corsa Parker, and Tara Madison. During the webinar, *Multi-Level Intervention for Human Trafficking of Florida's Youth*, the speakers introduced the topic of human trafficking in youth; provided Florida-specific statistics; and discussed intervention efforts, including relevant policy, implementation of the Open Doors pilot, and ongoing evaluation efforts. In September, a three-part webinar series on Partnering with Families was held. Victor Sims discussed innovative ways to better connect with parents; Jamie Grantham and Dan Burns shared ways that co-parenting can bridge the gap between research and reality; and Amelia Franck presented evidence for new innovations in child welfare system reform. These are hosted in our [webinar](#) section of our website.

Videos with the experts

Several interviews were produced with experts, primarily affiliates, on various topics: supervised visitation with affiliate Karen Oehme; high needs youth with affiliate Dr. Shamra Boel-Studt; intergenerational trauma with affiliate Dr. Lisa Schelbe; and child abuse prevention with Chris Lolley, Prevent Child Abuse Florida. These are hosted on our [website](#) and have been disseminated on various platforms such as newsletters and social media.

Florida Institute for Child Welfare Podcast Series

In 2019, the Institute created and aired the first season of what is planned to be an ongoing podcast series. It was developed as an innovative means to provide training to frontline caseworkers, supervisors, researchers, students, and administrators.

Recordings began for our second season, *Innovations in Child Welfare*, in early March 2020. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, they were cancelled. They have recently been rescheduled for recording in early October and released in early 2021. In addition to the *Innovations in Child Welfare*, we are planning three webinars related to the Family First Act. Visit the Institute's website to learn about the speakers and listen to the [podcasts](#). They are available on Apple Podcasts, Soundcloud, Spotify, and YouTube. During this reporting period, there were 1,413 total plays from SoundCloud. Analytics from Google Play, YouTube, and Spotify are not available. Our audience is global with 1,301 in the U.S. and 43 from Canada, and 18 from Australia. The most popular episode was on racial equity with Corey Best with 410 plays.

Innovations in Child Welfare

Podcast Title	Speaker
1. Innovations to Enhance the Front Line	Leah Dienger, IBM
2. Social Worker – Client Relationship in the Digital Age	Dr. Karen Randolph, FSU
3. Assessment Response Team	Miranda Slaughter, DCF
4. Using Community Participatory Action Research to Engage Youth	Dr. Seanteé Campbell, Broward County Children’s Services Council

Family First Prevention Services Act

Podcast Title	Speaker
5. Revisioning Residential Care Services for Children and Youth: The Family First Prevention Services Act & the Group Care Quality Standards Assessment	Dr. Shamra Boel-Studt, FSU Zandra Odem, DCF
6. Building the Evidence for Kinship Navigator Programs	Dr. Anna Yelick, FICW

APPENDIX A | INSTITUTE BUDGET INFORMATION

The Institute received a \$1 million appropriation for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Additional funds were awarded to the Institute via contracts with the Office of Early Learning and the Department of Children and Families. The Institute had \$150,303 in unspent E&G funds at the end of the budget period. To meet the section 1011.45 F.S. requirement for universities to maintain a 7 percent statutory reserve, FSU earmarked \$72,320 in FY 2020-2021 carryforward budget based on the Institute’s FY 2019-2020 beginning budget of \$1,033,147. A spending plan has been submitted to the Board of Governors to use the anticipated carryforward balance of \$77,984 to fund the legislatively required Residential Group Care Quality Standards initiative and the final report of the USF’s evaluation of the DCF core preservice training.

Table 1: Fiscal Year 2019-2020 E&G Budget

Operating Budget (Salaries, OPS, Expenses)			\$624,790
	Expenses	Available Balance at year end	
Salaries ¹	\$361,319	\$34,308	
OPS ²	\$124,829	\$4,798	
Other Expenses ³	\$71,323	\$28,213	
Research and Evaluation	\$370,067	\$42,318	\$421,385
Total E&G Budget			\$1,046,175

Table 2: Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Contracts

Office of Early Learning		\$ 109,762
Department of Children and Families		\$181,730
Inventory of Kinship Care Programs	\$ 75,775	
Assessment of Quality Standards for DCF Residential Group Care	\$105,955	
Total Contractual Funds		\$291,492

¹ Executive Director, Program Director, Administrative Specialist

² Other Personnel Services (OPS), Post-Doctoral Fellows, Graduate Researchers, Graphic Designer, and Editor

³ Includes computer and software purchases, IT assistance, facilities, offices supplies, travel

Table 3: Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Funded Research and Evaluation Projects

Project Name	Award Dates	Award Amount	Principal Investigator/ Affiliate	University/ Organization
Racial Equity Training for the Office of Early Learning ⁴	7/1/19 to 12/31/19	\$109,762	Jessica Pryce	Florida Institute for Child Welfare
Community Participatory Action Research: Co- researching Disparities with Broward’s Child Welfare Participants and System Partners	7/1/19 to 6/30/20	\$50,000	Sue Gallagher	Children’s Service Council of Broward County
An Examination of Racial Disparities in the Experience and Outcomes of Crossover Youth	7/1/19 to 6/30/20	\$50,000	Lodi Rorher	University of South Florida
An Assessment of Quality Standards for Florida’s DCF Licensed Residential Group Homes ⁵	7/1/19 to 6/30/2020	\$105,955	Shamra Boel-Studt	Florida State University
Inventory of Kinship Care Practices ⁶	7/1/19 to 9/30/19	\$75,775	Anna Yelick	Florida Institute for Child Welfare
Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families	7/1/19 to 6/30/20	\$207,656	Dina Wilke	Florida State University

⁴ Funded by OEL

⁵ Partially funded by DCF (\$47,475)

⁶ Funded by DCF

Project Name	Award Dates	Award Amount	Principal Investigator/ Affiliate	University/ Organization
Guardianship Assistance Program Evaluation	5/15/2019 to 6/30/2020	\$75,000	Martie Gillen	University of Florida
Evaluation of the Department of Children and Families Core Preservice Training	2/1/2018 to 9/30/2020	\$76,385	Amy Vargo	University of South Florida

Table 4: Fiscal Year 2020-2021 E&G Budget

Operating Budget (Salaries, OPS, Expenses)	\$871,643
Salaries	\$369,747
OPS	\$225,306
Other Expenses	\$276,590
Research and Evaluation Projects	\$136,125
Total E&G budget	\$1,007,768

