



Virginia Department of Social Services

people helping people

CWAC

June 9, 2020

Welcome

2



AGENDA



- Division Updates and COVID Response
- Family First Prevention Services Act
- CFSP and APSR
- Break
- PIP
- Plus/Delta





VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

DFS Division of
Family Services



Photo: S. Kumar

COVID-19 Response and Transition Alignments

5

Establishing
Essential Personnel

Virtual Visits
Doxy.me

16 Broadcasts

54 FAQs

18 Regulatory
Waivers

Weekly Data
Analysis

Foster Parent
Payments

Collaborations:
VDOE, CIP, DBHDS-
DJJ-DMAS,
Advocacy Partners

Converting In-
Person Training to
Virtual Training
Options

Prepare for a 20-25% increase in calls to the hotline



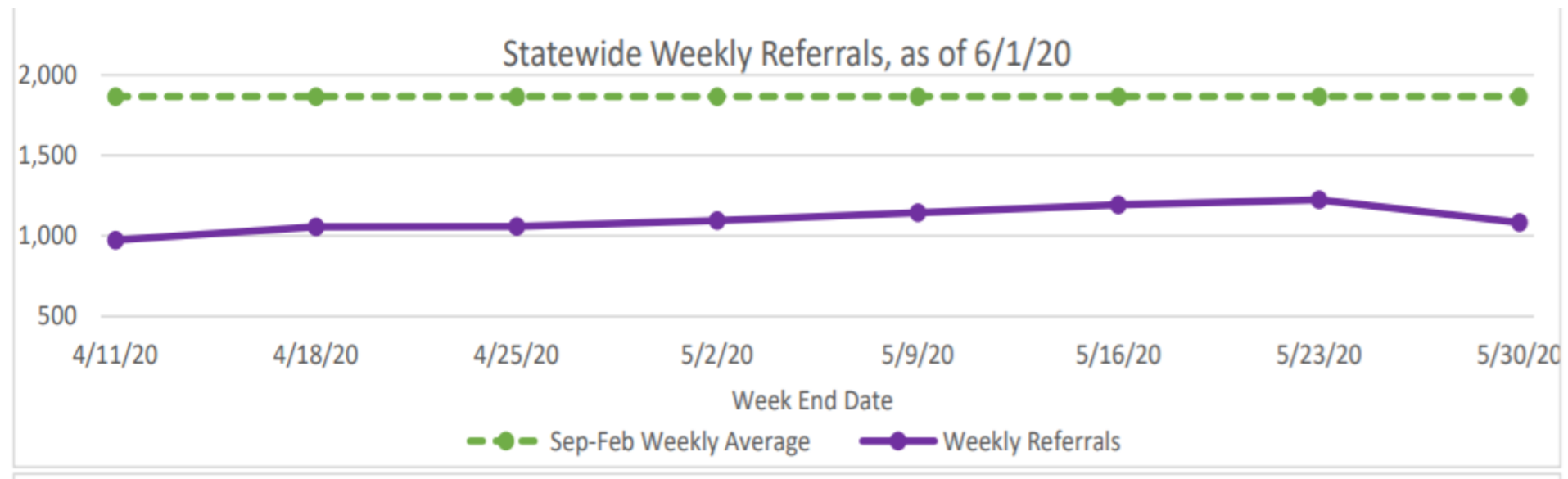
What can we do now to allow for a possible increase in caseloads?

- **Investigations:** look at the number of investigations/FA that are over 90 days and make a push to close them and/or open to ongoing
- **Ongoing:** look at what cases need to be closed
- **Foster Care:** identify the children with TPR and on trial home visit status and determine what is needed to finalize those cases



Hotline Calls

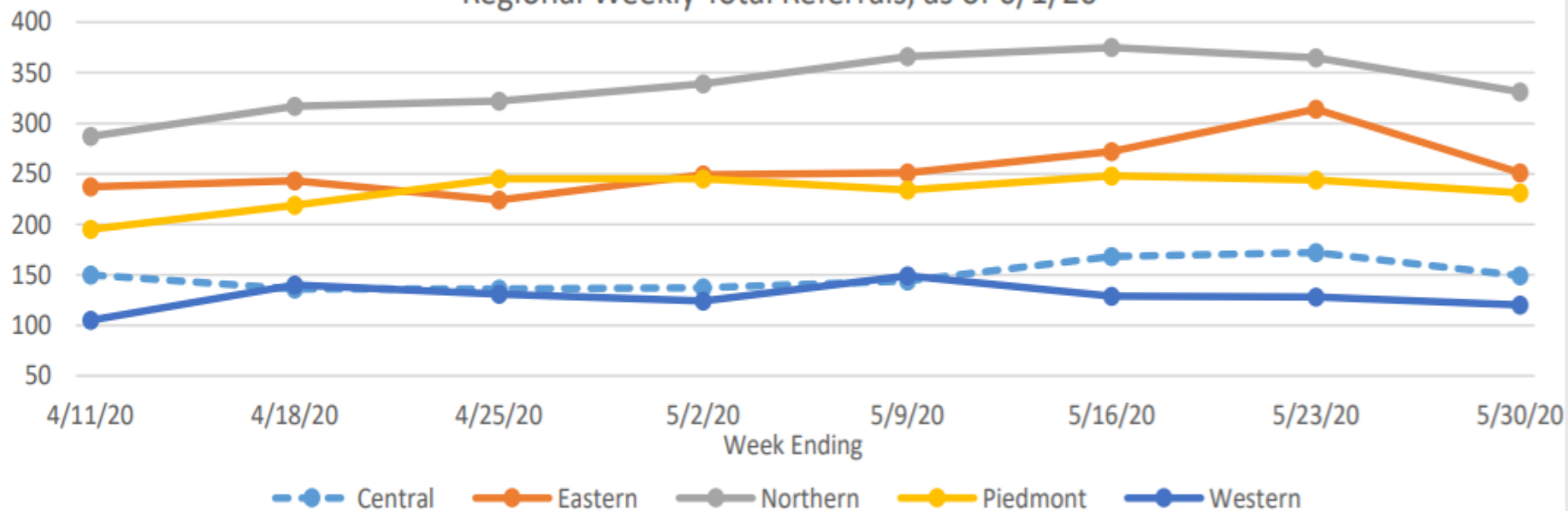
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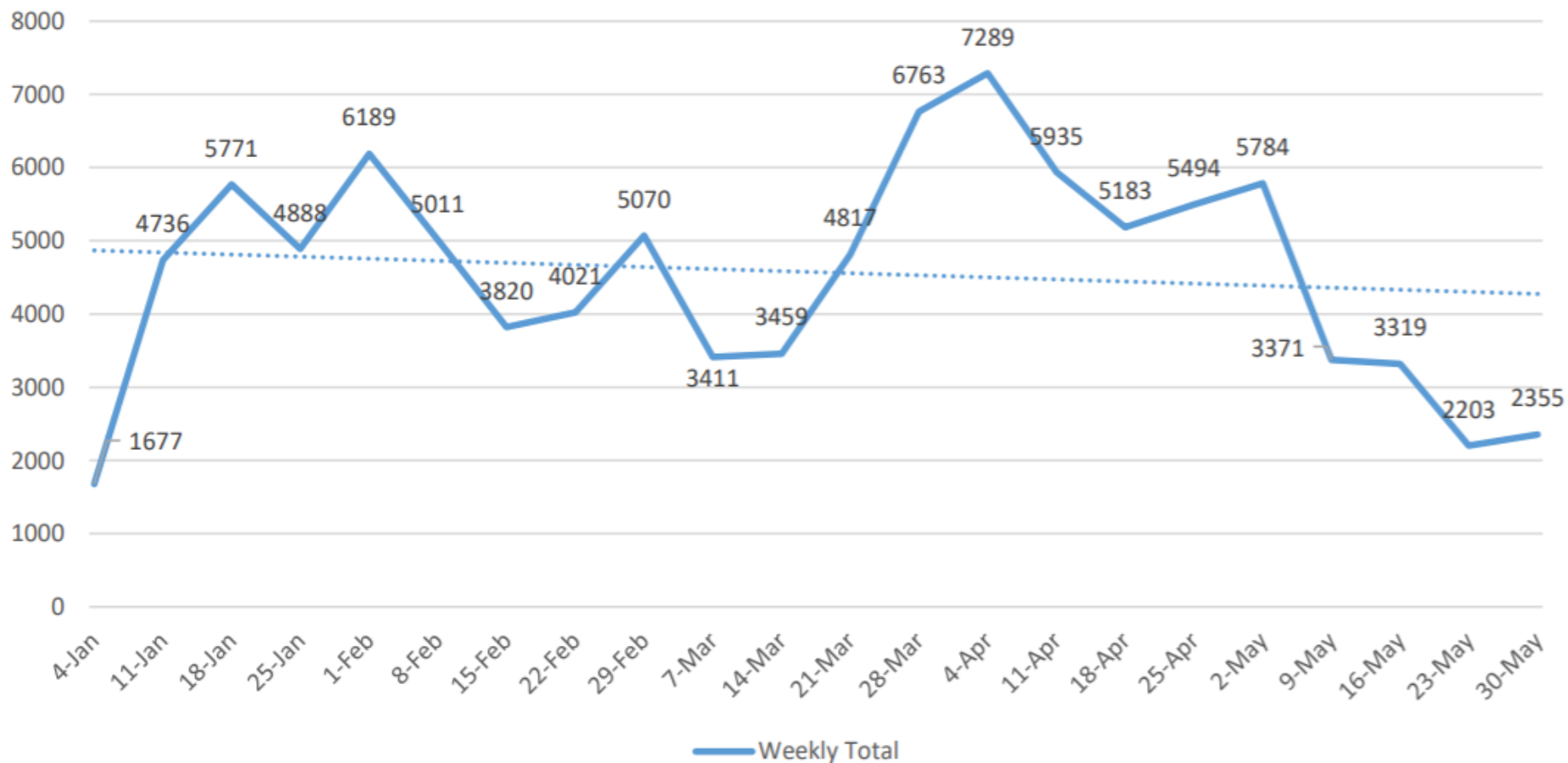
Hotline Calls

