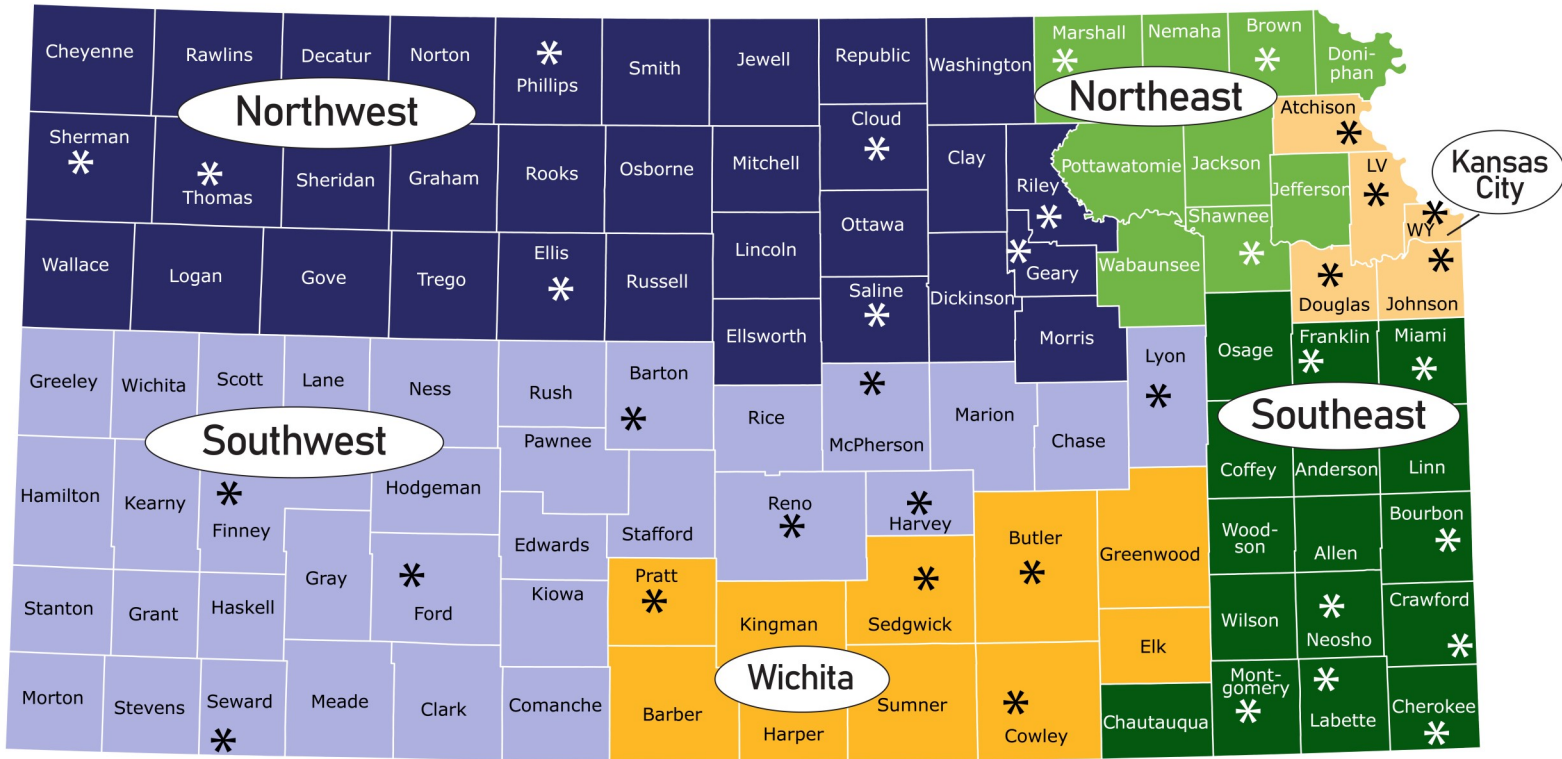


Prevention in Kansas



In this issue...