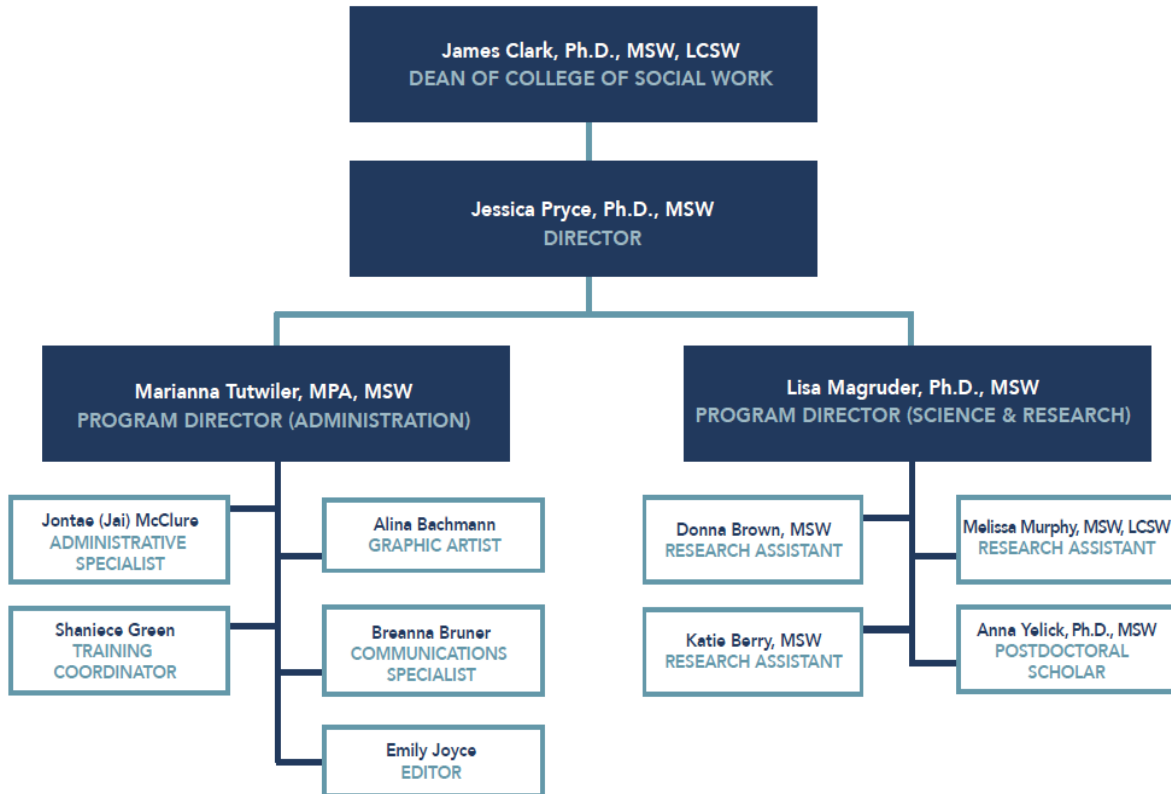
Table 5: Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Contracts (to date)

Office of Early Learning, Racial Equity Training	\$247,973
Inventory of Kinship Care Practices	\$59,659
Total Contractual Funds	\$307,632

APPENDIX B | INSTITUTE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



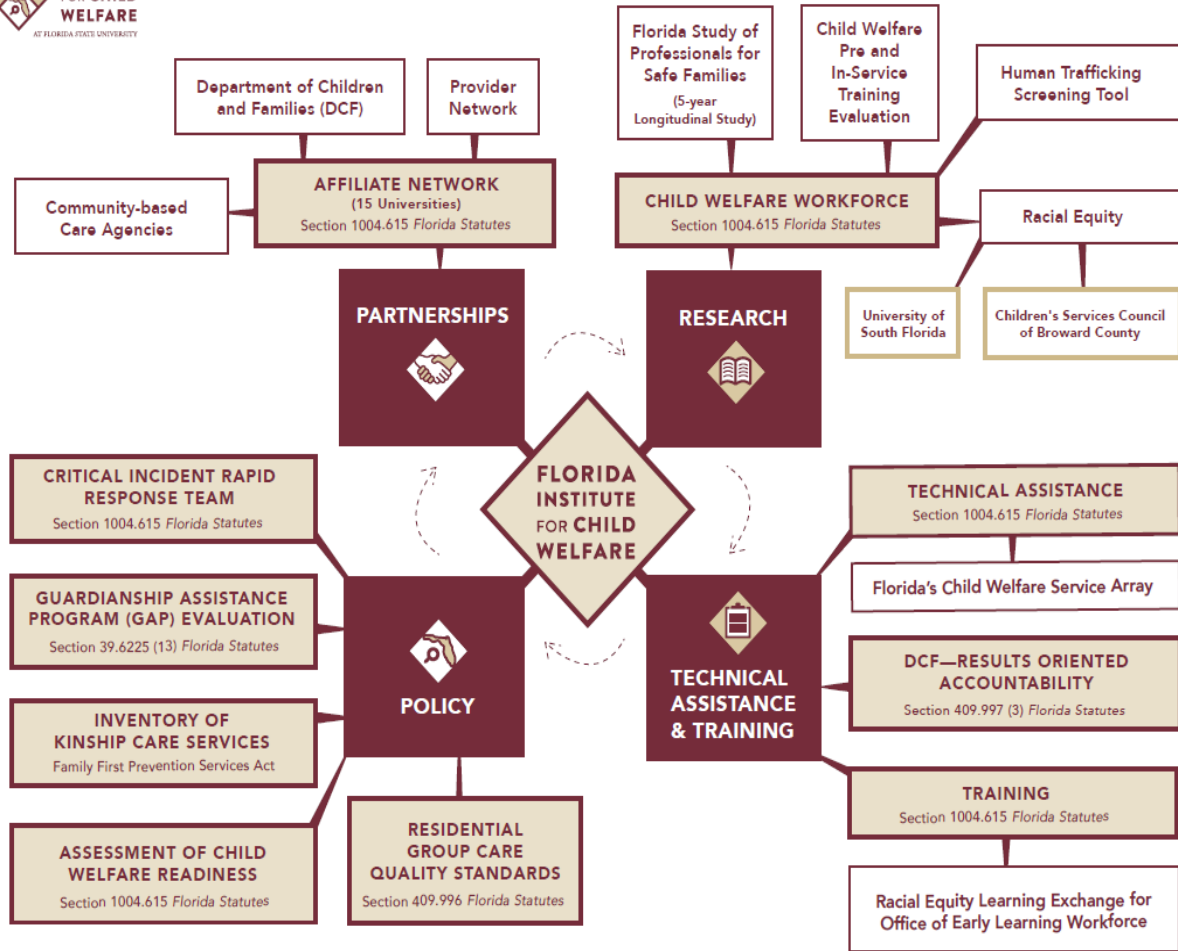
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2020