8

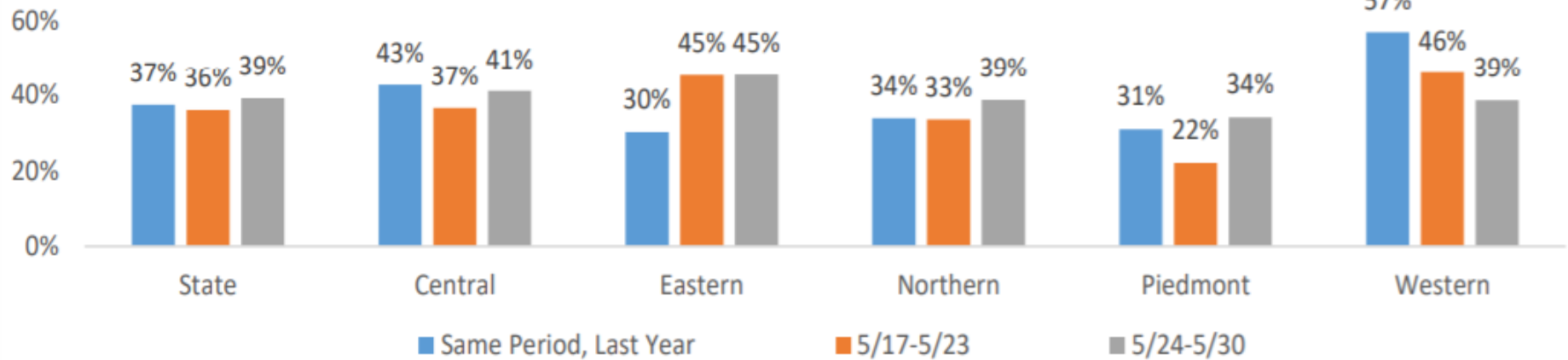
Regional Weekly Total Referrals, as of 6/1/20



COMPASS | mobile weekly transactions



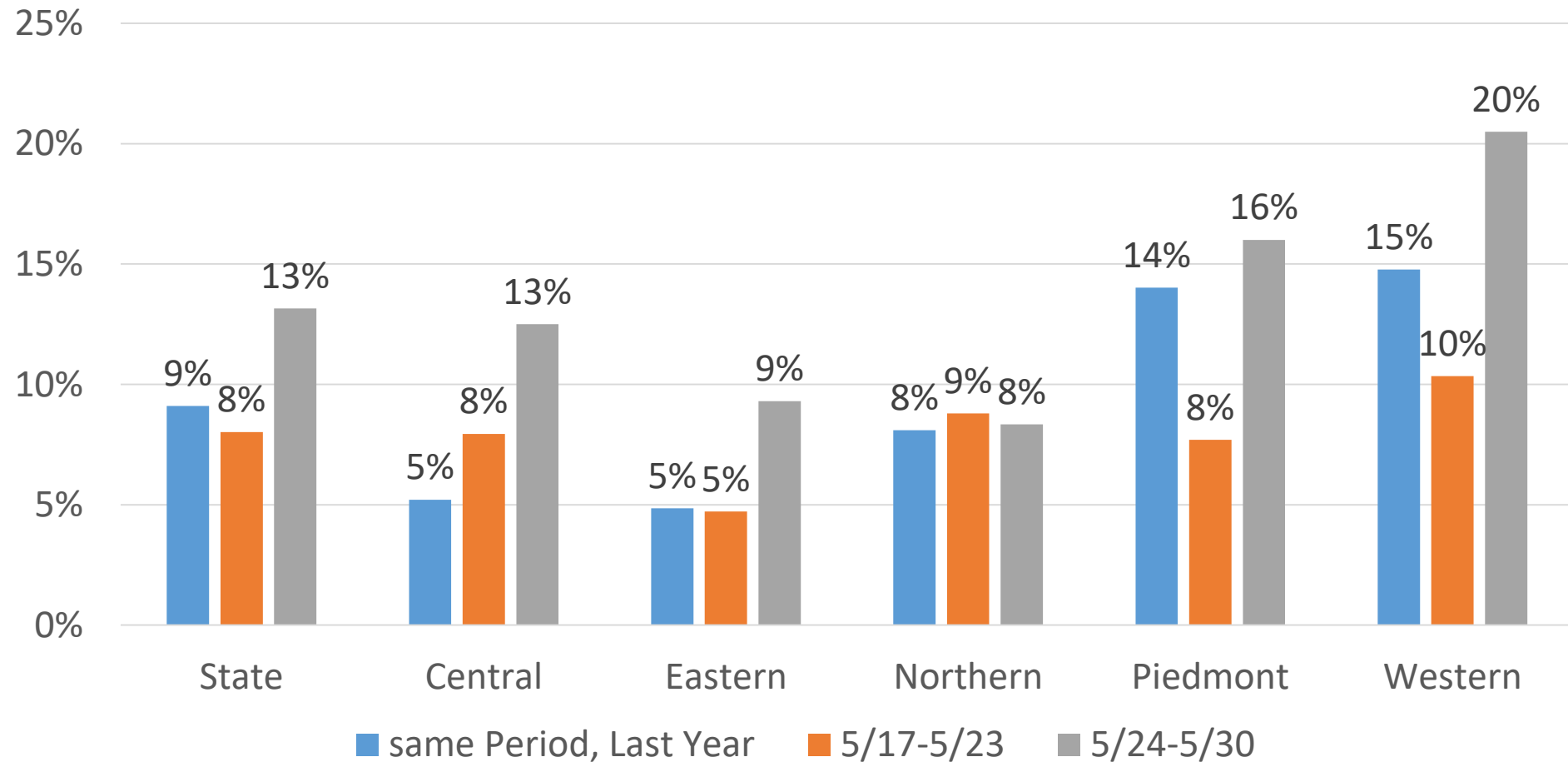
Percent of Referrals Closed Within 45 Days of Opening



Ongoing – New Cases

11

Percent Referrals Opened to CPS Ongoing Before Closure



	Entries	Exits
March	205	189
April	121	129
May	120	104





Training and Coverage

- **Hotline:** How many additional staff are needed to cover the hotline for the 20-25% increase in calls?
- **Investigations:** Do you have enough staff trained?
- **Family Assessments:** Do you have enough staff trained?
- **Ongoing:** How many staff do you have vs. what might be needed?
- **Diligent Recruitment:** How many foster families have availability and how many more need approved and trained?
- **Foster Care:** What are current caseloads and what will be needed?



What changes will you or your organization make as a result of the pandemic that could result in improved outcomes for our children and families?



- ✓ Automatically be moved to a breakout room
- ✓ Presenter will guide the collective thinking
- ✓ Presenter to report out your group's key ideas
- ✓ After 15 minutes – notification to return to larger group
- ✓ Each group will have 2 minutes to report out key ideas



What changes will you or your organization make as a result of the pandemic that could result in improved outcomes for our children and families?



What changes will you or your organization make as a result of the pandemic that could result in improved outcomes for our children and families?

- Breakout Group 1 – Bethany
- Breakout Group 2 - Garrett
- Breakout Group 3 - Morgan
- Breakout Group 4 - Lauren





FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT



FAMILY FIRST VISION

The **vision** for Family First is to **keep children safe, strengthen families and reduce the need for foster care** whenever it is safe to do so.