- New DCF Regions *pg 1*
- Meet the Regional Directors *pg 2*
- Provider Spotlight: CSI *pg 3*
- Provider Spotlight: Project Eagle and LiveWell Northwest Kansas *pg 4*
- Community Provider Spotlight: Kansas Serves Native American Families *pg 5*

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DCF adds two new regions for the state

In an effort to align regional boundaries and aspire to amplify local touch and community collaboration, DCF has introduced two new regions to the region structure. The aim is to continue efforts to connect with communities and support services and programs locally.

“While the old structure served the agency well, the time has come to make some changes to better address challenges in equity of effort and travel and provide more support in those regions with a high number of counties and local partners so that we can achieve our goals and outcomes in prevention and customer services,” said Tanya Keys, Deputy Secretary for the Department of Children and Families.

Effective July 1, two new regions were created by dividing counties by north and south in the East and West regions. It is not expected to produce significant changes to the shared business process management workflows and DCF anticipates preserving as much of the supervision structure – even if that structure involves a team with some members in northern and southern service centers.

-View the DCF Service Centers in Kansas that have begun the reopening phases by visiting this [link](#).

--For information on county cases of COVID-19 can be found on the [KDHE website](#), updated Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays at 12:30 pm.

Kansas DCF regional directors discuss prevention progress



Northwest regional director, Pamela Beach: *I am very encouraged that some of our most rural areas of Kansas are having an opportunity to receive additional services that generally are only accessible in urban areas. Extending services to families through providers with Family First grants has strengthened community partnerships in providing education and support to parents of young children as well as teens. These services are emphasizing the need for the communities to take action and all of us work harder with families to be a part of the safety network for children.*

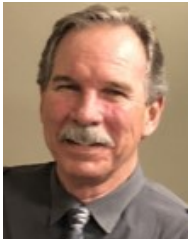


Northeast regional director, Chrisy Khatib: *I am so inspired by the prevention efforts we are doing in Kansas. The Northeast will soon be implementing Team Decision Making. I had the opportunity to participate in two TDM's and was touched by the strength and resiliency of families. The TDM facilitator did an excellent job of leading the meeting and honoring all participants. The expectations were clearly identified in the first ten minutes, so families understood the purpose of the meeting and felt empowered. There was never instances blaming others or picking apart flaws, yet a clear focus on how the family moves forward.*

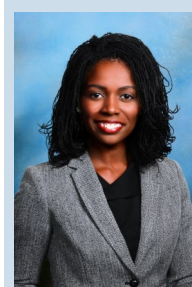
Southwest regional director, Stacey Tweedy: *We hear our staff are excited about the work they are doing and working alongside with a family. We have the ability to offer more resources that haven't been available before and more tailored to a family's needs.*



Southeast regional director, Anita Cooper: *The East Region, particularly the SE Region, is using the variety of prevention services and practices to keep families together, such as Family Finding, Signs of Safety, and Team Decision Making. These all fit together so well with the focus on prevention. Staff are thinking outside the box by utilizing resources including Family First Prevention Services to maintain children safely in their homes. We are truly working alongside the families and community partners, through TDM and other types of family meetings to create a network of safety for children. The prevention services through Family First gives the family options based on what their needs are and allows us to provide services that are personalized for them.*



Wichita regional director, Tom Buell: *We are all looking forward to rolling out Team Decision Making (TDM) in the Wichita region this summer. We've been extremely encouraged by the success stories coming out of Kansas City and the East. Not only does TDM offer the opportunity for families to discuss child safety in a way that allows for addressing options to mitigate concerns in a non-threatening environment with support by extended family or friends, but it also provides an opportunity to expand our engagement with community partners and strengthens our relationships with them in a combined effort to support families at a critical juncture in their child's life.*



Kansas City regional director, Shanelle Dupree: *There is nothing more frustrating than not having the tools to help those in need. Kansas led the way by being one of the first few states to implement the Family First Prevention Services Act. Family First provides multiple resources to help families stay together. Our dedicated child protection specialists now have many options to offer families and prevent a child's removal from the home. We are finding creative solutions to empower families and maintain child safety while focusing on prevention. Successfully meeting the needs of families is a win for the family, a win for our workers, and a win for Kansas.*



DCF leadership around the state have been couriers of the agency's prevention efforts, collaborating with community providers, sister agencies, courts, and stakeholders. DCF leadership value your place at the table!

