

# YOUTH IN TRANSITION: IMPROVING OUTCOMES THROUGH COLLABORATION & CONNECTING THE DOTS

4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference “An Informed System of Care”

# Session Outcomes

- Collective Impact
- Children's Cabinet
- Governor's Coordinating Council
- Aging Out of Foster Care & Risk of Homelessness
- IPPEYH Strategic Plan
- How to Connect Locally

Stanford SOCIAL  
INNOVATION REVIEW

## Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work



# Collective Impact

LARGE-SCALE SOCIAL CHANGE REQUIRES BROAD CROSS-SECTOR COORDINATION, YET THE SOCIAL SECTOR REMAINS FOCUSED ON THE ISOLATED INTERVENTION OF INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS.

BY JOHN KANIA & MARK KRAMER

*Illustration by Martin Jarrie*

The scale and complexity of the U.S. public ed  
thwarted attempted reforms for decades. Ma

# Collective Impact

- Common Agenda
  - ▣ All participants must agree on the primary goals
- Shared Measurement
  - ▣ Agree on ways success will be measured and reported
- Mutually Reinforced Activities
  - ▣ Each stakeholder's efforts must fit into an overarching plan
- Continuous Communications
  - ▣ Meetings need to happen regularly with a structured agenda
- Backbone Support Organization

# The Virginia Children's Cabinet



- Established by Executive Order 21
- To “develop and implement a comprehensive policy agenda related to the education, health, safety, and well-being of youth throughout the Commonwealth”
- Subset of the Governor’s Cabinet, with goal of internally aligning agency priorities and programs
- Focus is on prenatal through age 21

# **Children's Cabinet Structure**



- **Leadership**

- Co-Chaired by Secretary of Education Anne Holton and Secretary of Health and Human Resources Bill Hazel

- **Membership**

- Lt. Governor Ralph Northam
- First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe
- Secretary of Commerce & Trade Maurice Jones
- Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security Brian Moran

# **Children's Cabinet Priorities**



Executive Order 21 establishes five priority areas for the Children's Cabinet:

## **1. Beyond the barriers.**

- Schools in high-poverty communities face numerous systemic societal barriers

## **2. Raising the foundation.**

- High quality early child care, increased access to pre-K, and educational programs

## **3. Access to basics.**

- Access to healthcare, housing, and proper nutrition

# **Children's Cabinet Priorities**



## **4. Triumph over transitions.**

- Services for youth who are transitioning out of Virginia's juvenile justice, mental health, and foster care systems

## **5. Working parents, building families.**

- Policies and services that encourage workforce development efforts for parents through education, credential training, career development, and employment

# Creating a Children's Agenda

- Stakeholder Input
  - State Agencies
  - Community Organizations
  - Advocates
- Community Outreach
  - *Taking the Cabinet on the Road*
- Strategic Plan
  - Casey Family Programs