APPENDIX C | INSTITUTE ILLUSTRATION OF ACTIVITIES



FY 2019-2020 Activities



APPENDIX D | CONTRIBUTIONS BY INSTITUTE AFFILIATES

During FY19-20, the Institute aimed to engage as many affiliates as possible in at least one Institute-related project or product. Below is an accounting of our affiliates' many meaningful contributions. To assist the Institute with preparing for the legislative session, a legislative subgroup was formed.

Dr. Heather Agazzi, University of South Florida, presented her recent work during the January 2020 affiliate call. Specifically, she discussed Smart Start, a parenting tool for children with developmental delay, social-emotional concerns, and trauma. She discussed its development purpose and basic principles, as well as key elements of Smart Start and the preliminary findings. In addition, Dr. Agazzi co-authored a brief literature review with Dr. Kimberly Renk, University of Central Florida, entitled [*Attachment Problems in Young Children: Effective Interventions for Repairing Young Child Trauma*](#). This document was publicly distributed in July 2020.

Dr. Shamra Boel-Studt, Florida State University, leads the Quality Care Standards for Residential Group Care project. She also filmed a 10-minute video, [*Residential Care and Children and Youth with High Level Needs*](#), which was shared on our social media in May for Foster Care Month. She also serves on the FFPSA workgroup.

Dr. Michael Campbell, St. Leo University serves on the FFPSA workgroup.

Dr. Marianna Colvin, Florida Atlantic University, served as an affiliate representative on the proposal review team for the 2020 *Partnering with Families* Symposium (cancelled to COVID-19).

Dr. Morgan Cooley, Florida Atlantic University, is a member of the legislative and FFPSA subgroups and is part of the research team evaluating the Guardianship Assistance Program (PI: Dr. Martie Gillen). Dr. Cooley filmed a brief [video](#) about herself and her expertise related to foster care, touching on her clinical experience working with LGBTQ+ youth. This video was released on social media in May for Foster Care Month.

Dr. Nicole Fava, Florida International University, is a member of the legislative subgroup.

Dr. Jessica Felix-Jäger de Weaver, Southeastern University, completed a two-minute [video](#) on her expertise in foster care. This content is being saved for release during slower social media time in fall 2020.

Dr. Thomas Felke, Florida Gulf Coast University, filmed a brief [video](#) on food insecurity, which was released in March 2020 for National Nutrition Month.

Dr. Martie Gillen, University of Florida, is a member of the legislative and FFPSA subgroups and is currently leading the evaluation of the Guardianship Assistance Program.

Chris Groeber, University of South Florida, is a member of the legislative and FFPSA subgroups and co-lead a Human Trafficking webinar produced by the Institute in January 2020. He presented a brief summary of the webinar during the April 2020 quarterly affiliate call.

Dr. Hui Huang, Florida International University, lent her substance abuse expertise to a meta-analysis being co-developed by Dr. Anna Yelick, a postdoctoral scholar at the Institute. She is also a member of the FFPSA workgroup.

Dr. Michael Killian, Florida State University, has assisted the Institute in the validation of the Human Trafficking Screening Tool (HTST). He agreed to serve as an expert consult on the qualitative HTST

project in his affiliate capacity. He also co-authored a proposal to DCF with Drs. Yelick and Magruder to assess inter-rater reliability of the HTST among trafficking experts.

Dr. Erin King, University of West Florida, presented findings from the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families at the Council on Social Work Education's 65th Annual Program Meeting and the Society for Social Work Research's 24th Annual Conference.

Khalilah Louis-Caines, St. Leo University, filmed a two-minute [video](#) for National Adoption Month, which was released on social media in November 2019. She serves as a member of the FFPSA workgroup.

Pam MacDill, Florida State University, served as an affiliate representative on the proposal review team for the Institute's inaugural Child Welfare Worker of the Year awards.

Dr. Jennifer Marshall, University of South Florida, co-authored a qualitative manuscript based on the 2018-2019 Early Childhood Courts Evaluation entitled *Early Childhood Court in Florida: Qualitative Results of a Statewide Evaluation*. She also agreed to co-host a future webinar for affiliates sharing her experiences in securing research funding.

Dr. Marleen Milner, Southeastern University, authored a brief literature review entitled [Addressing Teen Pregnancy and Parenting among Youth in Foster Care](#). This document is in the editing process, with an anticipated release in October 2020. In June 2020, she submitted a proposal for funding to support her research: *Preliminary Investigation of Mindfulness-Based Training for Child Welfare Workers*. This proposal, which involves collaboration with affiliate Teri Saunders (Heartland for Children), was approved by Institute leadership for funding.

Dr. Eva Nowakowski-Sims, Barry University, has authored a brief literature review on the use of movement and breath work for parent stress as an abuse prevention strategy. This document is in the editing process, with an anticipated release in November 2020.

Karen Oehme, Florida State University, filmed a two-minute [video](#) on the topic of intimate partner violence, which will be released on social media in October 2020 for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Karen participated in an interview regarding supervised visitation and the Institute for Family Violence Studies' Clearinghouse on Supervised Visitation. She also led pre-planning and proposal development for SB1326's professional certification initiative in Spring 2020, though this will not be funded during FY20-21.

Dr. Gihan Omar, Citrus Health, filmed a two-minute [video](#) on the Citrus Helping Adolescents Negatively Impacted by Commercial Exploitation (CHANCE) program, which was released in January 2020 for Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

Dr. Melissa Radey, Florida State University, continued as co-investigator of the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families. She also co-led a Lunch & Learn in October 2019, presenting FSPSF findings to a group of primarily frontline child welfare supervisors and serving as a panelist for the Q&A session. In May 2020, she and Dr. Dina Wilke were awarded a COVID-19 Collaborative Collision Seed Fund Grant through Florida State University. The project involved rapid analysis of FSPSF qualitative data regarding COVID-19 impacts on human services workers and clients. Drs. Radey and Wilke collaborated with Institute postdoctoral scholars Drs. Yelick and Magruder to carry out this short-term project.

