

## Voices for Georgia's Children Panel on Other States Child Welfare Reform Efforts

### Improving Child Welfare Services: Exploring State Efforts and Public / Private Partnerships

#### Progress of State Reforms: A Panel of Public / Private Sector Leaders

- Louisiana      Suzy Sonnier, Secretary of LA CFS
- Florida        Don Winstead, Consultant
- Kansas        Erin Stucky, EVP, KVC Health Systems
- Nebraska      Erin Stucky, EVP, KVC Health Systems
- Texas         Scott Lundy, CEO Arrow Child and Family

#### Comments on Texas, Nebraska and Kansas

#### Kansas

- KVC has been serving as a foster care agency since 1996 in Kansas
- Originally had all 5 regions under lead agencies, now have 4
- State had a negotiated consent decree with Childrens Rights, involving 100 various elements
- KS Legislators invested more money into child welfare
- KS Governor made a decision to privatize all services
- Designed a RFP
  - Four year lead agency contracts
  - Some RFPs have been very prescriptive
  - All cases in out-of-home-care were privatized
- Privatization Struggles
  - Originally, there were struggles due to no baseline data from which to measure the new services by or against
  - Private agencies requested data from the state, but the state was unable to provide
- Results of privatization:
  - Child safety measures improved
  - Private providers were paid a different payment mechanism designed to reward performance
  - Implemented a child case rate system, i.e. one rate that drove an increase in family-based care and less congregate care
  - Requirements on caseload sizes
  - Contracts with the state allowed for creativity by the regional lead agencies designed to meet the "unmet need"
  - Practice improved more quickly than a traditional system
- Things that did not work well:

- The Community Forums that were held did not include judges, legislators, and other stakeholders
- Created some negative perception by those who were not involved
- Kansas currently:
  - Only 3% of children reenter foster care
  - Has 2 contracts:
    - Adoption and Reintegration
    - Out of Home Care
  - Since 2005, they have finalized 3500 adoptions, a rapid improvement, and a large number considering the size of the state
  - KVC has 2 of the 4 regional lead agency contracts in the state
  - Each contract requires 12 months of aftercare services for each child who discharges from the system

### Nebraska

- The original goal was to improve the state's results on the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)
  - Was ranked 48<sup>th</sup> out of 50
- Additional goal was to increase the number of children served within their biological home
- The Process of Moving Towards Privatization
  - Involved Judges, but not Legislators
  - Did not result in a discussion on additional funding
  - A set, or flat amount of funding was created but not a case rate
- The Results of Privatization
  - More referrals occurred than projected; the original data set was not inclusive
  - The state agency later added in the case management function for lead agencies
  - The state and private providers looked at a case rate reimbursement methodology for 18 months without conclusions
- The "Good"
  - 24/7 access from private providers
  - Aftercare was part of the contract
- The "Bad"
  - Funding
  - Timelines were unrealistic
  - Lack of flexibility
  - Lack of decision on case rate discussion
  - Within 12 months, 2 lead agencies dropped out, and both were absorbed by KVC
  - In November 2011, negotiations with lead agencies resulted in KVC terminating its contracts

### Texas

- The Legislature passed a law in 2006 requiring the state agency contract out all services
- The state then formed a Public / Private Partnership (PPP) Consortium based off the Illinois paradigm
  - This PPP included CASA, 4 judges, private providers, state leaders and educators
- The PPP discussed what is working, and what is not working
- From the PPP, the CPS Reform and Redesign was birthed
- Currently:
  - Private providers provide placements for 95% of all children in foster care
  - DFPS provides the remaining 5% through state agency managed foster homes
  - DFPS has contracted in 2 of the identified regions for Single Source Continuum Contractors (SSCC):
    - Rural area: Providence (2013)
    - Urban area: ACH of Ft Worth (2014)
  - SSCC benefits:
    - 6-9 months of start-up time
    - Blended rate for each child who enters foster care
      - Lead agency is paid one rate for each child
      - Lead agency is then responsible for procuring all services that that child may need
    - Performance-based measures instituted:
      - Serve children locally (within 50 miles) of their biological home
      - Maintain siblings together
      - Reduce placement moves
  - SSCC Realities:
    - Cannot build a new system with the historical resources
    - The flaw was in trying to be “cost neutral”
    - State is rolling out catchment areas based on the number of removals and entries into out-of-home-care
    - Each SSCC is bringing varying data and billing systems into implementation
    - Can state, private agencies and SSCC share data systems to improve the administrative management
- The PPP Realities:
  - The public and private sector have different “goggles”, i.e. they do not see the same issues, not are they good at seeing each other’s viewpoints
  - Results are improved as both the public and private sector spend more time talking

- The PPP wanted a model that would increase more in-home services to prevent removal, but this was not procured