# Triumph Over Transitions

# Housing Stability

# **Governor McAuliffe Issues Executive Order 32**

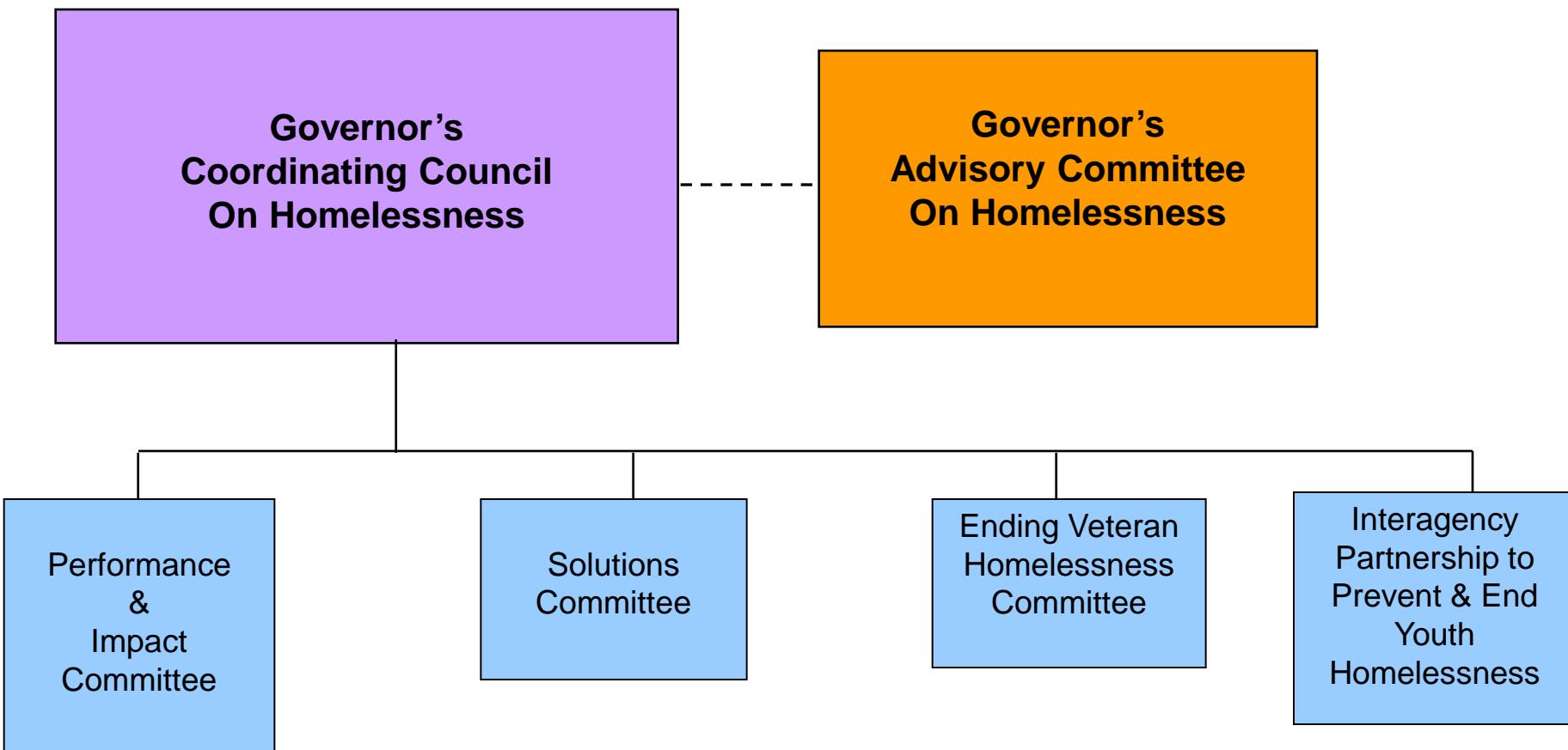
- Virginia's Housing Policy Agenda
- Purpose of the Housing Policy Agenda:  
Identify & implement actions to enable quality, affordable housing which will strengthen families and communities and foster economic growth

# Virginia's Housing Policy Agenda

## □ Key Components

- Prioritize the most urgent areas of housing & homeless program needs
- Offer advise and recommendations that address:
  - Homelessness, particularly among veterans, young adults and children
  - Rapid re-housing strategies
  - Housing opportunities for individuals with disabilities and special needs
  - Appropriate housing options for an aging demographic

# **Governor's Initiative on Homelessness**



# **Successful Transitions**



- Department of Social Services and Department of Juvenile Justice Collaboration
- Fostering Connections
- Interagency Partnership to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness

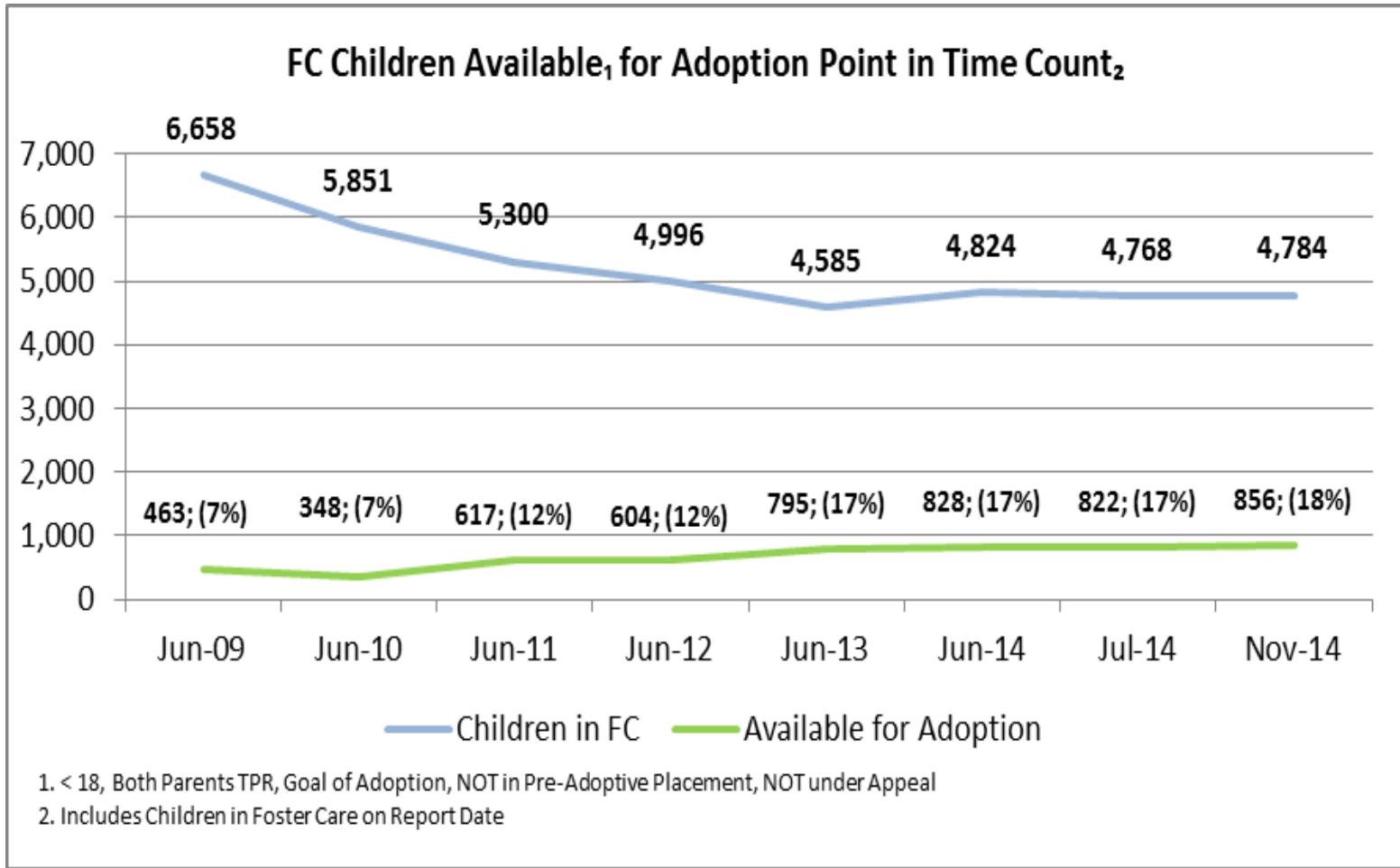
# DSS & DJJ Collaboration

- Issue
  - DJJ and DSS have identified a gap in the continuum of services for juveniles in foster care who are committed to DJJ and have worked with stakeholders to identify solutions.
- Purpose of the MOA
  - To identify the roles and responsibilities of the locally operated department of social services (LDSS) and DJJ
  - To serve the best interest of juveniles who are committed to DJJ and who were in the custody of LDSS immediately prior to commitment