Dr. Karen Randolph, Florida State University, presented findings from the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families at the Council on Social Work Education's 65th Annual Program Meeting. At the end of

FY19-20, she joined the planning team for the Institute’s new Workforce Well-being and Enhancement Initiative.

Dr. Kim Renk, University of Central Florida, co-authored a brief literature review with Dr. Heather Agazzi, University of South Florida, entitled [Attachment Problems in Young Children: Effective Interventions for Repairing Young Child Trauma](#).

Dr. Lisa Schelbe, Florida State University, was a member of the legislative subgroup. She completed a 10-minute [video](#) about intergenerational trauma that is in the final stage of production. In June 2020, she was appointed to the editorial team for the *APSAC Advisor* and the *APSAC Alert*. In this role, she has extended an invitation to her fellow affiliates to contribute to these publications.

Dr. Julie Steen, University of Central Florida, filmed a brief [video](#) about the impact of hurricanes on foster youth and families. This video was distributed in July 2020 alongside our hurricane infographic.

Dr. Dina Wilke, Florida State University, continued as principal investigator of the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families. She co-led a Lunch & Learn in October 2019, serving as a panelist for the Q&A session. She also presented findings from the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families at the Council on Social Work Education’s 65th Annual Program Meeting and the Society for Social Work Research’s 24th Annual Conference. In May 2020, she and Dr. Melissa Radey were awarded a COVID-19 Collaborative Collision Seed Fund Grant through Florida State University. The project involved rapid analysis of FSPSF qualitative data regarding COVID-19 impacts on human services workers and clients. Drs. Wilke and Radey collaborated with Institute postdoctoral scholars Drs. Yelick and Magruder to carry out this short-term project. At the end of FY19-20, Dr. Wilke joined the planning team for the Institute’s new Workforce Well-being and Enhancement Initiative.

Drs. Mary Kay Falconer and Terry Rhodes, Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, were part of a research and evaluation team that was accepted to present a poster at the Institute’s 2020 *Partnering with Families* Symposium in May 2020. However, the symposium was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Dr. Robin Perry, Florida A&M University, was scheduled to film an interview about the State Child Abuse Death Review System in Florida. However, due to COVID-19, filming has been postponed indefinitely.

Dr. Riann Van Zyl, University of South Florida serves on the FFPSA workgroup.

Through our monthly [infographics](#) (September 2019 through September 2020), we were able to highlight 40 affiliates based on their relevant expertise or recent accomplishments (* denotes inclusion in more than one infographic).

Affiliates	
Dr. Shamra Boel-Studt	Dr. Jennifer Marshall*
Dr. Michael Campbell	Maxine McGregor
Dr. Marianna Colvin*	Dr. Marleen Milner*
Dr. Morgan Cooley*	Dr. Karen Oehme*
Dr. Pam Criss*	Dr. Gihan Omar*
Dr. Martie Gillen*	Dr. Robin Perry*
Dr. Mary Kay Falconer*	Dr. Melissa Radey*

Affiliates

Dr. Nicole Fava*	Dr. Karen Randolph
Dr. Jessica Felix-Jäger de Weaver*	Dr. Lisa Rapp-McCall*
Dr. Thomas Felke	Dr. Terry Rhodes*
Chris Groeber*	Dr. Mitch Rosenwald*
Dr. Hui Huang*	Dr. Alison Salloum*
Dr. Nairruti Jani*	Teri Saunders*
Dr. Michael Killian*	Dr. Lisa Schelbe*
Dr. Erin King*	Dr. Julie Steen
Dr. Jeffrey Lacasse	Kellie Sweat-Darnell*
Rene' Ledford*	Dr. Heather Thompson*
Khalilah Louis Caines*	Dr. Riaan Van Zyl*
Pam Macdill	Dr. Dina Wilke*
Dr. Kimberly McGrath	Dr. Winnifred Whittaker

APPENDIX E | MINUTES FROM INSTITUTE AFFILIATE MEETINGS AND CONFERENCE CALLS



Second Quarter of Fiscal Year 2020 Affiliates Meeting

Thursday, January 22, 2020 at 1:00 PM

Attendees

Jennifer Marshall, USF
Erin King, UWF
Alison Salloum, USF
Gihan Omar, Citrus Health
Morgan Cooley, FAU
Melissa Radley, FSU
Maxine McGregor, UCF

Kimberly Renk, UCF
Robin Perry, FAMU
Rene Ledford, CHS
Heather Agazzi, USF
Karen Oehme, FSU
Michael Campbell, St. Leo
Jenn Spaulding-Givens, UNF

Jessica Felix-Jager, SEU
Marleen Milner, SEU
Marianna Tutwiler, FICW
Jessica Pryce, FICW
Marthea Pitts, FICW
Lisa Magruder, FICW
Jai McClure, FICW

Welcome

Dr. Jessica Pryce welcomed the affiliates to the call and gave a legislative update as it pertains to the Institute, social work curriculum, child welfare workforce, and the leadership community in Florida. Dr. Pryce gave a briefing on Senate Bill 122 (<http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2020/00122>), House Bill 43 (<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2020/43>) and Jordan's Law (<http://jordanslaw.com/>).

Institute Update

Dr. Heather Aggazi provided the background for the development of Smart Start:

- ❖ Smart Start is a parenting tool for children with developmental delay, social-emotional concerns, and trauma. She discussed its development purpose and basic principles, as well as key elements of Smart Start and the preliminary findings.

Marianna Tutwiler gave updates on two of the Institute's current projects.

- ❖ Residential Group Care Pilot Study
- ❖ Kinship Navigator Program

Marianna also highlighted the Child Protection Caseworker Support Podcast (<http://ficw.fsu.edu/podcast>). She introduced the Institute's 2020 symposium to be held May 19 and 20 in Tallahassee. The theme is "Partnering with Families". She informed everyone that there will be a Call for Workshop Presentations starting February 3rd. The annual affiliates' meeting this year will be a day

prior to the NASW-FL conference on June 10, 2020 from 1:00 - 4:00 pm. Lastly, Marianna shared with the group that the Florida Coalition for Children is currently looking for proposals.

