

Approach to Capacity Building



The Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative partners with State child welfare agencies, Tribes, and courts to assess and enhance child welfare capacity. The Collaborative's three centers—Center for States, Center for Tribes, and Center for Courts—help child welfare and legal professionals and organizations build the capacity necessary to strengthen, implement, and sustain effective child welfare practice and improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Complex Adaptive Systems in Child Welfare

Child welfare agencies and courts operate in increasingly challenging environments. They are often embedded in large, multilayered systems where issues are complicated and persistent. In child welfare, solutions are as varied as the needs of children and families. Child welfare systems must balance internal pressures (e.g., quality of leadership and infrastructure, staff skills and abilities, organizational culture, resources and financing) and external pressures (e.g., Federal, Tribal, and local laws; political environments; public perceptions; community expectations; and interagency relationships). In the midst of this complexity, they are expected to provide an array of interventions, respond to changes in the environment, forecast and respond to emerging needs, and demonstrate agility in designing and implementing relevant, high-quality services that result in positive outcomes. The capacity building approach used by the Collaborative incorporates complex adaptive systems thinking to better help agencies respond to these challenges.

The Collaborative's Purpose, Vision, and Aims

The *purpose* of the Collaborative is to help States, Tribes, and courts build the capacity necessary to strengthen, implement, and sustain or modify effective child welfare practice and improve safety, permanency, and well-being for children, youth, and families.

The *vision* of the Collaborative is to implement a capacity building system that is driven by national and Tribal priorities and that will strategically invest resources and deliver services in ways that are most likely to achieve intended outcomes.

The Collaborative aims to:

- ◆ Capitalize on prior lessons learned
- ◆ Embrace new opportunities to learn and grow
- ◆ Apply research, data, and expert knowledge
- ◆ Encourage thoughtful innovation and creativity
- ◆ Achieve effective service delivery
- ◆ Promote collaboration and teamwork



Child Welfare
Capacity Building
Collaborative

BETTER OUTCOMES, BRIGHTER FUTURES

Capacity Building Approach

The Collaborative defines “capacity building” as an ongoing, evidence-informed process that is intended to develop a system’s potential to be productive and effective. Capacity can be built by applying a child welfare system’s human and organizational assets to achieve its current and future goals.

The Collaborative’s capacity building approach is grounded in the research on implementing evidence-based and evidence-informed policies, programs, and practices. It incorporates multisystem frameworks that apply complex adaptive systems thinking. It requires effective partnerships to proactively respond to priorities for improvements in child welfare systems, Tribal systems, and court improvement projects.

Effective capacity building requires a foundation of information and data to support identifying needs, setting goals and outcomes, and assessing capacity; planning and designing services; developing and piloting strategies and tools; delivering services; monitoring and evaluating; and reporting results.

The Collaborative’s approach is intended to enhance access, facilitate learning, and increase effectiveness.

For more information about the Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative or to obtain resources, call 844-222-0272, email capacityinfo@icfi.com, or visit <https://capacity.childwelfare.gov>.

ACCESS	LEARNING	EFFECTIVENESS
<p>Commitment to simplify and improve State, Tribal, and court access to services and reduce duplication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ One Collaborative website ◆ One liaison as a point of contact ◆ One assessment of capacity ◆ One work plan for services 	<p>Commitment to learning and continuously improving the quality of the Collaborative’s services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ongoing process and outcome evaluation ◆ Regular feedback from service recipients and stakeholders ◆ Routine review of findings ◆ Implementation of service improvement strategies 	<p>Commitment to providing services that work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Meaningful preparation and assessment ◆ Clear objectives, strategies, and outcomes ◆ Application of prior evidence and research ◆ Integration of theory, expertise, and past experience ◆ High-quality service provision ◆ Rigorous evaluation of results