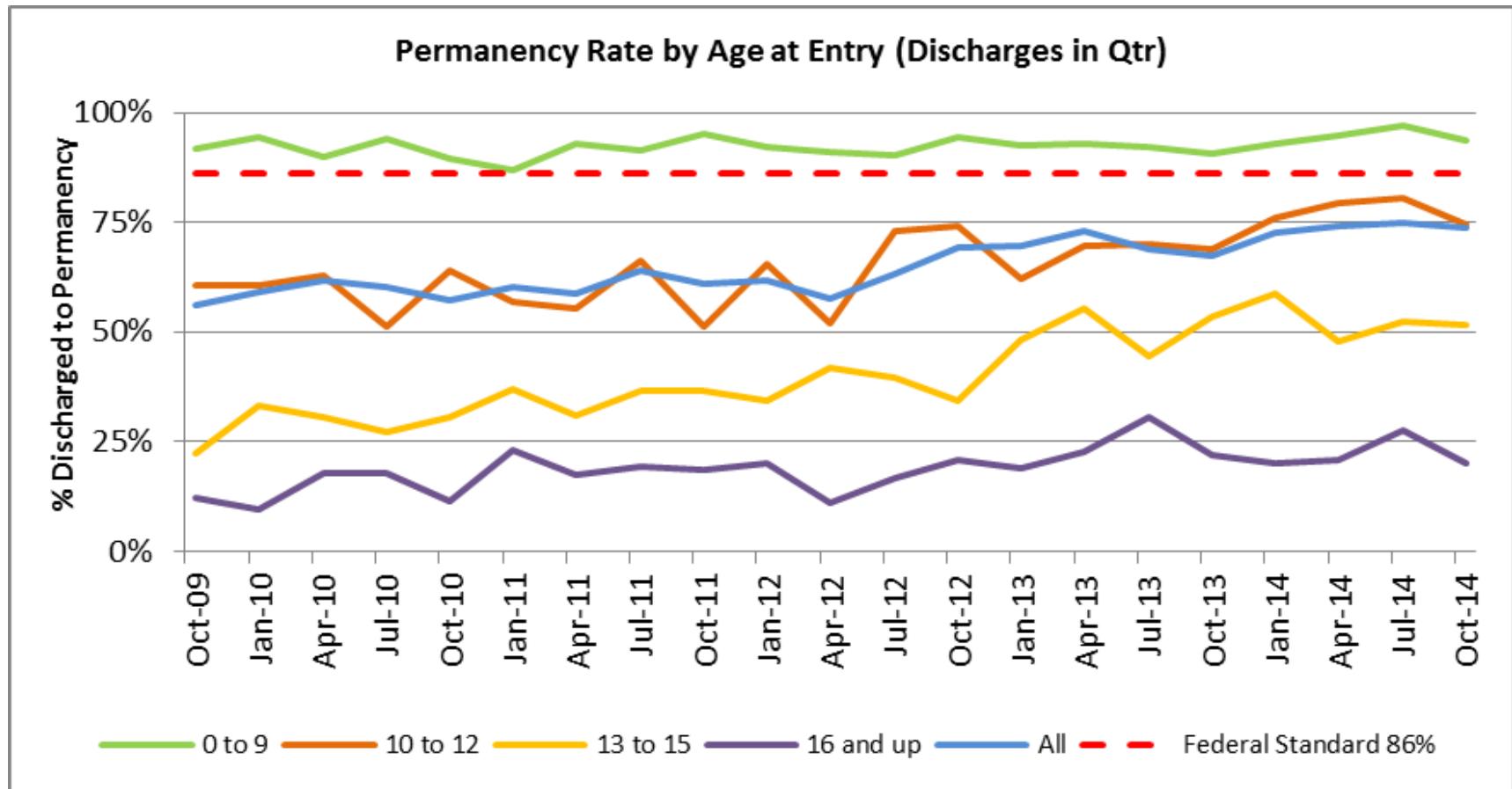
# Fostering Connections

- Movement to extend Foster Care and Adoption Assistance to age 21
- Age of independence is closer to the late 20's than 18
- Worse outcomes for children aging out of foster care including higher rate of homelessness, criminal activity, psychiatric hospitalizations, earlier pregnancies and reliance on the public welfare system
- Lower rates of graduation from high school or any higher education setting
- Significantly lower annual incomes

# Foster Care and Adoption Profile



# Permanency Rates





# **INTERAGENCY PARTNERSHIP TO PREVENT & END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

# Preventing & Ending Youth Homelessness

## Mission

To leverage state resources more effectively; maximize the effectiveness of state services and resources for youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness; and realize efficiencies through enhanced coordination and shared resources among state agencies.