Marthea Pitts gave a review of the Office of Early Learning (OEL) Trainings.

- ❖ FICW collaborated with OEL back in July 2019 and established 13 onsite trainings and 6 webinars for the Early Learning Coalitions. Marthea mentioned the topics of discussion for these training and webinars are the historical foundations of inequities, implicit and explicit bias, cultural response practices, and policy decision making using an equity lens.

Dr. Lisa Magruder spoke in regards to the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families (FSPSF), the Human Trafficking Screening Tool and gave Affiliates more updates.

- ❖ The FSPSF has its eighth wave in progress and is preparing data for secondary analyses. For further briefings and reports visit <http://ficw.fsu.edu/FSPSF>
- ❖ The Institute received a grant from FSU to conduct a qualitative exploration of screeners' experiences in implementing the tool in the field. The Institute is submitting a proposal to assess the interrater reliability of the tool among trafficking experts.
- ❖ In spring 2020, Dr. Magruder will be asking affiliates to contribute to the Institute in some manner. Ideas include: Literature/ Best Practice Reviews, to complete a video interview and or social media video, to present a brief project review on an upcoming quarterly call, as well as assist/speak at a Lunch & Learn event.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50.



Third Quarter of Fiscal Year 2020 Affiliates Meeting

Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at 1:00 PM

Attendees

Jennifer Marshall, USF
Erin King, UWF
Alison Salloum, USF
Diane Scott, UWF
Morgan Cooley, FAU
Melissa Radley, FSU
Dina Wilke, FSU
Kimberly Renk, UCF
Robin Perry, FAMU
Rene Ledford, CHS
Heather Agazzi, USF
Riaan Van Zyl, USF

Michael Campbell, St. Leo
Jenn Spaulding-Givens, UNF
Chris Groeber, USF
Marleen Milner, SEU
Marianna Colvin, FAU
Lisa Schelbe, FSU
Jessica Weaver,
Hui Huang, FIU
Heather Thompson, FAU
E. Nowakowski-Sims, Barry
Terry Rhodes, Ounce
Teri Saunder, Heartland

Shamra Boel-Studt, FSU
Martie Gillen, UF
Karen Randolph
Karen Randolph
Marianna Tutwiler, FICW
Jessica Pryce, FICW
Marthea Pitts, FICW
Lisa Magruder, FICW
Jai McClure, FICW
Donna Brown, FICW

Welcome

Jessica Pryce welcomed the affiliates to the call and informed the affiliates that our annual symposium for this year is cancelled due to COVID-19. *Jessica* announced that Senate Bill 1326 passed. This bill requires the Institute and the Florida State University, College of Social Work to redesign the social work curriculum. The Institute is to also collaborate with the Department of Children and Families and stakeholders to design and implement a professional development curriculum to lead to a child welfare specialization. The Institute will also be establishing a consulting program to assist child welfare organizations with workforce well-being and enhancement.

Institute Update

Marianna Tutwiler gave brief updates on the Institute's current projects.

- ❖ Residential Group Care Pilot Study
- ❖ Kinship Navigator Program
- ❖ Office of Early Learning
- ❖ Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families
- ❖ Human Trafficking Screening Tool
- ❖ Evaluation of Pre-Service Training
- ❖ Guardianship Assistance Program

Marianna highlighted the Child Protection Caseworker Support Podcast (<http://ficw.fsu.edu/podcast>) and informed everyone that the Institute is currently working on Season 2: *Innovations in Child Welfare*. Marianna gave a quick reminder of the currently scheduled annual face-to-face affiliates meeting in Orlando on June 10, 2020. The Institute is continuously monitoring the COVID-19 situation and if a face-to-face meeting is not feasible, a virtual meeting will be arranged.

Affiliate Update

Chris Groeber gave a recap of a webinar conducted in January on *Intervention for Human Trafficking of Florida Youth*. The live webinar provided state specific statistics, discussed intervention efforts (relevant policy, implementation of the Open Door pilot and other evaluation efforts). Participants indicated an overall positive response. They were able to engage in a question and answer session, as well as receive continuous education credits (upon request).

Lisa Magruder reiterated how the Institute desires to promote our Affiliates and their work by connecting the Institute's audience to our Affiliates. These contributions can be made via several options, brief technical reports, 2-minute social media videos, 10-minute interviews, and/or ad hoc assistance. Previous collaborations completed thus far were highlighted to promote our affiliates. Lisa also announced that there would be another affiliate survey distributed in late May or early June.

Other affiliates gave brief updates on current projects.

- ❖ *Hui Huang* shared information on her upcoming NRC-FAHE webinar on May 4.
- ❖ *Lisa Schelbe* gave an update on her research work on child maltreatment. She also asked if anyone was interested in being an ad hoc reviewer for the *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, to please contact her.
- ❖ *Jennifer Marshall* spoke on the prevention side regarding different evaluations coming forth this summer from Charlotte County.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:45.



Sixth Annual Florida Institute for Child Welfare Affiliate Meeting

June 10, 2020

Virtual

Attendees:

Riaan van Zyle, USF	Marleen Milner, SEU
Diane Scott, UWF	Chris Groeber, USF
Jani Nairrutti, FGCU	Rene Ledford, Children's Home Society
Erin King, UWF	Heather Agazzi, USF
Marianna Colvin, FAU	Karen Oehme, FSU IVFS
Dina Wilke, FSU	Ann Perko, FSU IVFS
Melissa Radey, FSU	Heather Thompson, FAU
Martie Gillen, UF	Teri Saunders, Heartland, Inc.
Eva Nowakowski-Sims, Barry	Lisa Schelbe, FSU
Michael Killian, FSU	Hui Huang, FIU
Morgan Cooley, FAU	Gihan Omar, Citrus Health
Michael Campbell, St. Leo	Khalilah Caines-Louis, St. Leo
Jennifer Marshall, USF	Jessica Pryce, FICW
Ying Zhang, representing Ounce of Prevention	Marianna Tutwiler, FICW
Maxine McGregor, UCF	Lisa Magruder, FICW

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Jessica Pryce, Director, welcomed the affiliates to the meeting.

Current State of the Institute

Marianna Tutwiler, Program Director, briefly discussed the status of the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families and the continuation of the residential group care standards and Kinship Navigator projects. She described the evaluation studies of the two projects on racial equity in child welfare and juvenile justice and the evaluation of the guardianship assistance program.