PREVENTION IMPLEMENTATION UPDATES



Prevention Plan Submitted

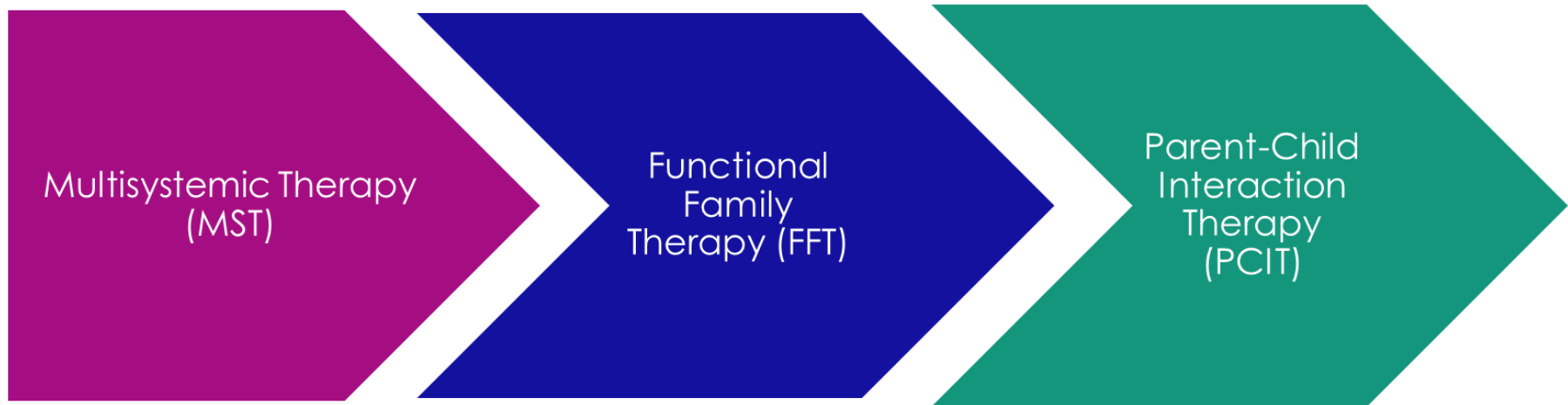


Training is being developed

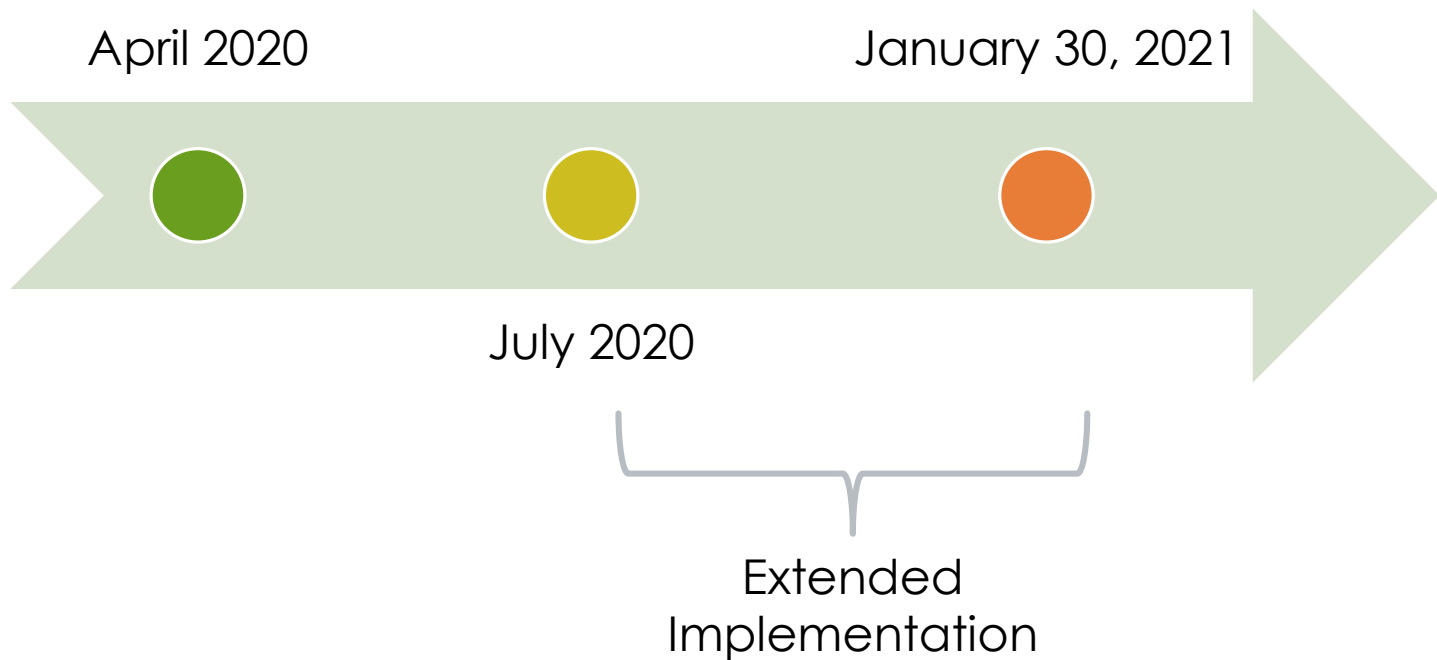


Communication Plan
developed

EVIDENCE BASED PROVIDER TRAINING



IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE UPDATE



Extension Rationale

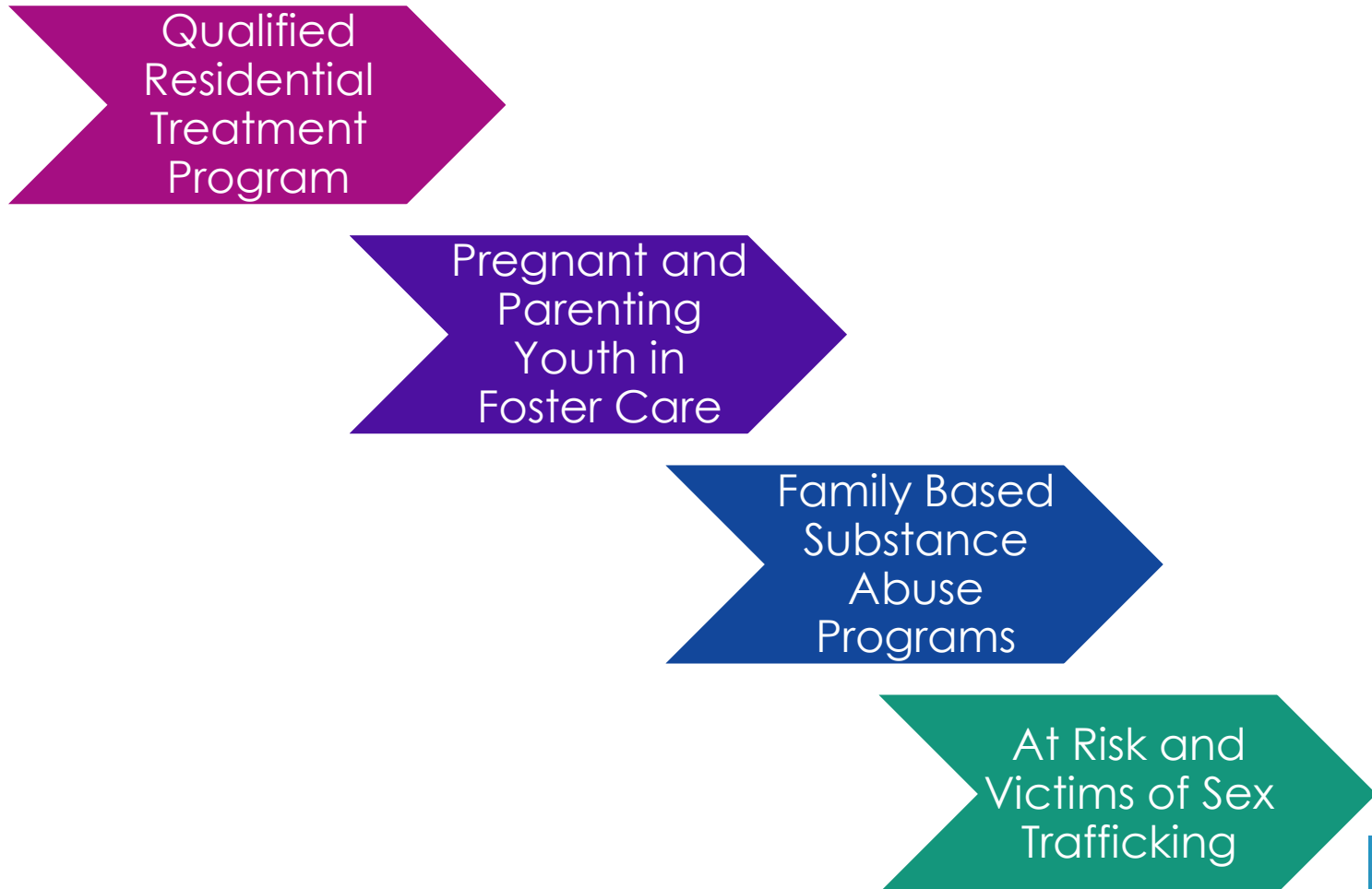
COVID19 Impact

- Budget
- EBP Learning Collaborative
- LDSS Training
- Implementation Meeting transition to virtual platforms

