|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **INTEGRATING FAMILY SERVICES Newsletter June 2016 Vol.1 Number 9**  **https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5f232acd1d94a648dbd0678fb/images/4b98394b-9e52-4db8-9403-4c5798323701.jpg** | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | | |
| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **A Word from the Integrating Family Services Management Team** We are emerging from a year of intense foundation-building work–creating frameworks and guidance documents that we believe will support and sustain IFS well into the future–and moving into a new phase, requiring us to put our work–*and words*–into action.   We find as we get more concrete and specific in the details, we are experiencing pressures from many different directions. We frequently find ourselves in conversations that involve diverse points of view and strong feelings. We have to remind ourselves that if this were easy, it would have been done long ago.   Douglas Stone writes in his book, entitled *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters* *Most*:  *We believe a major reason change efforts so often fail is that successful implementation eventually requires people to have difficult conversations—and they are not prepared to manage them skillfully.*  We need to ***lean into***, rather than ***away from***, difficult conversations that involve things such as shifts in funding, how to integrate measures and reporting requirements, and how to collectively set priorities with our limited, capitated funding. Vermont’s children, youth, and families deserve no less.   In partnership,                           Carol, Cheryle, and Susan  IFS Management Team  https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5f232acd1d94a648dbd0678fb/images/056948e5-020c-4493-9570-e3d688900136.jpg  **IFS Milestones** It is hard to believe that it's been over a year since four workgroups launched with goals tied to the first IFS work plan. These groups finished a tremendous amount of work that will not only move IFS forward, but will also inform integration work in many others ways. Having more clarity about governance, service delivery, data, prevention, and promotion is providing a solid foundation for IFS to grow and expand throughout Vermont. Thank you to all the state and community partners who contributed countless hours to those efforts.   https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5f232acd1d94a648dbd0678fb/images/5377c0f7-24c1-46e9-98f0-d5898ca62ba8.jpg                       https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5f232acd1d94a648dbd0678fb/images/ca57cb3b-354b-49a8-aa2a-5e574a79efd0.jpg  **Accountability and Oversight**, *Chaired by Cheryle Bilodeau and Keith Grier, with special assistance from Dru Roessle* This workgroup completed its work in late May, having completed its work to identify IFS population indicators and IFS performance measures. This group relied heavily on Results-Based Accountability and took time to answer the question: “*Is what we are doing helping children, youth, and families to be better off*?” Having quality and consistent data in all IFS regions will allow regional and state leaders to track and adjust service delivery as needed. The following are the finalized measures that will be implemented in the two existing IFS regions, in Fiscal Year 2017, and move into grants in new IFS regions, in the future.    https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5f232acd1d94a648dbd0678fb/images/fcbbb7af-9414-4e39-acc0-c4efd5db4684.jpg                       **State and Local Service Delivery**, ***Co-chaired by Belinda Bessette and Cheryle Bilodeau*** This workgroup engaged in critical thinking about how to balance a need for consistency in IFS regions while simultaneously supporting innovation and creativity. Two important documents came out of this workgroup with input and feedback from the IFS Implementation Team. They are:  1) A Service-Delivery Framework that puts into practice a common language about how we think about the following: a) the intersection of service delivery; b) accountability; c) core supports and services; and d) prevention and promotion. 2) A regional, outcomes-reporting tool that will be used by Regional Core Teams to look at how outcome data is impacted by service delivery.  These two, major pieces of work will be instrumental in how we talk and think about IFS AND how we communicate with each other regionally and statewide about the impact we are having on children, youth, and families. The work of this group tied in very nicely with the Accountability and Oversight workgroup.  This group will reconvene for two more meetings, this fall, to identify ways to streamline communications, regarding child and youth assessments.  **Leadership & Governance, *Co-chaired by Carol Maloney, Terri Edgerton, and Mary Moulton*** This group has also completed its work, which focused on two, primary goals: a) clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each component of the IFS infrastructure–on the state level and in the regions; and b) improving communication pathways between and among community stakeholders and state partners. The workgroup completed its recommendations, regarding a governance framework, and the State Leadership Team and Implementation Team are now reviewing and providing feedback on this framework.   At its last two meetings, this spring, the group began tackling the significant and vexing issue of how to create sustainable, meaningful partnerships with youth and families in IFS service delivery and decision making.   **Community-Based Prevention and Promotion, *Co-chaired by Carol Maloney and Charlie Biss*** Over the past six months, this group spent each monthly meeting reviewing the implications for each of the ***Strengthening Families*** protective factors. This group finished this work in May and has a set of guiding questions for each IFS region to grapple with–and intended to help Regional Core Teams look for opportunities to improve how they’re promoting these protective factors in their work. The State Leadership Team will review and adopt these later this summer or early in the fall. https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5f232acd1d94a648dbd0678fb/images/87f51257-48a3-4160-a1a1-ce196f2fc132.jpg  **IFS FOCUS ON GOVERNANCE** *—* **Where We Are & How We Got Here** In the rapidly changing world of human services, IFS’ management team made a conscious choice to focus its energies on working with regions around the state on local governance and the various issues associated with good, local decision making. As you may have heard, there are a number of payment reform initiatives going on within the Agency. (There was an article in the last newsletter about this). Since there is a large group working with the Designated Agencies on payment reform for that group of providers, it didn’t make sense for IFS to be working on a little piece of payment reform for the DAs. After conversations with the Secretary, we decided that our focus should be on getting all the other aspects of IFS up and organized, with an emphasis on governance.    