Dr. Lisa Magruder, Postdoctoral Scholar, described two ad hoc projects related to Human Trafficking Screening Tool Screeners and a COVID-19 study on the child welfare workforce (Co-PIs: Drs. Wilke and Radey). She also mentioned our recent collaborative federal grant submission with the USF for a national Quality Improvement Center for Reunification.

An overview of recent contributions by the affiliates, such as webinars, a Lunch and Learn meeting, videos, and brief literature reviews, was provided by Dr. Magruder. Slide 5 of the PPP depicts the affiliates who were highlighted in the last 10 months of Institute Infographics. She then shared some of

the preliminary findings of the affiliate survey and mentioned that your suggestions will be considered. Let Dr. Magruder know if you need the survey link again and please take a moment to complete the survey by June 18.

Beginning July 1, 2020, we will accept affiliate applications online via our [website](#). The Institute will review applications in March and September and on as-needed basis.

Dr. Pryce provided an overview of the three legislative initiatives, discussed the areas of need for each initiative and the affiliates were separated into three groups to discuss each and provide recommendations.

Social Work Curriculum

Statute: The Institute and the Florida State University College of Social Work shall design and implement a curriculum that enhances knowledge and skills for the child welfare practice. The institute and the college shall create the curriculum using interactive and interdisciplinary approaches and include opportunities for students to gain an understanding of real-world child welfare cases. The institute shall disseminate the curriculum to other interested state universities and colleges and provide implementation support.

General Feedback/Questions:

- Be clear in what is meant by “curriculum development.” Specifically, communicate that the intent is to infuse more child welfare content throughout the social work curriculum, as opposed to changes solely within child welfare courses.
- Be thoughtful in the involvement of DCF, CBCs, etc. Academic education should be aligned with preservice and agency training. Their input is needed, but the curriculum should be driven by the Institute team, affiliates, and other experts as necessary.
- Related, how is preservice training built into curriculum? And/Or, can preservice training be modified to align with curriculum?
- How will the curriculum changes work with certification?
- Consider potential challenges of cross-listed courses (e.g., required field components)
- Include the Certification Board in conversations
- Dr. Campbell is collaborating with Ellen Piekalkiewicz (Director, Center for the Study and Promotion of Communities, Families and Children) on a SAMHSA grant that has similar some overlapping goals. Consider consultation.

We are interested in attracting students from other disciplines; how might we include an interdisciplinary focus to the curriculum design?

Ideas for getting started included:

- Looking at best practices research for interprofessional education
- Gaining understanding of how child welfare 1 & 2 courses are currently implemented across social work programs
- Exploring curriculum maps of other majors/programs
- Exploring marketing data to determine what interdisciplinary majors are being attracted to social work to help determine interdisciplinary areas of focus

- Running ideas past program directors

What other academic programs would you recommend we spend time recruiting? For each program, what unique aspect would they bring to social work and child welfare?

- Criminology/Criminal Justice
- Allied Health
- Nursing
- Education
- Psychology
- Child & Family Sciences
- Business

The group discussed that all these majors/programs can provide diverse perspectives in the social work classroom and assist students in thinking about the transdisciplinary nature of child welfare services and the complexity of clients' needs.

Generally, what should the Institute keep in mind as it relates to ongoing evaluating of this design process and implementation at other universities? What challenges should the Institute prepare for? Any concerns about the design and implementation?

- Given that some non-social work students will engage with the curriculum, social work values and concepts will need to be communicated/reiterated (e.g., race equity, trauma lens).
- Getting approval for curriculum changes can be challenging. The group discussed the need to have input from other university representatives as one strategy for reducing this barrier.
- The Institute and participating universities will need to be thoughtful about how curriculum can be implemented while respecting academic freedom. Along these lines, that faculty – tenure-track, teaching, and adjunct – have different areas of expertise might limit their comfortability in incorporating child welfare content into courses.
- Consider what content works best for certain modalities (e.g., in-person, hybrid, online). This is particularly poignant due to current COVID concerns.
- How will this be paid for? Consider the IV-E model. What are the funding restrictions? Reimbursements? Necessary documentation?

Child Welfare Specialty and Certification

Statute: The institute, in collaboration with the department, community-based care lead agencies, providers of case management services, and other child welfare stakeholders, shall design and implement a career-long professional development curriculum for child welfare professionals at all levels and from all disciplines. The professional development curriculum must enhance the performance of the current child welfare workforce, address issues related to retention, complement the social work curriculum, and be developed using social work principles. The professional development curriculum shall provide career-long coaching, training, certification, and mentorship. The institute must provide the professional support on a continuous basis through online and in-person services.

How might we incorporate mentoring and coaching into the certification process?

- Prior to beginning the online portion of the certification modules, the trainee is matched with a coach in their region, who provides monthly check-ins to discuss the content of the module and how the trainee is incorporating the knowledge into their interactions with families. The trainer hired to conduct the face-to-face training should also be a coach. This is similar to many evidence-based interventions/practices (with additional coaches due to training cohort size).

- Mentoring is considered a long-term approach. Coaching may be better for this.
- Consider the qualifications of the trainer and or coaches. Consider co-facilitators – one with research background and one with practice.

How might we incentivize workers to take advantage of this opportunity?

- Incentives are imperative for engagement, either through salary increases or credentials. Lighter workload during training and travel costs to attend the training.
- Need to incorporate the certification into the career ladder plan that DCF and the Institute are to develop.

What challenges should the Institute prepare for?

- The certified child welfare professional should not have a caseload of only the population in which they have been certified in order to avoid burnout.
- What is currently in place for specialization – other than HTST screeners?
- Should include CBCs, DCF, CMOs in the discussion throughout development.

Note: CHS is developing a certification curriculum related to children ages 0-3.

Workforce Well-being & Enhancement (WWE)

Statute: The institute shall establish a consulting program for child welfare organizations to enhance workforce culture, supervision, and related management processes to improve retention, effectiveness, and overall well-being of staff to support improved child welfare outcomes. The institute shall select child welfare organizations through a competitive application process and provide ongoing analysis, recommendations, and support from a team of experts on a long-term basis to address systemic and operational workforce challenges.

What skills sets would you recommend be present on each consulting team?

- Someone who has expertise on mindfulness and selfcare. Focus on trauma-informed organizational culture.
- Data Analysis
- Public Health Perspective
- Ecological Perspective
- Social Determinants
- Strategic Visioning
- Racial Equity Expertise

How long should the consulting with each agency last?