Prevention Provider Spotlight: Community Solutions, Inc.

Community Solutions, Incorporated (CSI) has been advocating for social change since the early 1960's. While initial work involved collaborating with the community and local and state officials to establish the first halfway house in Connecticut for men releasing from state custody, the importance of advocacy and families are cornerstones of CSI's work.

The agency's first executive director, Ralph Cheyney, worked tirelessly to establish the program and gain the trust of the neighborhood in which the home was located. He also educated the public

about the need for such social services. Mr. Cheyney and his wife and three young sons lived at the halfway house with the residents, ate their meals with the clients, and worked to reunite returning citizens with their families. CSI understands, values, and promotes the importance of the connections of family and community.

Since those early years, CSI has grown to over 60 programs, providing services to individuals and families in eleven states and Canada. This includes a continuum of services for youth and families.



Community Solutions, Inc attending a fall meet and greet. **Left to Right:** assistant chief operating officer, Sedgrid Lewis; project area director, Vonetta Lambert; chief development officer, Terri Williams.

Family First Selected Program, Multisystemic Therapy



Left to Right: Andrew Hartz, assistant director, and Robert Butcher, program director for Community Solutions, Inc in Kansas.

In accordance with the agency's desire to provide evidence-based models which are outcome driven and research based, CSI became the first licensed provider of Multisystemic Therapy (MST) in New England in 1999. CSI is one of the largest licensed providers of MST in the country and a Network Partner with MST Services providing over 21 years of experience in MST services for juvenile justice, child welfare and mental health populations in urban, suburban and rural settings. CSI was excited to learn of Kansas DCF's early adoption of Family First and the agency's focus on providing evidence-based services. Further, MST is rated well-supported on the title IV-E Prevention Clearinghouse.

CSI's MST programs are rooted in the philosophy that families possess the

innate strengths and capacities to solve their own problems. MST Therapists overcome many of the barriers that often prevent successful engagement with families and CSI does "whatever it takes" to support the MST therapists in the successful completion of their work.

The MST model provides services for youth between the ages of 12-17 and their families. The target population includes youth who demonstrate behavioral challenges, aggression, and running away from home.

"Our understanding of Kansas' history and need for regional services in both urban and rural areas of the state, helped us craft a proposal to provide MST in 18 counties* across all four DCF regions," said Terri Williams, chief development officer.

CSI officially started serving Kansas youth and families in December 2019. While COVID-19 required CSI to pivot and approach the work a bit differently, the collaboration with DCF made services for families seamless during the last few months.

"Our Kansas MST staff have worked incredibly hard in ramping up services in their respective communities," shared Kansas program director Robert Butcher. "I am proud of the work of the Kansas CSI team, particularly in their ability to

engage families in treatment. That engagement has been instrumental in our successful work with families during the pandemic, as has our wonderful partnership with DCF."

"We are honored to be able to provide a safe and effective model for youth in many counties in Kansas. It is our goal to help families leverage their strengths to bring about sustainable change," said CSI's chief executive officer, Fernando Muñiz.

Words of Hope

Examples of MST case notes:

Despite identified barriers and challenges along the way, this family became resilient and today is a success.

The youth has decreased or eliminated all referral behaviors and "feels happy."

The caregiver was able to apply rewards, maintain a clear structure in the home, and utilize proper discipline (no longer using corporal punishment).

Caregiver has increased communication with the school and more supervision which resulted in the youth being up to date with school work and passing all classes.

*View the [Service Menus](#) to see which counties offer MST with Family First

Prevention Provider Partnership Spotlight:

KU MCRI Project Eagle and LiveWell Northwest Kansas

Project Eagle, a program of the University of Kansas Medical Center, has three purposes: to prepare children, engage families, and promote excellence. Located in Wyandotte County, Kansas, since 1989 and an anchor tenant of the Children’s Campus of Kansas City, Project Eagle has provided early education and home visiting services to young children and pregnant women, along with their families for three decades. Through all programming, Project Eagle emphasizes the importance of positive parent-child relationships, serving infants and toddlers within the context of their families and aims to simultaneously foster child development while supporting parents in reaching their own goals as parents and providers for their families. Project Eagle believes this two-generational approach is critical to improving outcomes and opportunities for children in the community.