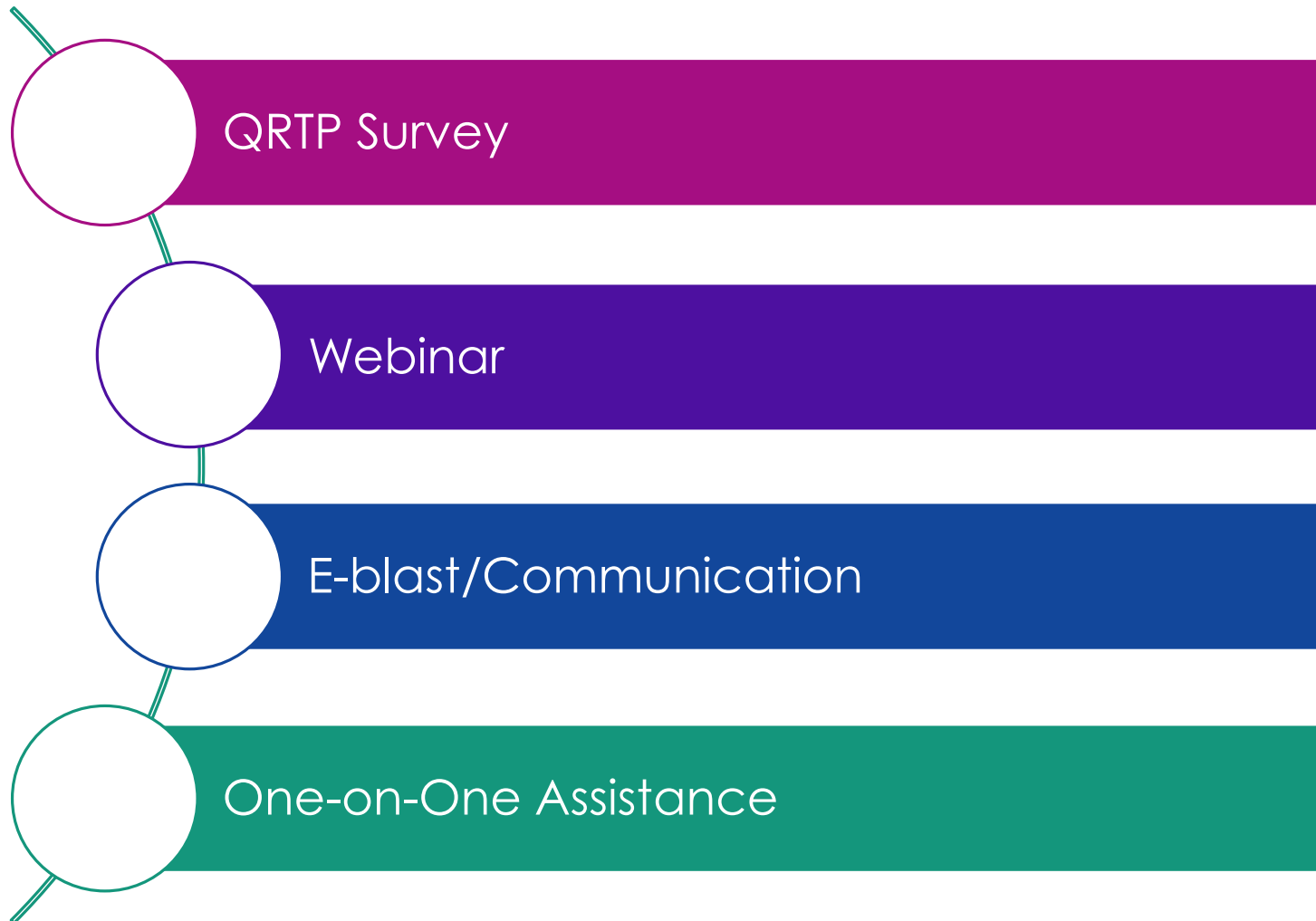
Other

- IT
- Contracts
- Evaluation

NON-FAMILY BASED PLACEMENTS

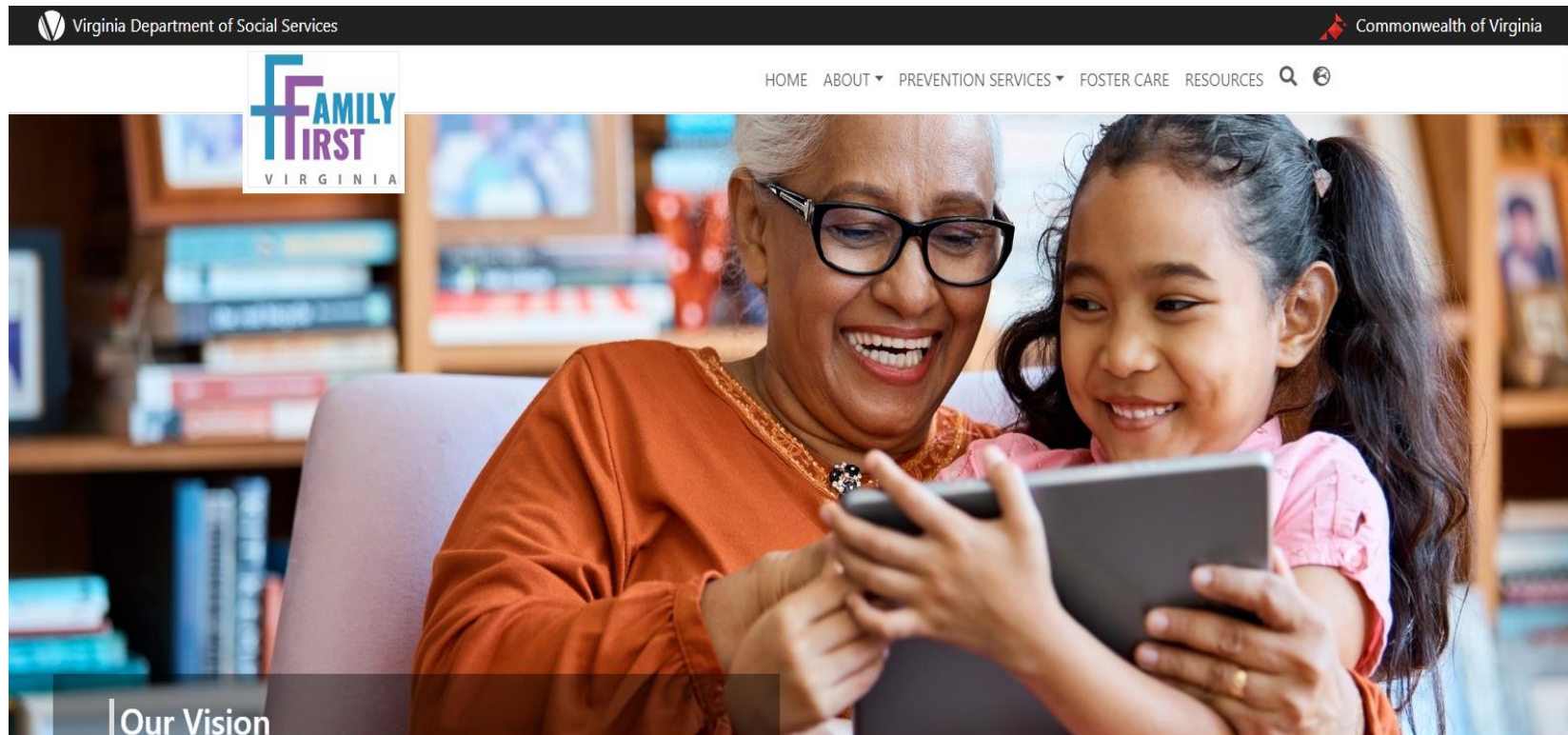


QRTP OUTREACH



FAMILY FIRST WEBSITE

familyfirstvirginia.com



Our Vision

The Family First Prevention Services Act aims to keep children safe, strengthen families and reduce the need for foster care whenever it is safe to do so. Family First supports the overarching mission that kids should grow up in a safe, stable and secure family that supports their long-term well-being.