- 2-3 years

How might we include universities in this project?

- Universities could become involved at the evaluation stage
- A partner to agencies (student preparation/training/similar to Title IV-E)

What should the Institute keep in mind as it relates to ongoing evaluating of this initiative?

- Evaluation should include qualitative and quantitative methods.
- There will need to be a distinguishing between the evaluation of each site and the evaluation of the overall WWE Initiative.
- Leverage Existing Data
- A logic model will help with organizing the evaluation
- It would be beneficial to have the same core set of instruments across sites (even if other areas of the evaluation are distinct).

What challenges should the Institute prepare for?

- Turnover is likely to be an issue, so that needs to be prepared for with all consulting teams
- Site selection criterion
- Consideration of the privatized model and how that relates to CMOs and CBCs
- Be careful not to burden organizations with too many surveys/data collection

Affiliate Updates

After the group reconvened, a few affiliates offered updates and announcements.

Jennifer Marshall at USF shared a link to her [webinar series](#) on disaster preparedness.

Morgan Cooley at FAU shared the following:

- She is looking for connections to agencies across the state if you have agencies who are asking for support or research around preservice training for foster parents - feel free to email me or send them my email.
- She is also working on a WT Grant invite related to racial equity and Guardian ad Litem involvement/decision-making; feel free to send resources or questions if this is an area that you are interested in or passionate about.
- Please look for a Child & Adolescent Social Work journal call for proposals for manuscripts on foster parenting and child outcomes. Please consider submitting or distributing to your networks.

Marleen Milner, at Southeastern, is developing a mindfulness training for Heartland, Inc. staff and collaborating with the Lakeland Center.

Maxine McGregor, UCF, shared that Julie Steen is working with the Embrace Families CBC on improving outcomes for foster youth.

FY 20-21 Affiliate Memorandum of Understanding

Dr. Magruder then discussed the MOU requirements for requesting funding from the Institute as well as new requirements and expectations of the affiliates to remain in good standing with the Institute. Please facilitate the signing of the MOUs in your agency and return to Jai McClure at jmclure@fsu.edu at your earliest convenience.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.



First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2020 Affiliates Meeting

Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 1 PM

Attendees

Martie Gillen, UF	Julie Steen, UCF	Karen Oehme, FSU
Sylvia Boynton, FMU	Gihan Omar, Citrus Health	Khalilah Caines, St. Leo
Jennifer Marshall, USF	Lisa Rapp McCall, St. Leo	Michael Campbell, St. Leo
Marianna Colvin, FAU	Morgan Cooley, FAU	Lisa Schelbe, FSU
Erin King, UWF	Heather Thompson, FAU	Marianna Tutwiler, FICW
Eva Nowakowski-Sims, UWF	Robin Perry, FAMU	Jessica Pryce, FICW
Alison Salloum, USF	Rene Ledford, CHS	Donna Brown, FICW
Tom Felke, FGCU	Mike Killian, FSU	Lisa Magruder, FICW
Terri Rhodes, Ounce of Prevention	Dina Wilke, FSU	Jai McClure, FICW
	Heather Agazzi, USF	

Welcome

Dr. Jessica Pryce welcomed the affiliates to the call and gave the opportunity for each new affiliate who recently joined the Institute to introduce themselves. Dr. Michael Killian and Dr. Eva Nowakowski-Sims, both introduced themselves and briefly spoke on why they decided to join as an affiliate.

Institute Update

Marianna Tutwiler discussed:

- ❖ Zero to Three conference that she and Dr. Magruder attended to present findings from the Early Childhood Court evaluation
- ❖ The Institute's new Podcast series – Child Protection Caseworker Support <https://ficw.fsu.edu/podcast> Please share with your colleagues and social media.

Dr. Lisa Magruder updated us on

- ❖ The 2019-2020 affiliate survey and next steps. Of the 31 affiliates who responded, professional support desired included the Institute keeping them abreast of child welfare-related legislation and external funding opportunities. Regarding the latter, many were interested in an Institute-led grant writing workshop. For affiliate contributions to Institute work, Lisa is currently working with those who have limited availability (i.e., Summer/Fall 2019) before reaching out to those who have later or more open availability. She plans to reach out to all 31 affiliates who responded to set up one Institute product or deliverable. She may also reach out on an ad hoc

basis as needed. Following the presentation of the affiliate survey results, Lisa demonstrated how affiliates can sign up to receive notifications for updates to the online affiliate forum.

Dr. Jessica Pryce highlighted her three primary areas for recommendations for the annual report:

1. HTST survey
2. Child Welfare Workforce
3. Residential Group Care Quality Standards

She also asked for volunteers to create and sit on a FICW Legislative Committee and outlined the volunteers' responsibilities.

Affiliate Updates

Dr. Jessica Pryce opened the floor for questions or updates from the affiliates.

- ❖ Dr. Michael Killian, a new affiliate, recently ran analyses for the Institute's Human Trafficking Screening Tool validation, gave a brief report of the findings, which the Institute has sent to the Department of Children and Families for review. Briefly, the Tool cannot yet be considered valid due to reliability concerns, but it does show promise. Dr. Pryce noted during the call that the Institute is applying for an internal planning grant through FSU to continue this vein of research. Dr. Killian also offered his services relating to statistical analyses, if needed.
- ❖ Dr. Morgan Cooley informed us of her current project on training foster parents in Palm Beach and Broward Counties. Dr. Cooley is also working on manuscripts from Institute data on foster care quality and intends to work on those this Fall.
- ❖ Khalilah Louis-Caines gave background information about her monthly meetings with Department of Children and Families regarding the retention of foster parents and her recommendations.
- ❖ Dr. Dina Wilke gave a summary of her project with the Institute, The Florida Study for Professionals for Safe Families (FSPSF). The FSPSF just entered its final phase of data collection. Though originally intending to go longer, the team decided to cut short data collection given the small number of child welfare professionals still at their baseline agency and/or role. Dr. Wilke intends to make the data publicly available and encouraged affiliates to think about if and how they might use the data in their own work.
- ❖ Dr. Jennifer Marshals spoke about their project with Healthy Start and Hurricane readiness.
- ❖ Dr. Alison Salloum highlighted her trauma-informed self-care tool for social workers dealing with burnout and vicarious trauma.
- ❖ Dr. Jessica Pryce also gave a briefing regarding Dr. Shamra Boel-Studt and her collaboration with Department of Children and Families and developing quality standards for residential group care homes.

