

Session Name: Federal Policy: CDF with Steven Olender

Date & Time: 3:00 pm ET, June 18

Number of participants:

Names of participants: Liz Wyner, Heather Wilson, Shannon Scott, Cherrelle Turner, Katie Hubner, John Drebing, Julian Johnson, Janine, Leila Pree, Soya Soni, Anthony Silverman, Becca Kaplan, Asad Bandeali, Angie Thies, Marie Zemler Wu, Cassandra Finley

Notes (please use first name or initials around different speakers whenever possible):

SO

How Fed policy Impacts State policy in CW

- CW is really expensive 33bil/yr; 40ish% is fed
- Feds say- I will give money, you may use for X purpose, and must meet X requirements or you get shut out of funding
- Prior to FFPSA, IV-E funds could only be used if child was in system, for certain things; now states can draw down certain prevention funds for children at risk of being pulled into cw; with these dollars come new restrictions for placement settings

State policy follows what is funded. Most prevention funding comes from the state, because feds don't pay for it.

Lawsuits have major impact over funding and policies: courts are more of a "backstop" for stopping bad policy.

Elected officials rely on advocacy orgs, and think tanks to direct what they do. (Prefer to hear from constituents, people on the ground)

- On prevention-side there is a national child abuse coalition who meet to drive policy and lobbies as such.
- CDF's child welfare and mental health coalition do not sign onto policy as a single organization.
- Work through the elected officials that represent you/your district to push them on votes.

Senate Health and House Labor Committees have jurisdiction over CAPTA; Appropriations committee is the most powerful committee to get funding

Child welfare is really, really tiny in the scope of federal budget/spending... 3/10 of 1% of total budget.

We are working in a system of Congress that no longer [asses individual bills- we must work to get language into big/omnibus bills.

The administration, namely ACYF has discretion in how to interpret and implement, including directing funding to make it easier to serve children.

- For example- a few years ago, ACYF, CB decided to allow funding legal services through IV-E
- Currently the FFPSA evidence -based clearinghouse (FYI- this is terrible), OPRE interpreted the requirements in FFPSA very stringently, making it harder for states to access and implement funded services
- The advantage of working with Admin is not having to get 60 votes, just having to convince one/a few people at the top to interpret and offer guidance.
- You can contact the CB by region:
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/training-technical-assistance/childrens-bureau-regional-program-managers>
 - If you reach out, it would be in your interest to share problems and solutions you are seeing within an equity lens and framework... This is a priority for the Admin and CB

Be sure to simultaneously reach out to Congress and the Admin

- Ensure you are reaching out on a Fed issue, not a state issue
 - Often states will impose additional restrictions as cost saving measure, mis-interpretation of fed policy, not changing state policy when fed policy changes... and, many more reasons.

Biggest shift in Fed CW policy is towards prevention.

- Need to share what is and not working with FFPSA- how can we make this better- a more transformational change than is currently interpreted.
- RIGHT NOW:
 - Title IV-B, designed to fill gaps that IV-E doesn't cover: currently up for reauthorization- half in 2021 and half in 2022. There is a serious likelihood of a continued resolution for this year and full reauthorization next year. We have an opportunity to push for changes to spending
 - Share ideas with SO (@CDF) and other major/national advocacy groups
 - CAPTA reauthorization is also up now. These funds prevent abuse before system entry. House has passed a stronger CAPTA, and Senate has a bill to reauthorize that.
 - Include \$250 mil is nowhere near enough, thank you, and... increase to what has been requested \$750 mil, increased to 1.5 bil over 5 years.

CW is the last stop for families we have failed over and over again.

ARPA: changes to the CTC will have a greater impact on ending CAN than any other piece of legislation. Expected to lift 45% of children out of poverty. There is current work to make these

changes permanent and to make other necessary changes, including: promoting reunification (making CTC available for parents working on reunification).

<https://www.childrensdefense.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Child-Allowance-Child-Welfare-Talking-Points.pdf>

- Housing is CW policy
- Education in CW policy
- Poverty reduction is CW policy

Contact Steven: solender@childrensdefense.org

[Sign up ABC Coalition](#)

The CTC expansion was designed to be fully refundable, even for non-tax filers (those without tax obligation).

CARES Act and Consolidated Appropriations Act: States have a lot of \$ and flexibility in spending those dollars.

- You have specific and special responsibility to support children in CW/CP systems. We have a mandate to get involved, and an obligation to support

What about UBI (Universal Basic Income)? This is important, but need to be a UBI+ that doesn't take from other hard-fought benefits (i.e. the Romney plan that would have gutted other social support/safety net programs)

We should not have a single child entering the system due to poverty and/or impact of poverty. Once we get here, we need to raise that bar.

Current Opportunities:

- American Families Plan
- American Jobs Plan

When we take a broader view of CW, we intersect and engage with eliminating root causes.

Vital to engage year round; not just during current appropriations/budget conversations.

- Things never slow down during recess
- These (recesses) can be key times for advocacy. Staffers are still working.

If we ever stop pushing, others will fill this space.