Project Eagle has a staff of nearly 90 highly qualified, prepared, and invested individuals and provides direct services to pregnant women and families with young children through Early Head Start Home Visiting, Early Head Start/Head Start classrooms at Educare Kansas City, the Connections Comprehensive Early Childhood Screening and Referral Program, and ABC Home Visiting,

Project Eagle is partnering with LiveWell Northwest Kansas, on the Family First Prevention grant to serve 21 counties in the Northwest and Kansas City regions*.

“We have had great success with this program in the Kansas City area, and we were excited about this opportunity to make it available to more families in Kansas.” said Lisa London, director of Project Eagle at the KU Medical Center.

LiveWell Northwest Kansas, based in Colby, builds a foundation for children and families through strong household connections, healthy development and early learning. This can create a lifelong change for healthy lifestyles and smart decisions. For 16 years, LiveWell has worked with several local, state, and federal agencies, to advance outcomes related to healthy behaviors within Northwest Kansas, especially for those families most at risk. By filling gaps, adding enhancements to the early childhood system and linking health to education, LiveWell has successfully made a direct impact on community health outcomes.



Top Left to Right: Lisa London, Project Eagle director; Blanca Ansbro, ABC Home Visitor; Kelsey Ritz, ABC Home Visitor; Leslie Warlen, Project Eagle assistant director. **Bottom Left to Right:** LiveWell Northwest Kansas at the Colby meet and greet; Emily Palmer, project director and Travis Rickford, executive director.



Family First Selected Program, Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up

In 2017 Project Eagle and LiveWell Northwest Kansas expanded their early childhood program offerings for young children and families through the addition of the Attachment Biobehavioral Catch-Up Program (ABC). This evidence-based parenting intervention for caregivers of children ages six months to 48 months focuses on sensitive and responsive caregiving in order to nurture child development and foster strong and healthy attachments. Children, depending on the experiences they’ve had in their young lives, may exhibit a variety of emotional and behavioral difficulties making it challenging for them to form secure relationships and manage their behavior and responses to stress. “As we explore opportunities to address toxic stress and trauma in our communities, ABC has served as a proved method to make families happier and healthier, which in turn improves our ability to thrive as a community,” said Travis Rickford, director of LiveWell Northwest Kansas.

ABC is designed to help children experiencing adversity by promoting attachment and sensitive nurturing parenting

practices, thereby buffering against the long-term effects of toxic stress. ABC Parent Coaches use “in the moment commenting” and video clip review to directly model and reinforce behaviors that create nurturing, responsive environments for children. Commenting is framed to feel positive and rewarding to the parents. The 10 sessions end with a celebration and a special “best of” DVD montage of the parent and child for them to keep. “It is truly amazing the amount of growth caregivers make in reading and responding to their child’s signals after just 10 sessions,” says Anne Marie Jackson, Project Eagle’s ABC program coordinator. Parents have also commented on the positive impact of the program on their relationship with their child. “[ABC] makes you more conscious of the actions you take as a parent and how you react to things. You notice weaknesses in your parenting and how to make them stronger,” said one ABC Parent.

The following success story, provided by an ABC Parent Coach, illustrates the impact of the program for both children and their parents: *I worked with a young parent, and*

their two-year-old. The parent had recently gotten custody of the child and four year old sibling. The parent had never parented them before, and was very stressed out about caring for them. The children had experienced neglect in their previous placement, and were constantly dysregulated—screaming, crying, and throwing things the entire session, so of course, this parent would get very frustrated with having to constantly set limits and manage their behavior. The first few sessions of ABC were very difficult. The parent became overwhelmed with the child’s constant crying, and frequently yelled to try to calm them down. This parent was very eager to try ABC strategies to interact differently, and I saw incredible changes over the course of our ten weeks together. Most notably, the parent is a nurturing, soothing figure for the child gets upset. The parent decreased frightening behavior that he used to display and said they feel better equipped to handle the child’s difficult behaviors.

*View the [Service Menus](#) for the Kansas City and West Region to view service counties

Community Provider Spotlight: Kansas Serves Native American Families



Left to right: RaeAnn Hullman (ITKN), SFP group leader, and Maria Fairman (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska/PBPN), project manager, delivering food for families.