IFS, while sitting at the payment-reform table, is also concerned with program improvement and increased accountability–on all sides of the service system. That is why the other parts of IFS are so important to fulfilling the vision of an Agency of One. So, while payment reform remains an important part of moving forward, payment ***reform without a strong, local governance structure*** and without strong state and local accountability would not fulfill the many promises that we hold onto for an integrated system.   This change in focus–from payment reform and bundling all children’s and family funding into a single grant in each region–has led some folks to ask if this isn’t just a watered down vision of IFS. We respond to that statement with an unequivocal and resounding **NO**! If we thought so, we would be yelling loudly. While it’s clear payment reform is a significant part of the total systems-reform package, it is equally clear that without good local governance in place, regions will lose rich opportunities to fundamentally change how our system works. Regional governance agreements are necessary precursors to payment reform, and they will provide the processes and infrastructure necessary to:   * Fully leverage the flexibility that comes with payment reform, * Increase the capacity for collective approaches to improving outcomes for children and families, * Shift how the State relates and engages its community partners in decision making, and * Build relationships and support teamwork that treats families holistically and breaks down service barriers.   Payment reform needs to be done in an incremental manner. The idea of one fiscal agent in a region, or putting all the dollars into a global budget, doesn’t make sense at this point in time. While our vision in the very long term is an integrated health and human service system, including budgets, in each region, our short-term plan is to allow the money to continue to flow as it currently does from each AHS Department/Division, with oversight by the program experts at the Division level and using the business office capacity in each Department. Our fiscal strategy over this near term will be, whenever and wherever possible, to create small bundles (consolidation) of dollars and services. The focus on governance and creating small bundles, we believe, is an important step toward an integrated service system.    As we work in various regions, we are including the Blueprint and others focused on health reforms in the conversations to make sure we think in advance about how to connect and create synergies with their existing governance structures. We don’t need three or four different large governance groups in each region of the state. This is the time for us working in the social determinant side of the health and human services system to develop our governance structures so we can be strong partners with the traditional medical folks. That is why IFS is focusing on the governance issues.  **Regional Readiness Update** There won’t be any new grants at the start of fiscal year 2017. If you heard IFS isn’t moving forward, you would be very mistaken! There has been tremendous work occurring in multiple regions. Here is what has been happening around the state. https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5f232acd1d94a648dbd0678fb/images/ee36ba2b-fe20-4153-9a66-ce1b711c823f.jpg  **Professional Development Opportunities that Occurred** **CANS (Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths) What does the CANS do????** For nearly two years now, a workgroup has been meeting, made up of the following team members: Janine Beaudry (UVM-Child Welfare Training Partnership), Belinda Bessette (NCSS), Cheryle Bilodeau (IFS), Diane Bugbee (DAIL), Cathie Busgalia (Howard Center), Cheryl Huntley (CSAC), Barb Joyal (DCF/FSD), Alison Krompf (NCSS), Beth Maurer (DCF/FSD Placement Stability Project), Matt McNeil (Howard Center), and Laurel Omland (DMH). This group has epitomized partnership and collaboration! The group was initiated by Melissa Bailey, former IFS Director, to think through how we measure outcomes using an IFS approach and answer the question: “Are children, youth, and families better off?” After considering a variety of tools, the group decided on the CANS, which was developed by John Lyons, Ph.D. The tool creates a way for teams to put information that is gathered during the assessment of a child and family all in one place. It creates a focus on what strengths can be leveraged that already exist and what the needs are.   The CANS enables teams to have a communication tool, use a common language, and create clarity about what the goals are between a family and its team. At this point, Vermont has approved the use of the CANS for children, ages five to 22. We are also working on a CANS for children under five. The over-five CANS will be used in IFS regions, enabling the State to look at both local and statewide aggregate data.    On May 16, 17, and 18th, John Lyons came to Vermont and provided consultation to the workgroup, a statewide informational webinar, a day focused on completing the CANS, and another day focused on training trainers for the CANS.  We had over 50 people across the state participate in this exciting opportunity and the CANS has officially begun implementation!!! And as John Lyons said, “The CANS isn’t the point; this isn’t about the CANS, this is about the people we serve.”   A special thanks to the Placement Stability Project and Beth Maurer for their support, both fiscally and in the planning process.    Last but not least, a very special thank you goes to NCSS, which not only has supported this effort, but championed it through both practice and implementation. Alison Krompf, Quality Review Specialist, has led the effort, statewide, and has been incredibly generous with her time and knowledge. She has received support to participate from her agency, Todd Bauman, and Belinda Bessette. Thank you all so much!   **Appreciative Inquiry**  IFS held a really terrific workshop on Appreciative Inquiry on June 6th! The training was facilitated by trainers from the David L. Cooperrider Center for Appreciative Inquiry, at Champlain College. Appreciative Inquiry is a framework for communicating by bringing the positive and energizing to all you do, whether it’s setting up an agenda for a meeting or working with a vulnerable family with complex needs, and everything in between. AI skills can be used in all parts of your life. It also fits very well with the Strengthening Families™ framework.   As we moved through the AI training, it was apparent that all of us have many of the skills and approaches at the core of Appreciative Inquiry. This training helped put it all in a conscious set of principles. The workshop was such a success; but because the presenters only got to about halfway through their material, they are going to come back for another half-day sometime this summer. IFS is committed to creating professional-development opportunities by partnering with organizations and efforts with training resources. Please let us know if you’d like to partner with us to host a training, either in your region or statewide.  **Update on "Turn the Curve," Regarding Children & Youth in Residential Settings** In the fall of 2015, AHS, with support from the IFS management team, began *“Turn the Curve,”* an initiative aimed at addressing the high and increasing number of children and youth in residential-care settings. The specific purpose was to reduce those numbers by identifying strategies that allow for more children and youth to be placed and supported in settings within their home communities. Building our communities’ capacities to better meet the needs of children and their families is a long-term goal, and in order to enact the most meaningful changes that will support this vision, the *“Turn the Curve”* initiative continues its efforts. The Advisory Committee, which is made up of representatives from the Department of Mental Health, DCF Commissioner’s Office, DCF-Family Services Division, DAIL-Children’s Division, and AHS-Integrating Family Services, has been engaged in ongoing, bi-weekly meetings to support the *“Turn the Curve”* work*.* The action plan includes looking closely at the data of youth and families who fit in the rising trend lines, developing and facilitating focus groups to gather information from those closest to the realities of residential treatment, as well as meeting with partners and stakeholders.   This month the group met with AHS Leadership, and, thanks to the creativity and support of leadership from DMH, DCF and the Secretary’s Office, a new position is being created that will be dedicated to this effort and will work in close partnership with the advisory committee. Stay tuned for more details!  **IFS Efforts Supporting Integration** **Teaming Initiative-Providing Integrated Services for Families with Complex Needs** How do we ensure services and supports are coordinated for families with especially complex needs? This is not a new question and, yet, we can do much better to unify services. Right now, a family involved with multiple agencies could have separate formal plans for DCF, Probation, Reach Up, Children’s Integrated Services and Mental Health. Accomplishments over the past two months include:   * A team from across FSD, DMH, ESD, AHS, DCF and IFS met for several months and identified two regions of the state (Chittenden and Rutland) to begin piloting this teaming initiative. * A slide deck has been developed and revised multiple times that describes the initiative in detail and has been presented to multiple audiences to get feedback and input on the concept. * Data regarding risk populations have been analyzed to narrow target population and focus the effort. * Field Directors were apprised of this effort and immediately stepped forward to assist in coordination and moving this effort forward, given their unique leadership role in each community. * A common template to utilize for teaming meetings has been drafted.   The initiative is on track for implementation later this summer in Chittenden–beginning with one family–with Family Services and Reach Up case workers taking the lead, coordinating their work with the family. Other providers in the region will be invited to a meeting to hear more about it and discuss their roles. Local ESD and FSD staff are excited about seeing how they can improve services, be more efficient with their time by sharing and coordinating the work, and see better outcomes for families through this effort.  **Autism Supports and Services** *How do we use our collective resources to move autism services forward for children and their families in Vermont?* This is the question the Autism Workgroup is focusing on, which is being co-led by IFS and DAIL (Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living). The group consists of a diverse group of State, community, and family members. At the next meeting, on July 19th, the group will continue to prioritize action steps related to the prioritized goals the group has established. Full meeting minutes and agendas can be found on the [IFS website](http://ifs.vermont.gov/).   If you have questions and/or would like to be involved, please contact [Cheryle.Bilodeau@vermont.gov](mailto:Cheryle.Bilodeau@vermont.gov) or [Diane.Bugbee@vermont.gov](mailto:Diane.Bugbee@vermont.gov). This group is open and welcomes your input and participation.  **Laughter REALLY is the best medicine.**  https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5f232acd1d94a648dbd0678fb/images/96899f27-e55d-4251-9d5a-b5ffbd5f88ef.jpg | | | | |
| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **For general questions about IFS, contact any of the IFS Management Team members:**  Carol Maloney: [carol.maloney@vermont.gov](mailto:carol.maloney@vermont.gov) or (802) 279-6677  Susan Bartlett: [susan.bartlett@v](mailto:susan.bartlett@state.vt.us)ermont.gov or (802) 917-4852  Cheryle Bilodeau: [cheryle.bilodeau@](mailto:cheryle.bilodeau@state.vt.us)vermont.gov or (802) 760-9171 OR  [Click here](http://humanservices.vermont.gov/Integrating-Family-Services) **to visit our website!** | | | | |
| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  | | --- | |  | | |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | | |