



**Iowa System of Care Summit  
Tuesday, April 5, 2016  
Comments from Morning Self-Reflection, Small Group Work, and Report Out**

- Iowa is top five in youth out of home. Apples to oranges? Since JJ and CW are combined. Are placement necessary, are we not introducing community based in replacement? There isn't a standard/uniform assessment.
- You can't be in alignment with Policy #2 if not in alignment with Policy #1. Looking at a different way.
- Policy #3: Lengths of stay too long. This policy in and of itself is stated in the negative. Cut out the first sentence. We lack diligent attempts to search and locate parents/relatives. Lacking efforts to engage fathers. Service options for dads are slim to none for residential substance abuse for fathers with children.
- Iowa 5<sup>th</sup> in nation in removals per 1,000
- Lack of alignment by court and county attorneys with DHS – removals CINA
- Lack of common assessment to inform services/needs that works
- Lack of common agreement on risk versus safety
- Lack of common agreement on definition of family
- Staff values and biases do not align with families we work with
- DHS/JCS not letting go of control/calling the shots and being true partners – trusting that providers do have expertise
- Kids spending too much time in shelter
- "Whenever possible" is an out
- Not having strong discharge plans in the beginning of a child's/family's case
- Putting resources into reunification later in age as keeping them in care
- Having flexibility to have FTDMs whenever needed
- Lack of capacity in finding homes close to kids
- Boys Town home model to keep kids in their communities
- Need to pay for process not process



- Agencies that value staff and pay staff accordingly – structure contracts to promote higher staff salaries
- Time and skills needed to fully engage families are high level skills and not all staff have that competency
- Policy #1: JCS/DHS – differing definition of safety. Community vs. child safety
- Policy #1: What does this mean for “assessment?” JCS...DHS...MCO...The assessment impacts removal
- Policy #2: Who is making the decision? Who will be the “case manager?” Who decides which services and supports?
- Policy #2: At what point are we doing full family functioning assessment? JCS/DHS differing goals/needs.
- Policy #3: Huge gap in what kind and how many placement options right now! DHS needs not aligned with provider capacity.
- Policy #3: JCS acknowledges their lengths of stay too long; moving to more services and work with family to return more quickly.
- Policy #3: Define shorter? Who defines lengths of stay?
- Policy #3: Thinking of MCOs – different versions of family as it relates to therapy.
- Policy #4: This seems to be three different issues in one policy
- Policy #4: Potential disconnect when TRP – two different age ranges, older kid(s) want to go home but not safe for younger ones.
- Policy #4: Gender issues keeping siblings together. Different needs/issues.
- Policy #4: Disconnect – kid getting services, family not. Need to do better with whole family.
- Policy #4: Family finding – have to find someone.
- Policy #5: Define “all aspects”
- Policy #5: We are dictatorial, “telling” parents what’s going to happen and when
- Policy #5: JCS diverting – parents advocating to take the kid. (Could be a regulatory issue)
- Policy #5: Just being available to parents; being flexible about their schedules
- Policy #5: Misalignment with available technology – we will have to get creative (regulatory issue)



- Policy #5: Still room to improve on “system view” of parents – we don’t always view them favorably
- Policy #6: There are clear patterns of what JCS/DHS staff use what providers. JCS – change their environment and get them away. DHS – keep them together.
- Policy #6: The “flow” needs streamlining
- Policy #7: Not enough dollars to make this happen
- All Policies: universal definitions (community, safety, family, assessment)
- Policy #3: Lack of capacity
- Policy #5: not liking families
- Policy #7: Not enough dollars
- Policy #1: Everyone agrees that kids should stay in the home
- Policy #1: Safety issues with JCS – JCO (removal issues)
- Policy #1: DHS doesn’t do the assessments as well as they could
- Policy #1: Different assessments
- Policy #1: Issue of child behavior of what services they receive
- Policy #1: More family involvement
- Policy #1: Safety risk
- Policy #1: Education of families at beginning of the investigation
- Policy #1: HOW TO’s: job application, standards, etc.
- Policy #2: Connecting supports-resources-flex funding to get basic necessities
- Policy #2: Coaching on how to use the support around other than just DHS, JCO, fiscal services
- Policy #2: Helping to have them overcome barriers
- Policy #2: Funding before crisis
- Policy #2: Regulatory component rather than policy
- Policy #2: qualifications?
- Policy #3: Look at the RIGHT time duration
- Policy #3: What is the evidence that shows that child must be in long term service?



- Policy #3: Definition of what the issues are – why in group care?
- Policy #3: More things to work on – not only one target → Lots of push back
- Policy #3: Put back in the community – what direction are we sending them?
- Policy #3: Coaching and education of the parents as soon as the child leaves to go to residential
- Policy #4: Struggle is the next steps for the child
- Policy #4: How do you keep teach the parents to be facilitators?
- Policy #5: Getting the family involved at the beginning:
  - Educate parents and families
  - Involved in decision making...diversion utilization to empower parents.
  - How do you get systems involved?
  - Different ways of thinking
- Policy #5: Community safety will be better once we work with prevention with families
- Policy #6: This is a pie in the sky mentality
- Policy #6: Working together with the providers as much as the parents
- Policy #6: Encourage use of technology – great way to connect
- Policy #6: How to get the child then?
- Kids being sent out of state/home. No known assessment tool in use for making these decisions. Any tool that is created should factor in the family (currently very child focused) and the home setting/safety. Other states may already have something that can be validated in Iowa. It would also need to take into account public safety (juvenile justice) on top of the child/family. What services would be indicated to be able to keep them at home (part of the assessment).
- There is a lack of addressing the “drivers” of the later child welfare/JJ issues (e.g. poverty, housing). The level of behaviors/issues that is required to get services is too high. If a family needs support, they should be able to access it more easily.
- The longer you’re in care the father you move from home and supports. Need to be clear that family foster care is not permanency. Need to look for non-traditional options for permanency. Economy of scale (group care) currently in the way of limiting use of out of home care.
- Need to look at extended family more as well as other alternatives in order to keep siblings together. Transition planning for after out of home care, should have a “Plan B” for when it develops that the child will not return home at all. Should be plans that are developed concurrently.