In order to ensure outcomes are met, VDSS developed an integrated approach to utilize the **Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP)** in the development of a Virginia Child Welfare Strategic Plan to align current initiatives, CFSR/PIP strategies, JLARC recommendations, and Family First requirements.



Goal: To Serve and Engage Families and Communities to Help Shape a Stronger Future by Improving the Well-being, Safety, and Permanency of Children.

Protection

Prevention

Permanency

Workforce

CQI

Strategy	Activities	Alignments
3. Increase the number of children in family-based settings by Strengthening Diligent Recruitment of foster families.	3.1 Embed Family Recruitment and retention throughout the length of the case life.	CIP Area 7, Outcome 1 PIP 3.2 JLARC 4,5,6,10,15 FBP 1-4 Kingap
	3.2 Increase the number of children placed in the care of relatives when removal from the home is necessary.	PIP 3.2 JLARC 4,5,6,7,10,15 FBP 1-4 Kingap
	3.3 Develop and implement statewide strategic plan for recruiting and retaining foster parents, and kinship guardian assistance program	JLARC 8 PIP 3.2
	3.4 Increase the number of foster homes to serve sibling groups.	PIP 3.2
	3.5 Design Virginia-specific model licensing standards for foster care placements.	FBP4
	3.6 Increase family-based foster care placements and reduce the number of youth who are placed in congregate care while maintaining oversight.	JLARC 11, 12
	3.7 Implement qualified residential treatment program (QRTP) requirements as it relates to Family First.	FBP3

CFSP page:

https://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cfs_plan.cgi

- ✓ Click the title of the plan to access
- ✓ Will include annual reports on the plan after they are approved

Fusion page:

<https://fusion.dss.virginia.gov/dfs/DFS-Home/Child-Family-Services-CFS-State-Plan>

- ✓ Will include annual reports on the plan



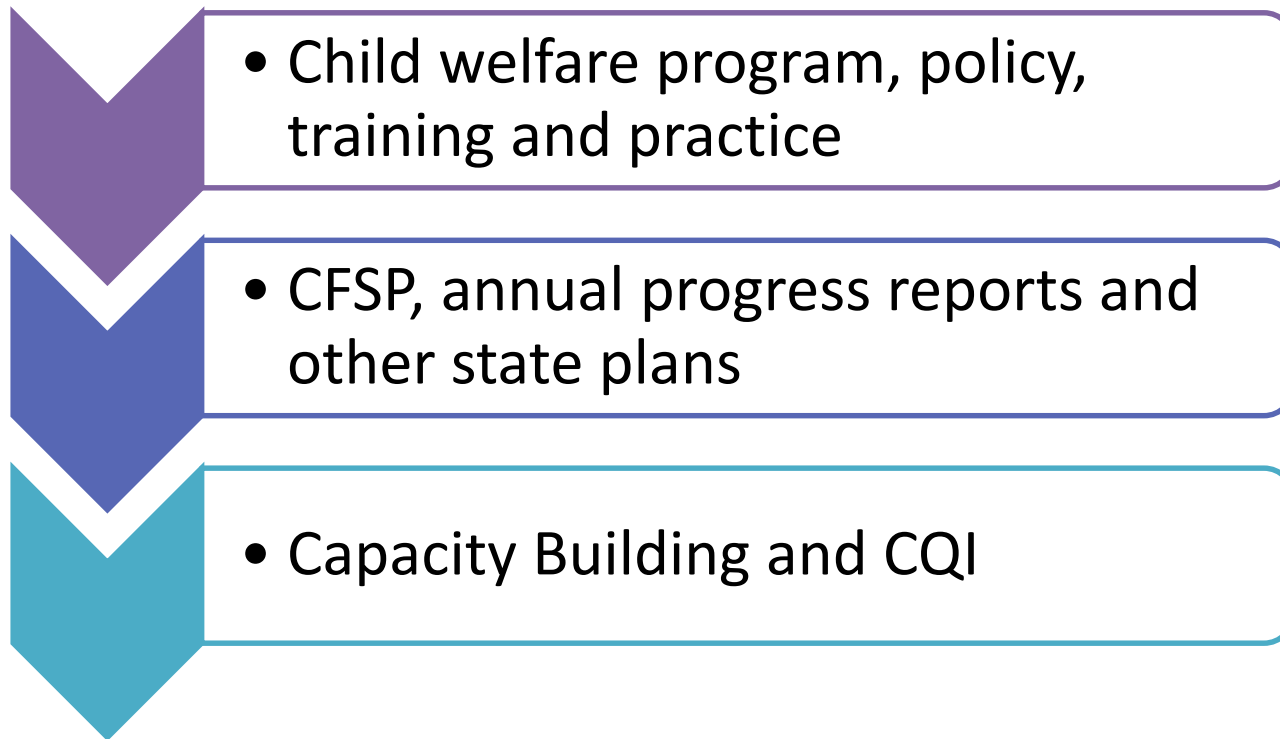
- **Mute**
your line
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your
camera

