Enhancing Community Supports & Safely Reducing Congregate Care

Linda Dixon, Ph.D.
Administrator: Connecticut Department of Children and Families

Who we serve:
- 35,000 children
- 15,000 families

How we serve:
- Family engagement
- Purposeful visitation
- Family-centered assessments
- Supervision & management
- Initial & ongoing safety & risk assessments
- Effective case planning
- Individualizing services

Train your staff!

Measure everything.

The numbers tell part of the story:

2011 JAN
- 4,900 youth in care
- 30% congregate
- 364 Out of State programs
- 200 youth < 12 in congregate care

2016 MAR
- 4,200 youth in care
- 7% congregate
- 9 Out of State programs
- 10 youth < 12 in congregate care

Many parts to the puzzle:

$0.79/41 investment in community support

Families must be at the center:

New leadership helped support these changes:

- GAP analysis (example)
- DCF + Courts = Training judicial judges

Maximize foster care resources:

- Include LGBTQ community
- Include rural communities

Lost $90 Million but didn’t lose improvements:

- Invest in technology
- Reduce and streamline all forms

Always remember to think broadly.

Weekend approvals & training

Staff must take risks just like these kids & families.

Fatherhood support

Incarcerated fathers about to be released = change outcomes