



A Knowledge Development Initiative on Public/Private Partnership

To promote knowledge development regarding the usefulness of privatizing portions of the child welfare system in certain settings, the Children's Bureau funded the Quality Improvement Center on the Privatization of Child Welfare Services. The QIC PCW will serve as a resource for information on child welfare privatization efforts and provide lessons learned from these efforts. Additionally, through subgrants funded by this initiative, research and demonstration projects will test the effectiveness and efficiency of selected privatization models. The information gained from these efforts will move the field forward and will inform the ongoing process of child welfare enhancement and reform.

The QIC PCW is being undertaken by the University of Kentucky, College of Social Work in collaboration with Planning and Learning Technologies, Inc. A national advisory board of leading experts will provide input at key points. The board will also serve as an integral part of the QIC PCW's information sharing network.

Approach

The QIC PCW has four overarching qualities: inclusivity, clarity, transparency, and objectivity. It will serve as a collaborative laboratory for innovation, application, and learning, and will act as a repository of up-to-date information for practitioners, policy makers, administrators, and researchers.

The QIC PCW's goals are:

- To promote and support an evidence-based and outcomes-focused approach to child welfare system development and organizational improvement.
- To facilitate a collaborative information-sharing and problem-solving national network among subgrantees, the Children's Bureau's training and technical assistance network, public child welfare agencies, private service providers, and other stakeholders.
- To build consensus on appropriate models of reform, the respective roles and responsibilities of public and private agencies, and to provide input on areas on which the child welfare policy and evaluation fields should focus.

Core Components

The QIC PCW involves four major components across two distinct phases.

Phase I

- **Conducting a national needs assessment (Year 1):** A multi-faceted, iterative needs assessment will be undertaken to identify the current state of child welfare and privatization. It will inform the selection of topical focus areas for research and demonstration projects administered in Phase II of the project. The needs assessment will involve key informant discussions with State child welfare staff, literature reviews, and regional forums held throughout the nation among other efforts.

Phase II

- **Administering grants (Years 2 – 5):** A small number of demonstration projects will be funded through a competitive process to test the effectiveness and efficiency of reform models. The QIC PCW will provide ongoing technical assistance to funded projects and will facilitate the development of an information sharing network among projects.
- **Evaluating process and outcomes (Years 2 – 5):** A cross-site evaluation involving both descriptive and outcome analyses will be conducted to assess the outcomes achieved by the initiative and synthesize findings across the individual projects. Lessons learned through the implementation process will be documented. Additionally, the QIC PCW will provide technical assistance to support evaluations undertaken individually by the grantees.
- **Disseminating knowledge (Years 2 – 5):** To help build a knowledge development process and engage the field, information will be shared in a timely manner throughout all stages of the initiative. Initial information will include the state of child welfare reform and privatization efforts, while interim information will include early findings from the funded projects on their implementation processes. Finally, information on outcomes achieved through the cross-site evaluation will be shared nationally and project-specific outcomes will be synthesized and disseminated as they become available.

For more information about this initiative, please contact:

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