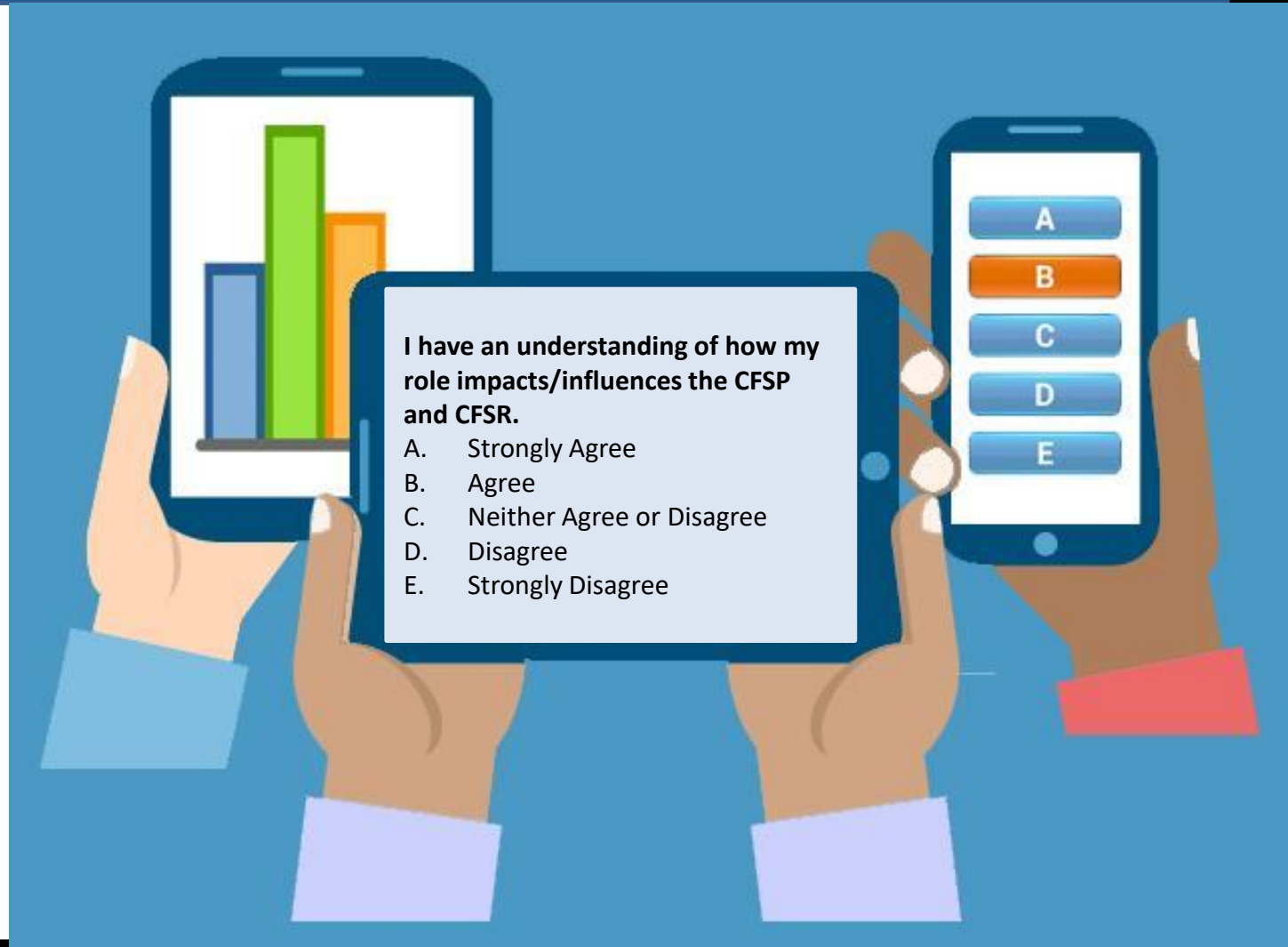


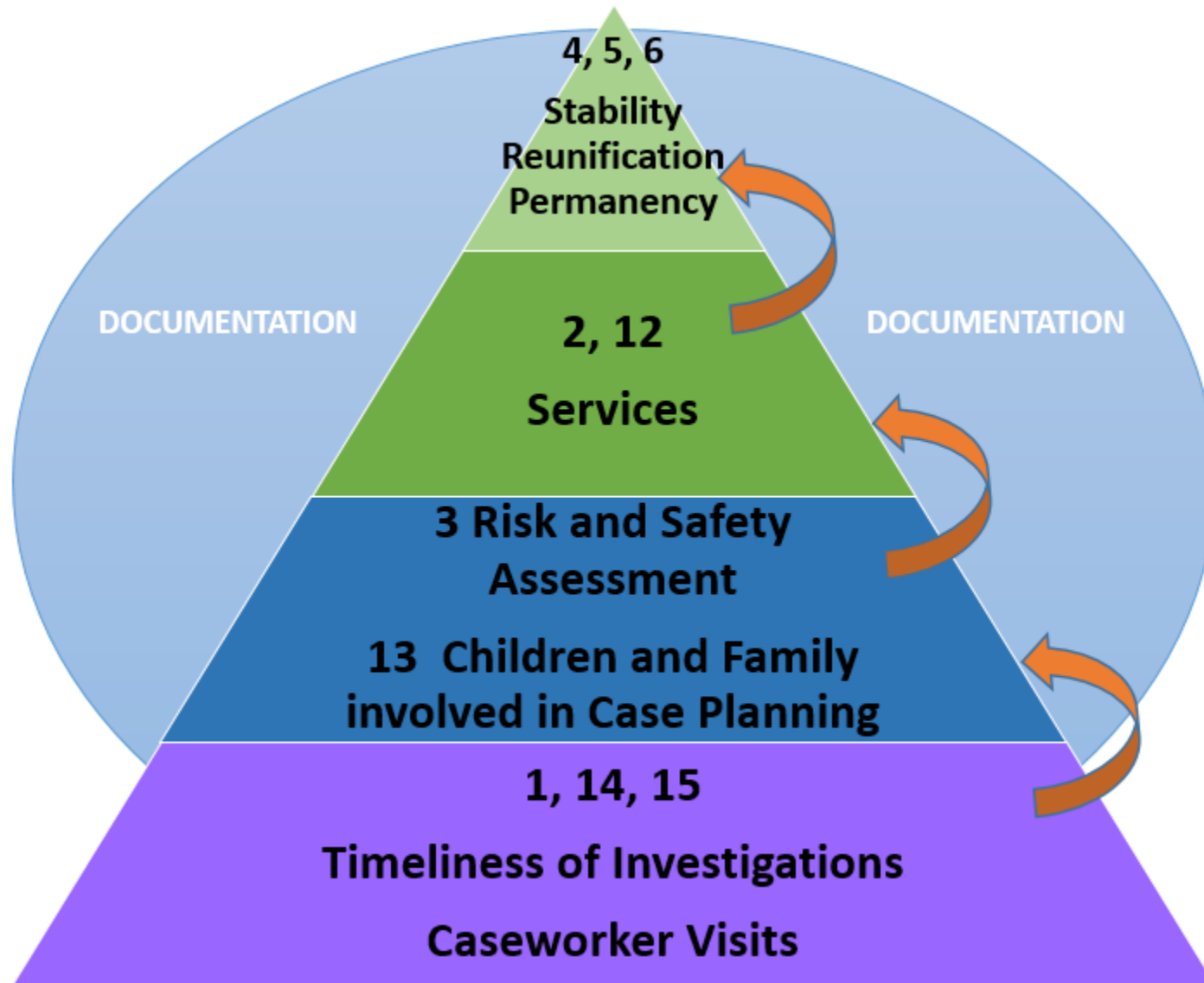
APSR due each Federal Fiscal Year

- Report summarizes
 - Progress made toward outcomes;
 - Identifies technical assistance needed for the upcoming year; and,
 - Details Federal funding spending and QAA Reviews.

CWAC: collaborative advisory group working together to meet system outcomes.

