

# A User's Guide to the Family Empowerment Leadership Academy (FELA) Resources



Capacity Building  
CENTER FOR STATES

Child welfare agencies whose values and actions support family engagement and empowerment can better meet family and community needs. Agencies can encourage family members with lived experience in child welfare to collaborate with them by:

- ▶ Taking an active role in agency programs and policies
- ▶ Sharing insights
- ▶ Enhancing services

The following resources can be used alone or together to help agencies build individual, team, and agency capacity to engage and collaborate with families:

## FELA Individual E-Learning Modules



Three online training modules for managers, supervisors, frontline staff, and family leaders are designed to develop a common understanding of the following key areas of family engagement practice:

- ▶ Helping agency staff at all levels work with families to create sustainable change
- ▶ Understanding agency administrator and family leader roles in developing and sustaining collaborative partnerships
- ▶ Providing peer-to-peer support for families working as peer mentors or parent partners

Access at <https://learn.childwelfare.gov/lms/course/view.php?id=18> (registration required).

## Family Empowerment Training Curriculum



A customizable 2-day, in-person training curriculum for child welfare agency managers, supervisors, frontline staff, and family leaders on family empowerment topics, including:

- ▶ Agency culture and climate and how each affects family voice
- ▶ Shared leadership
- ▶ The power of personal stories and how to build on them
- ▶ The use of data to guide implementation of family empowerment strategies
- ▶ Readiness for change

A "Training of Trainers" archived webinar provides child welfare trainers and others with an overview of the FELA curriculum and discusses key learning points in each of the curriculum's units.

Access at <https://learn.childwelfare.gov/lms/course/view.php?id=54> (registration required).

## FELA Implementation Manual



A structured, research-informed "how to" manual on planning, initiating, and sustaining family engagement and empowerment programs.

Designed for agency administrators, family leaders, and implementation teams, this manual:

- ▶ Brings together key concepts in family engagement and implementation science
- ▶ Provides a detailed look at strategies for implementing changes and overcoming common challenges

Access at <https://capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/focus-areas/foster-care-permanency/family-empowerment-leadership-academy>

## How Can You Use the FELA Resources?

### *To Introduce Family Leaders and Staff to Family Engagement and Empowerment*

Individuals and groups can use the three FELA individual e-learning modules to help family leaders and agency staff (including managers, supervisors, and frontline workers) learn how to work together as partners in making meaningful changes in a child welfare system. For example, the modules can help users:

- ▶ Discover useful strategies to develop meaningful partnerships between agencies and family leaders
- ▶ Develop an understanding of how positive changes can be implemented
- ▶ Improve agency capacity to work with families in a sustainable way

### *To Build a Shared Understanding of Ways to Authentically Partner With Families*

Agency trainers and family leaders deliver the FELA in-person curriculum to help managers, supervisors, frontline staff, and family leaders build a common understanding of partnering with families through shared dialogue and activities. Customizable curriculum materials include:

- ▶ Training agendas
- ▶ Presentations and handouts
- ▶ Video clips and activity ideas
- ▶ “Training of Trainers” archived webinar
- ▶ Participant surveys to assess whether participants achieved training outcomes

### *To Help Implement a Full-Scale Family Engagement and Empowerment Initiative*

Combine the three resources described here and use them sequentially as part of a coordinated learning pathway to take agency leaders, implementation teams, and family leaders from individual learning to implementation.



- ▶ Start with the [FELA individual e-learning modules](#) so all child welfare staff can build foundational knowledge and skills.



- ▶ Bring managers, supervisors, frontline workers, and family leader teams together for group learning using the 2-day [Family Empowerment Training Curriculum](#). The in-person training curriculum allows the team to learn collaboratively to form partnerships, identify effective family empowerment strategies, and create a favorable culture and climate.



- ▶ Then, use the [Family Empowerment Implementation Manual](#) to help teams plan, implement, evaluate, and sustain agency family engagement and empowerment programs or initiatives

#### NOTE FROM THE FIELD

“I have been working with a state on developing training modules and empowering family leaders. The FELA resources have helped them to excel in developing and implementing strategies and projects to support and increase family involvement at all levels of their child welfare system.

The FELA resources give states and jurisdictions a family leader empowerment training model to replicate or modify to meet the needs of their own communities. It is an excellent tool and beneficial for all states to be able to increase family engagement!”

—Center for States Family Consultant

To ask questions or request free services related to building agency capacity for partnering with families, email [capacityinfo@icfi.com](mailto:capacityinfo@icfi.com) or [contact your Tailored Services Liaison](#)

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