

Public child welfare agencies and private agencies serving children have come together to make recommendations to policymakers to align federal financing to child and family success.

As the three largest networks of public and private agencies working directly to strengthen the lives of children and families, the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, and the National Organization of State Associations for Children (NOSAC) have joined forces and this summer will launch *Keeping Kids in Families*, a national campaign focused on keeping the best interests of children and their families at the center of decision making. At the heart of this partnership is a desire for comprehensive system reform that provides a regulatory and fiscal framework aligns with our collective desire to ensure child safety through a child and family centered system.

In 2014 the group released its *Shared Principles for Aligning Federal Financing to Child and Family Success*. The principles serve as the backbone for upon which we will develop, assess, and respond to proposals.

The campaign recognizes that it will take time to achieve our goals, but we will continue to push for comprehensive system reform that aligns with our principles. The ultimate federal financing mechanism will require providing the ability for states, in full partnership with community based organizations like those in our network, to create an expanded service array, serve more families earlier, have flexibility with accountability and the ability to reinvest savings in building community capacities that further improve and strengthen the child welfare system.

Keeping Kids in Families raises the collective voice of our network, their staff, donors, boards and communities to make the point that the time for Congress to act is NOW.

Shared Principles for Aligning Federal Financing to Child and Family Success

Child and Family Centered Principles

- Every child experiences ongoing safety and permanency as crucial to their well-being.
- Whenever possible, a child lives with their family.
- Families are partners.
- Each child and family receives the right services and supports at the right time for the right amount of time.
- During any intervention requiring a quality residential setting, the child remains connected to their family or placement.

System Centered Principles

- Public systems promote and improve safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families.
- Systems of care deliver appropriate, integrated, comprehensive, high quality home- and community-based services and supports.
- Public and private agencies operate within a Continuous Quality Improvement framework and share accountability.

Finance Reform Principles

- A new outcomes-oriented accountability framework balances oversight and flexibility.
- The federal-state-local partnership includes a guaranteed base funding and a mechanism for risk sharing.
- The federal government establishes accountability across programs and agencies as part of an integrated system.
- Federal child welfare financing is available without regard to the parent's income.