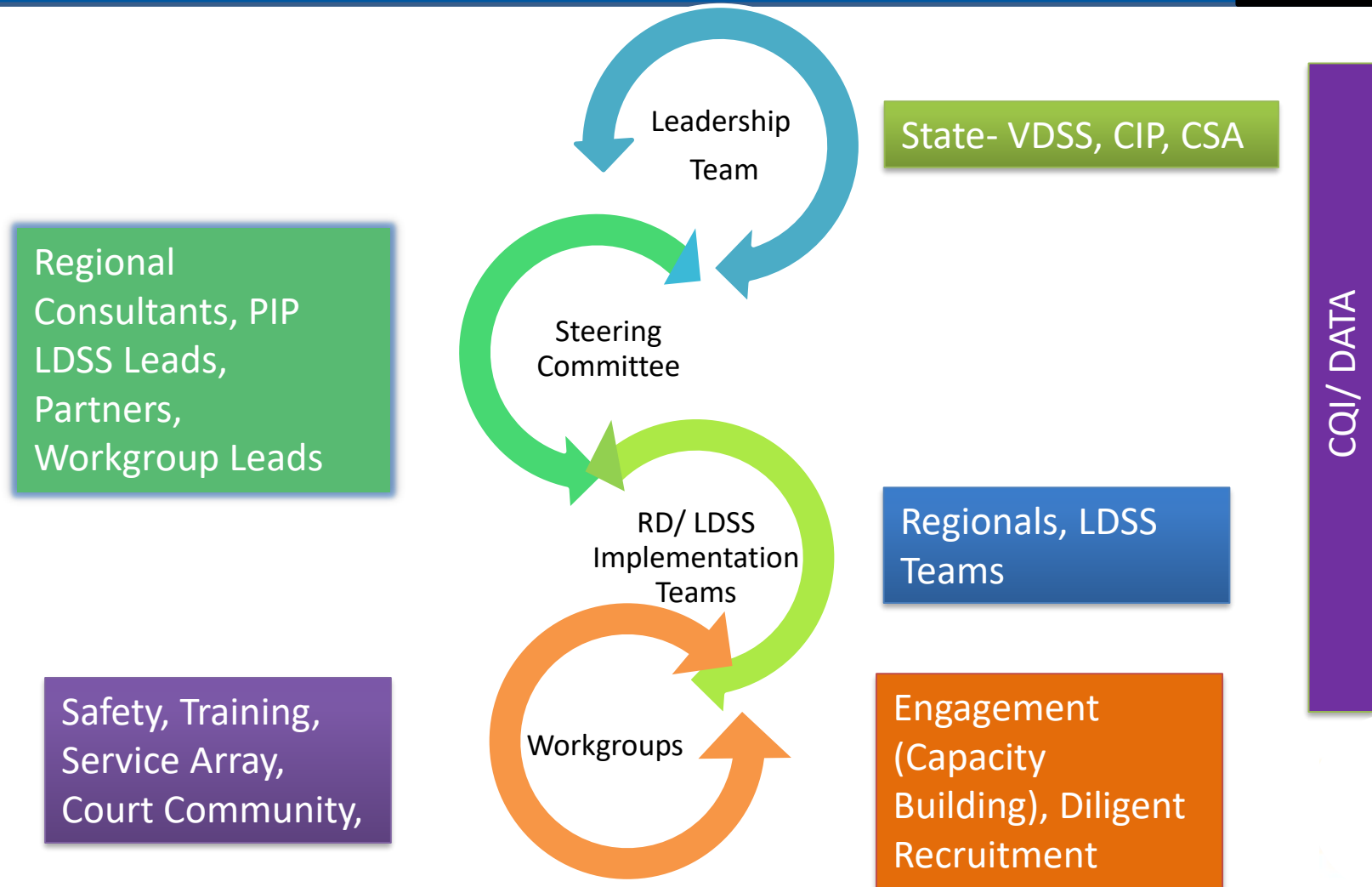






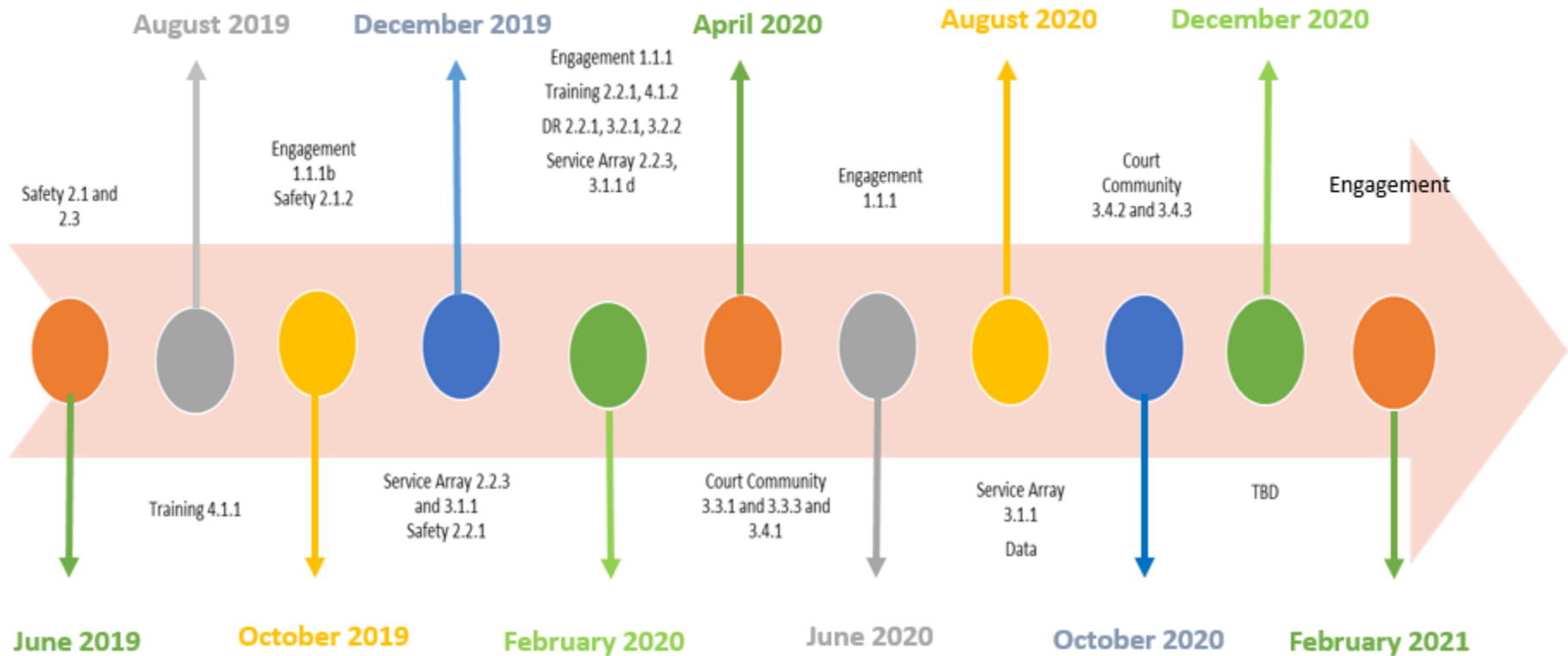
Team Communication Loops

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PIP Installation Timeline

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What are the greatest barriers to family engagement?



- ✓ Automatically be moved to a breakout room
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- ✓ After 15 minutes – message to return to larger group
- ✓ Each group will have 2 minutes to report out key ideas



What are the greatest barriers to family engagement?

What are our TOP solutions to
overcoming the barriers?

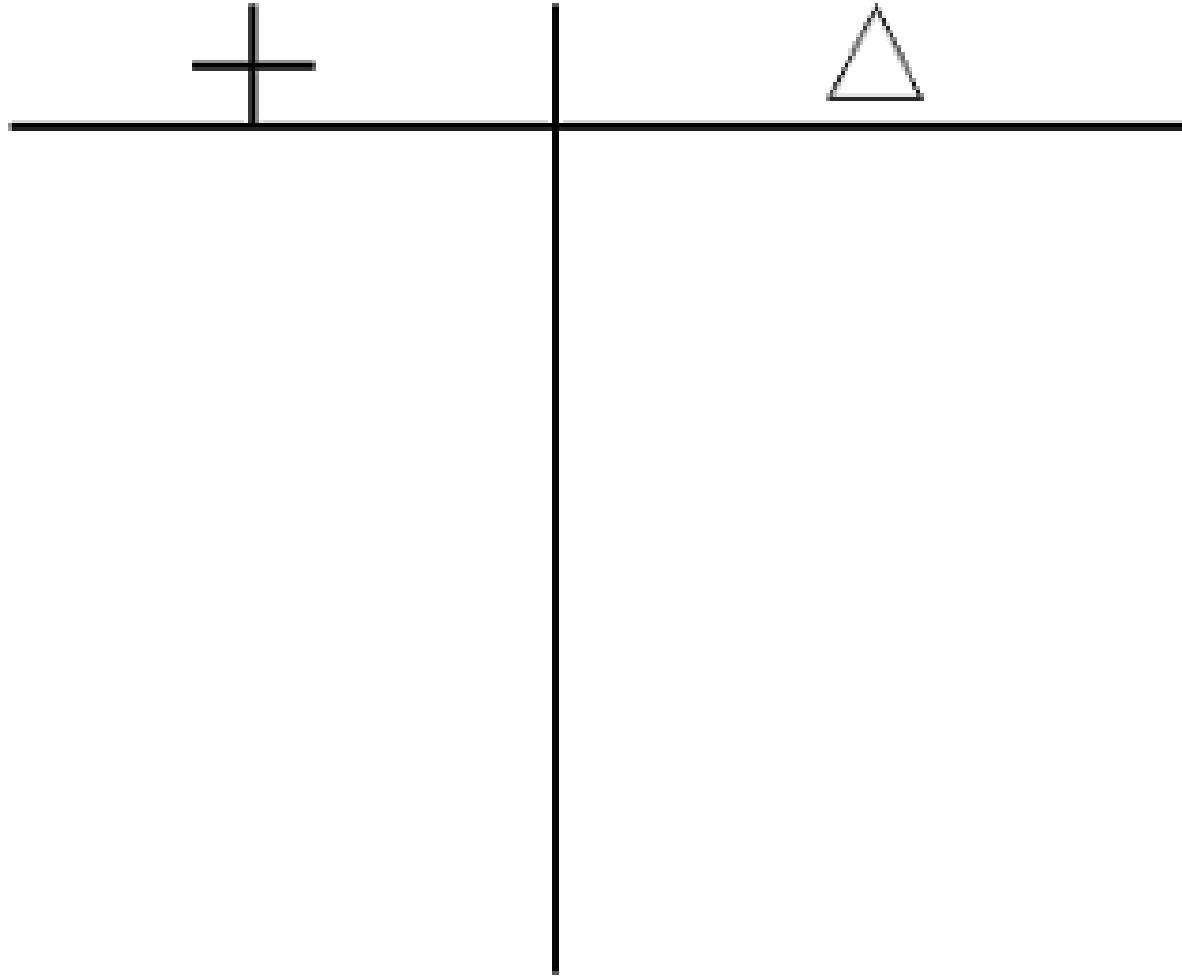


What are the greatest barriers to family engagement and then the top solutions to some of those barriers?

- Breakout Group 1 – Bethany
- Breakout Group 2 – Garrett
- Breakout Group 3 – Morgan
- Breakout Group 4 – Lauren









VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES



Division of
Family Services

Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2020

Division Updates

- Nannette Bowler, Deputy Commissioner, welcomed Kristin Zagar as the new Director of Family Services.
- Nannette shared details about the 5-year Prevention Plan with an emphasis on the prevention of child abuse and neglect. This is an opportunity for child welfare staff and our public and private partners to bridge gaps and strengthen our prevention efforts across Virginia. Collaborative partners will include VDH, DBHDS, FACT, Families Forward, VOICES for Virginia's Children, Virginia Poverty Law Center and other state agencies and stakeholders. We will be intentional in identifying opportunities for alignment of funding streams, resources, other plans and services. The anticipated target date of completion is March 2021. The plan is due to the GA and July 1, 2021.

