

## **THREE BRANCH INSTITUTE ON CHILD SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING STUDY PLAN**

### **Study Mandate**

- Collaborate and coordinate with the executive and judicial branches in Virginia's application for the National Governors Association's Three Branch Institute on Child Social and Emotional Well-Being Request for Proposal to improve the social and emotional well-being of foster care children in Virginia.

### **Identified Issues**

- In April 2012, the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) published an information memorandum with guidance for understanding and measuring the concept of well-being of children and youth receiving child welfare services. The ACYF identified four primary domains for measuring a child's well-being:
  - Cognitive functioning,
  - Physical health and development,
  - Behavioral/emotional functioning and
  - Social functioning.
- The Three-Branch Institute on Child Social and Emotional Well-Being of the National Governors Association seeks to improve the social and emotional well-being of children in foster care in participating states. The Institute's Request for Proposal requires the coordination and collaboration of the state's executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. The goal is for states to develop a state-specific plan for children and youth receiving foster care services through the state's child welfare system. The Institute will provide support for states in:
  - Identifying the nexus between the unique health, mental health and education challenges of children in foster care;
  - Examining strategies in which safety, permanency and well-being are interrelated;
  - Highlighting best or promising practices across the state; and
  - Identifying possible gaps or barriers in policy in order to improve outcomes for children connected to the child welfare system.

### **Grant opportunities**

- Develop a state-specific plan to promote and measure well-being among children and youth receiving child welfare services.
- Develop evidence-based and research-informed strategies that will have a positive impact on children's social and emotional well-being.

- Strengthen, coordinate, and enhance existing efforts through cross-system collaboration.
- Leverage Medicaid and other federal and state dollars to fund innovative practices.
- Develop policies that improve outcomes for children in foster care.
- Improve accountability of policy in day-to-day practice.
- Strengthen existing partnerships and engage stakeholders.

### **Study Activities**

- Review the National Governors Association's Three Branch Institute on Child Social and Emotional Well-Being.
- Meet with executive and judicial branch agencies
  - Office of Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families,
  - Department of Social Services, and
  - Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court.
- Receive an update from the bidders conference call. (March 25, 2013)
- Provide information as needed for the proposal. Virginia's proposal is due April 22, 2013.
- Assist in the development of a coordinated plan of action:
  - Review Virginia's current performance improvement plan (PIP) for the child welfare system
  - Determine target population
  - Set measurable outcome goals and benchmarks of social and emotional well-being of children
  - Develop strategies that will have the greatest impact on the promotion of social, emotional, and physical well-being for children in foster care
  - Include a plan to track and measure progress (both the short- and long-term)
- If selected by the National Governors Association, the Commission shall work with the executive and judicial branches in meeting the requirements of the grant:
  - Participate in an all-state orientation conference call. (May 29, 2013)
  - Prepare for the Three Branch Institute. (June 2013)
  - Attend the Three Branch Institute. (July 2013)
  - Host an in-state technical assistance visit by Three Branch staff. (July-November 2013)
  - Participate in all state conference calls/webinars. (September 2013)
  - Submit State Plan and Progress Report. (January 2014)
- Present findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth.