

Spotlight On: Assistance to States and Tribes – transcript

Presenters: Jane Morgan, Director, Capacity Building Division, Children's Bureau, Washington, DC; Marilyn Kennerson, Children's Bureau Regional Program Manager, Region 8, Denver; Angela Green, Children's Bureau Regional Program Manager, Region 5, Chicago; Mark Jazo, Senior Analyst, Division of State Systems, Children's Bureau, Washington, DC; Krista Thomas, Children's Bureau Program Specialist, Region 5, Chicago; Junius Scott, Children's Bureau Regional Program Manager, Region 2, New York

Jane Morgan: [00:00:12:25] It's really important that the Children's Bureau work directly with the States and with the Tribes around the services they provide for children and families. That's how we serve children and families, is through the States and through the Tribes. In our work, we can help the States to identify model programs; through our training and technical assistance we can provide support and really help the States to improve their programs.

Marilyn Kennerson: [00:00:40:11] More and more, child welfare agencies are accepting the fact that they cannot do this work alone. So more and more collaboration, and we do it within the Federal system, collaborating with our sister agencies, our partners in other administrations for children and family services, child support, et cetera. The States are doing the same thing, and we are encouraging that more and more, to work with mental health entities, you know, the fiscal and workforce agencies, et cetera.

We're also, because of our part of the country, spending a great deal of time these days trying to have the States and the Tribes collaborate together.

Jane Morgan: [00:01:19:27] The Children's Bureau funds the Training and Technical Assistance Network, which is made up of over 30 organizations that provide technical assistance to States and to Tribes to help them improve their programs. Our work with the technical assistance providers is actually critical in making sure that States are informed of good models of practice, that they have an opportunity to really look at their programs and have the expertise that our technical assistance providers can bring to that effort and the support that both the technical assistance providers bring and also that Children's Bureau staff can bring to that.

Angela Green: [00:01:57:19] As our program specialists, as they're working with their partners within each State, they're working with the courts, they're working with the court improvement program managers as well as the foster care managers within the State and the permanency managers and all the ones that are really making an impact into what the policies and the practices that are going on within each State. And as they're communicating with them, they're having challenges with some of the policies we're trying to roll out, in terms of foster care and adoption and relative placements, and how do we do this, what's the best way to do it, what are other States doing, and that should be the information that we're able to provide them.

Mark Jazo: [00:02:32:16] We're trying to also bring technical assistance out to the State to help them, in terms of other States that could be benefiting from them. So we'll try to introduce them to other States, which have similar problems, maybe different solutions or

different ways of approaching those problems, and bringing those solutions to the table for a State to work through.

Jane Morgan: [00:02:51:23] In our work with States over the last few years around program improvement efforts, we've really seen the importance of helping to build States' capacity at all levels, from the frontline worker to the management, around improving child welfare programs. This has really informed us in how we've designed training and technical assistance and is really leading our efforts to reshape and redesign how we provide training and technical assistance.

Krista Thomas: [00:03:24:16] I think having the opportunity to see how programs operate around the country and talk with people that are leading those programs around the country really crafts a more refined vision for the kind of work that we could be doing, what we should be doing, different ways that you could go about the work, and I think having all of that experience really gives a more developed vision for what, you know, being able to assess what is going on, what could be going on, where could we be directing our efforts in the future.

Junius Scott: [00:03:54:19] So our partners also bring resources to the table--the States, the Tribes, the local communities--by the very nature of the experience that they have in serving children and families, by their own professionalism, by their own training and development. And so when you put these collective resources together, you get an approach that in most instances guides us to the solutions that we are looking for as child welfare practitioners.

[end audio]