APPENDIX F | INSTITUTE'S DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

The Institute continues to disseminate in-house research findings or recently published research journal articles on topics related to child welfare issues and vulnerable families. This year, we expanded outreach through our new YouTube channel and Instagram accounts. Our various dissemination activities are implemented to share pertinent information with our affiliates and stakeholders.

e-Newsletters

Over 1,000 people receive our electronic newsletters: *Monthly Matters* (distributed monthly) and *Institute Insights* (distributed quarterly). *Monthly Matters* highlights new reports or research briefs as well as relevant events or conferences, while *Institute Insights* provides updates on affiliates' accomplishments, a research topic of note, special topics for considerations, calls for proposals, and legislative updates. Notably, there has been a seven percent increase in subscribers since last year. An archive of *Institute Insights* is available on our website: <https://ficw.fsu.edu/newsletter-archive>

Social Media

Our reach on Facebook and Twitter continued to grow during FY19-20. These platforms provide information and social sharing for the child welfare workforce. Various content is incorporated into dissemination, such as news articles, video interviews, podcasts with subject matter experts, and newsletters. Since October 2019, our Facebook readers have downloaded over 2,132 published materials, including videos and infographics.

Infographics

As a new initiative for FY19-20, our dissemination team developed and distributed twelve infographics.

September 2019	Workforce Development Month
October 2019	Domestic Violence Awareness Month
November 2019	National Adoption Month
December 2019	Institute Top Ten from 2019
January 2020	National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month
February 2020	Black History Month
March 2020	National Nutritional Awareness Month
April 2020	Child Abuse Prevention Month
May 2020	National Foster Care Month
June 2020	Pride Month
July 2020	Hurricane Preparedness and Recovery
August 2020	Children's Vision and Learning Month

For each infographic, we continue to highlight topically relevant facts, making them Florida-specific when possible; list our affiliates with directly or tangentially relevant expertise; and spotlight how the Institute is engaging in the topic, either through in-house or affiliate-related work. We also strive to include relevant community stakeholder participation each month on our social media page. An archive of our infographics is available here: <https://ficw.fsu.edu/media/infographics>

Research Briefs

Research briefs are compiled for most research and evaluation that the Institute conducts. Some research briefs offer summaries of the key points of our more extensive reports, while others detail preliminary analyses of our ongoing projects. For example, The Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families produces quarterly research briefs that are both publicly available and directly shared with DCF leadership, community-based care lead agencies, trainers, and study participants. The FSPSF research briefs are available on our website: <https://ficw.fsu.edu/FSPSF>

Brieflits

Our newest dissemination product, Brieflits, are akin to traditional academic literature reviews but are written in accessible language. Our goal is to briefly review pertinent evidence on a child welfare-relevant topic and present the information in an engaging format for busy professionals. We released the first Brieflit in July 2020, [*Attachment Problems in Young Children: Effective Interventions for Repairing Young Child Trauma*](#), co-authored by Institute affiliates Drs. Heather Agazzi and Kimberly Renk. The second Brieflit, [*Addressing Teen Pregnancy and Early Parenting Among Youth in Foster Care*](#), by Dr. Marleen Milner, was released in September 2020. An additional Brieflit is in the editing phase for release in Fall 2020. We will engage more affiliates to write Brieflits during FY20-21.

Journal Article Summaries

Recent journal articles on pertinent and relevant topics in child welfare are obtained and summarized into easy to read two-page summaries. The summaries are highlighted in the *Monthly Matters* or *Institute Insights* and housed on our website: <https://ficw.fsu.edu/resources/journal-article-summaries>

Institute Website

The Institute website is a repository for all our research reports and various resource described above. The communications specialist updates it regularly and shares its contents on the Institute's social media platforms. These efforts have led to a tremendous growth in our unique users (9,100) and total pages viewed (13,000). This represents a 490 percent increase and a 422 percent increase respectively. The most popular pages during this reporting period were the pages for home, staff, podcast, FFPSA resources, and research and evaluation.

APPENDIX G | STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

In addition to the mandated workgroups, the Institute sits on other workgroups in order to hear about issues, meet with stakeholders, and in many instances, provide advice and technical assistance.

Statewide Interagency Workgroup

The program director has been attending and representing the Florida Institute for Child Welfare at the Statewide Interagency Workgroup monthly meetings since early 2016. This Workgroup is comprised of state-level representatives from eight child serving agencies that could be involved in a dependent or delinquent child's care and provision of services. Additional representatives include the Executive Office of the Governor, SEDNET, and the Office of the State Courts Administrator. The Workgroup meets to identify cross agency issues and advance the purpose of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet, to whom the Workgroup reports. Since 2016, the Workgroup has created a statewide infrastructure to resolve cases that involve multiple agencies or are complex, established a standardized process for case escalation, and established agency expectations for sharing protected health information and cost sharing.

In 2019, the Workgroup developed a more sophisticated mechanism to capture data about the number of youth and their characteristics who were reviewed by the local and regional teams. From May 2019 – April 2020, 828 children were staffed at the local level - 59 percent were male, 24.8 percent had mental health issues, and 47 percent had behavior issues. Only five children's cases were elevated for staffing at the regional level. Since 49 percent ($N = 413$) of the cases referred to the local review team were considered lockouts and 100 percent ($N = 5$) were referred to the regional level, a daily and monthly cost savings was determined for lockout cases that are resolved or diverted from entry into child welfare. Almost 78 percent ($N = 320$) of the youth were diverted at the local level with an estimated \$14 million in savings for the year.

Dependency Court Improvement Panel

As an extension of her work on the Early Childhood Court (ECC) evaluation, Dr. Lisa Magruder served as an Institute representative on the ECC Recidivism Protocols Workgroup. This workgroup, led by Judge Alicia Latimore (9th Circuit) and coordinated by Leigh Merritt with the Office of Court Improvement (OCI), is part of the Dependency Court Improvement Panel. The goal of the workgroup was to develop protocols to address recidivism (i.e., re-removals) within ECC cases. Dr. Magruder's role on the workgroup was as one of several writers who provided substantive content to the protocols. Dr. Magruder also met with Leigh Merritt and her colleagues at OCI to discuss ways in which they can best capture data for future analysis efforts. The DCIP unanimously voted to approve the protocols in May 2020.

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