Kansas Serves Native American Families (KSNAF) seeks to improve the wellbeing, safety, and permanency of Native American children affected by parent and community substance abuse through implementing and evaluating a culturally integrated Strengthening Families Program (SFP). KSNAF serves Native American families with children ages 0-18 that have been affected by substance use either in their family or their community. The priority is serving Native American families with children who are in, or at risk of, out-of-home placement with a case plan goal of reunification or guardianship.

KSNAF is a partnership between the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare (KUSSW), Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation (PBPN), Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska (SFN), Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska (ITKN), Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas (KT), Haskell Indian Nations University, Kansas Department for Children and Families

(DCF), Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS), and KVC. Funding for this project is provided through a Regional Partnership Grant (Round 4) from the Children's Bureau, ACF, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "What really makes this program work is that it is done in close collaboration with tribal communities. Every step of the way we respectfully follow what our tribal partners tell us is important to them and the families that we serve." said Michelle Levy, director of KSNAF. As one example, each SFP site is encouraged to create their own name and logo. "Our SFP group was meeting during the summer last year at the Boys & Girls Club. We wanted parents to know that the group was going to give their family a chance to be together and learn but also have fun so we decided to call our program 'Family Camp'" said Lindsey Hullman (Ottawa) site coordinator.

"There are other places in the state that offer SFP but ours is unique in how it is tailored with and for Native families. We have multigenerational families participating together – kids with moms or dads and grandpas or aunties." said Maria Fairman (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska/PBPN), project manager.

SFP groups underway when the COVID-19 pandemic struck were halted and now the program is offering virtual SFP. Staff at White Cloud are providing groups with parents and children via Zoom through tablets that are provided to families. Despite a few technical glitches, families are participating and engaged in learning and

discussion. The program plans to finish out another group that was in progress at PBPN through a virtual format with the help of the PBPN site coordinator, Verna Simon (Kickapoo).

During the past two months, KSNAF staff have provided additional support to families by delivering food, games/activities and other resources. This is especially important because food bank resources and delivery are more limited in the rural areas where many of the families and staff live. "These resources help families not only with cost and convenience but it helps to keep our families home and safe," said Fairman.

This program helps families to have tools to address their current problems and know where to go for resources or assistance," said Simon. "Parents share their experiences with each other. SFP provides participants – both parents and children – with tools that focus on communication and interaction."

"KSNAF provides a parenting education program that engages Native communities. The staff are fully invested in the program and the families they serve. They build on strengths and respect tribal community uniqueness. During this pandemic, they have been creative in using technology and offering resources to support Native families. This program is showing successful outcomes. Personally, I have enjoyed collaborating and look forward to future endeavors," said Sandra Shopteese (PBPN), tribal specialist DCF Prevention and Protection Services.

Evidence-Based Program, Strengthening Families

The Strengthening Families Program is an evidence-based prevention program for caregivers and children. Families meet once a week for 14 weeks for a 2-hour class that addresses parenting skills, children's life skills, and family skills training. Each session begins with a family meal and includes informal family practice time and coaching by group leaders. Sessions address managing stress, communication, problem-solving, setting limits and other skills for family bonding, strengthening relationships and supporting well-being. The program provides transportation, child care, incentives and referrals to other services on an as needed basis.

KSNAF recruits, trains and supports individuals who are Native American to offer SFP within tribal communities and for tribal populations in urban settings. The goal of KSNAF SFP is to positively impact family

bonding, communication, and caregiver supervision in a way that reflects community cultural values. KSNAF also facilitates cross-systems collaboration and infrastructure development to build culturally sensitive and trauma-informed capacity across agencies who provide services to Native American families affected by substance abuse and involved or at-risk of involvement with child welfare systems.

KSNAF will start two virtual SFP groups in the fall. To learn more or find out a family's eligibility, contact Michael Steddum:

(816)527-7459 or
msteddum@kvc.org

To learn more about KSNAF, go to
www.socwel.ku.edu/ksnaf.



Maria Fairman (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, PBPN), Project Manager and Marcus Buchanan (Cherokee), SFP Group Leader