COVID-19 Updates

- Kristin provided an overview of work directly related to COVID-19. Discussed preparation efforts for increased caseloads and coverage in the fall.
- Reviewed child welfare case data since the start of the pandemic to include: Hotline calls, COMPASS Mobile usage, CPS Investigation/Family Assessment Case Closures, CPS Ongoing Case Opening, and Foster Care Entries and Exits.
- CWAC members were moved into four breakout group sessions for a "collective thinking" activity to answer, "What changes will you or your organization make as a result of the pandemic that could result in improved outcomes for our children and families?" Breakout groups' responses:
 - Offering virtual trainings for foster parents; offer more options for training for those interested in CASA
 - Continued use of doxy.me; it is allowing increased contacts/engagement with families; increasing participation from relatives
 - Telehealth options for children to connect to behavioral health has been positive and allowed for more engagement opportunities. Families feel more comfortable in their home environment; helps reduce transportation barrier.
 - Group homes have been grateful for the ability of virtual visits.
 - Increased participation in parent education programs that are offered virtually, for those families who lack transportation
 - Meetings are more structured/purposeful; agencies are meeting less and feel that meetings are more productive
 - Telework has provided more comfort, more communication and accountability for staff; increased morale. Also improved worker's ability complete tasks without distractions, which has led to an increase in data input; been able to work more in teams; reducing case backlogs
 - Utilizing more community resources and seen improvement in relationships with community partners

- More frequent check-in calls between regional offices and localities
- Leadership looking at ways to re-organize based on what has gone well; looking to be more innovative
- One agency notes that practice hasn't significantly changed
- Concerns noted: FPMs not successful when you cannot get people on video or if people do not call in

Family First Updates

- Prevention Plan submitted and working w/federal partners on finalizing the plan.
- Training plan will include pre-requisite learning opportunities, as well as self-paced webinars.
- A comprehensive communication plan will address technical pieces of implementation but also adaptive pieces so communities understand why implementation is so important to our child welfare system
- 5 MST (Multisystemic Therapy) teams, 5 FFT (Family Functional Therapy) teams and 18 PCIT (Parent-Child Interaction Therapy) clinicians received training on these evidence-based services through FY20 Funding; these services are available for CSA funding now; we will notify LDSS as the teams complete their training.
- Extended Family First implementation to January 30, 2021. The General Assembly had initially provided funding to support implementation of Family First. Unfortunately, as a result of the current pandemic this funding has been unallotted. The current pandemic impacted our LDSS training plans as well as the community EBS Learning Collaboratives that the Office of Children's Services were leading. Other areas that may not have been ready for implementation in July to include our IT changes, contracting procedures, and evaluation process.
- A fundamental requirement of Family First is establishing specialized congregate care placements, specifically the development of Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP's). VDSS has developed an application process for the designation of QRTP's with close collaboration with VDSS Licensing and Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) on the designation process. There are three other congregate care changes: Title IV-E funding can be used to support pregnant or parenting youth in foster care, Family based substance use treatment programs, and services for youth who are at risk or victims of sex trafficking.
- We have only received two applications for QRTP and have developed a strategic outreach plan, which includes: a survey around QRTP readiness, WebEx information session to providers, targeted communication to providers and to LDSS to explain importance of becoming a QRTP and 1:1 outreach for agencies requesting assistance. The state and localities will be financially impacted if we do not have more QRTP's.

CFSP/APSR Updates

- CFSP (Child and Family Services Plan) – 5 year strategic plan where we aligned current initiatives and state and federal requirements in our plan. Five buckets outlined the objectives of the CFSP: protection, prevention, permanency, workforce and CQI, and then identified strategies and activities within each of the objectives to achieve outcomes.
- Important that all CWAC members know where to access the CFSP. There are VDSS and Fusion (for LDSS staff) websites that house these reports:

- **VDSS page:** https://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cfs_plan.cgi
 - Click the title of the plan to access
 - Will include annual reports on the plan after they are approved
- **Fusion page:** <https://fusion.dss.virginia.gov/dfs/DFS-Home/Child-Family-Services-CFS-State-Plan>
- APSR (Annual Progress and Services Report) – yearly report on the CFSP; each year we update how we are doing and what our progress is with both measurement and of our Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) activities. Report summarizes: Progress made toward outcomes; Identifies technical assistance needed for the upcoming year; and Details Federal funding spending and QAA Reviews.
- DFS polled CWAC members re: their understanding of how their role impacts/influences the CFSP and CFSR. The majority of CWAC responded that they strongly agreed or agreed that they understand their role.

PIP Updates

- PIP Implementation Team consists of 19 LDSS, to include 6 workgroups who are charged with developing strategies to achieve outcomes; once strategies are developed, the LDSS and regional consultants implement the strategies; the regional practice consultants provide specific TA to support implementation efforts. PIP team meets every other month to focus on installation of the PIP activities. June we will focus on installation of the Engagement Practice Profiles and in August the focus will be on service array and service provision.
 - To note: The new Family Engagement Guidance is included in the Practice Foundations chapter – which is now on Fusion
- Engagement is an area we need to improve and is reflected in items in our PIP.
- CWAC members were moved into four breakout group sessions for a “collective thinking” activity to answer, “What are the greatest barriers to family engagement?” and then “What are our top solutions to overcoming the barriers?” Breakout groups’ responses:
 - Barrier crimes with relatives are a barrier as criminal history impacts their ability to go forward with placement; could we relax requirements for barrier crimes
 - Staff can struggle with leading from a strengths-based perspective and no matter how poorly a family functions, they do have strengths and we need to build upon those strengths
 - Values perspective – do we always listen to the voices of families?
 - Sometimes our own biases get in the way
 - Lack of cultural diversity; not having a real understanding of poverty in families
 - Kids in foster care who are undocumented; system not sensitive to the children we have in care right now
 - We need to change the way we interact with families and may need to rethink system from the ground up, start thinking about what would be some revolutionary changes (entire legal system) and barrier crimes may be a place to start, lack of services is also an issue
 - Importance of buy in of families; need to let family be the experts on their families
 - Legal system and embracing family strengths perspective

- Building on strengths and allowing families to have self-determination can be hard, while focusing on safety
- We need to believe that families want what is best for their children and we must build on those strengths at multiple levels
- As a professional system, it is an overwhelming, powerful system that our families are coming into, when you feel like you do not have other people that understand your circumstances, it can be a challenge to engage. Family support partners or youth support partners could help with this
- Time factor – need to equip workers to take the time to build relationships with families
- As a system, stop and think how it works for families to get services from their agency – make it user-friendly
- Be flexible – really step back and evaluate what each family needs, think about family schedules
- FPMs are helpful to have more honest conversations and virtual platforms might feel more safe
- We tend to get lost in the way we do things and forget what challenges our families face, are we asking the families to do things that they are truly able to do? We forget that we are viewing things through a different lens that our families are. They feel judged, and this is a huge barrier to engagement.
- Help families feel more empowered
- More training to service providers, resource families
- Take less of an enforcement role

Other Updates

- Valerie L’Herrou with the Virginia Poverty Law Center shared information on the Harvard Law Research project: Access to Justice Lab – using evidence/research to improve the justice system. Please see this website: <https://a2jlab.org/>
 - They are interested in doing research in Virginia
 - Some localities have already expressed interest in participating
 - Looking at court improvements
- Yvonne Epps-Giddings with the Nottoway Tribe shared <https://worldembracing.net/> and encouraged participation – daily virtual devotions and dialogue around racial prejudice
- Discussion on racial inequality - group members stated that we should look at disparities and disproportionality in child welfare; racial and cultural competence in foster care placement, resource family recruitment and training in a more relevant way; need to have a collective conversation. Idea to make this standing agenda item moving forward

Questions

- Question about moving other mandated training to virtual platform? Training team in the process of converting in-person classroom trainings to on-line trainings; they will send out more information as soon as they are completed
- Family First team was asked if work with Anne E. Casey Foundation is around FFPSA or broader? VDSS working with the Casey Foundation, not Anne E Casey Foundation, and that there is a

longstanding partnership with them. They have been heavily involved in supporting Family First implementation in VA and that Casey supports VDSS in many projects throughout the year.

Plus/Delta

Plus

- Impressive use of technology w/the breakout rooms; fairly seamless transitions from big group to smaller group; easier/quicker to break out into small groups with different people
- Loved the ability to go into chat rooms for small group discussion; great quality of discussion in the breakout sessions; really great that people shared
- More people able to attend
- Guided questions were instructive (in breakout rooms); information presented was informative and timely; facilitators did great job in small and large group; Great topics/content, very interactive
- This felt a lot more interactive and collaborative
- Appreciated the amount of information in the full session and also commitment to be mindful of racial disparities in the child welfare system
- Well organized and pace was about right; length was good as much materials was able to be covered; was worried about the length beforehand, but it actually flew by
- Break was helpful – wish I'd known it was coming
- I like that I could make my own space comfortable (by being virtual)

Delta:

- Love to have a longer breakout session or a small work group on addressing barriers
- Could maybe use one more break; perhaps a longer break if the meeting goes this long
- Turning cameras off when not speaking may help with bandwidth
- Miss seeing people and having conversations during breaks with people I hardly get to see
- It would be helpful for non-child welfare agencies to know how they can support the VDSS' required plans
- Would like to do a mix of in-person and the virtual meeting
- Missing from virtual conversation is free flow conversation as you have to be more guided in what you need from the group