# **Preventing & Ending Youth Homelessness**

## **Vision**

A community where no youth is homeless and every youth is supported by stable housing, permanent connections, education or employment and social and emotional well-being



# Strategic Plan

<b>Paul McWhinney, Chair</b>	Department of Social Services
<b>Pam Kestner</b>	Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources
<b>Kathy Robertson</b>	Department of Housing and Community Development
<b>Anna Antell</b>	Office of Comprehensive Services
<b>Nichele Carver</b>	Department of Housing and Community Development
<b>Susie Clare</b>	Office of Comprehensive Services
<b>Jackie Cowan</b>	United Methodist Home
<b>Bruce Cruser</b>	Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Service
<b>Ashley Harrell</b>	Department of Medical Assistance Services
<b>Lelia Hopper</b>	Court Improvement Program – Supreme Court
<b>Kelly King Horne</b>	Homeward
<b>Malcom King</b>	Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
<b>Michelle Kirby</b>	Office of the Secretary of Education
<b>Makita Lewis</b>	Department of Social Services
<b>Janet Lung</b>	Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
<b>Christie Marra</b>	Virginia Poverty Law Center
<b>Letha Moore-Jones</b>	Department of Social Services
<b>Melissa O'Neil</b>	Department of Criminal Justice Services
<b>Pat Popp</b>	Project HOPE /William & Mary
<b>Allyson Roberts</b>	Great Expectations/Virginia Community College System
<b>Erika Schmale</b>	Homeward
<b>Michael Shank</b>	Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
<b>Terri Stott</b>	Department of Juvenile Justice
<b>Rachel Strawn</b>	Great Expectations/Virginia Community College System
<b>Kimberly Tucker</b>	St. Joseph's Villa
<b>Mary "Alex" Wagaman</b>	VCU-School of Social Work
<b>Amy Woolard</b>	Voices for VA's Children

# Strategic Plan 2015-2017



## Target Population

*Low income young people, ages 14-24, who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless. This target population includes those youth involved in foster care or juvenile justice systems. It may also include youth who are not enrolled in or at risk of dropping out of an educational institution.*

# Core Outcomes



- Stable Housing
- Permanent Connections
- Education & Employment
- Social-emotional well-being

# Definitions of Homelessness

## HUD

A person is considered homeless only when s/he lives:

- On the street,
- In a place not meant for human habitation (e.g. cars, campsites, and abandoned buildings), in an emergency shelter,
- In transitional or supportive housing (for people coming from streets or shelter), or
- In any of the above places prior to entering a hospital/institution for short-term (30 days or less).

A person is also considered homeless if he/she is being

- Evicted within a week from a private dwelling, or
- Discharged within a week from an institution where they stayed long term, 31 days or more, and a housing plan is not provided as part of discharge planning.

## McKinney-Vento Act

- Homeless children are "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." The act provides examples of children who would fall under this definition:
  - Children and youth sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason
  - Children and youth living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations
  - Children and youth living in emergency or transitional shelters
  - Children and youth abandoned in hospitals
  - Children and youth awaiting foster care placement
  - Children and youth whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc)
  - Children and youth living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations
  - Migratory children and youth living in any of the above situations

# **Goal 1**



**Increase stable Housing for  
Youth who are or at risk of  
Experiencing Homelessness**

# OBJECTIVES

- Identify youth who are experiencing homelessness or at risk homelessness
- Identify housing options and relevant best practices
- Ensure every youth exiting foster care or juvenile justice has a verified discharge/ transition plan for permanent housing for at least six months post exit
- Implement best practice to meet the housing needs of the target population
- Develop strategies for working with youth with unique barriers to housing, including but not limited to, undocumented youth, LGBT youth, and youth with legal barriers to accessibility. (e.g. housing barrier crimes, poor credit reports, etc.)
- Provide youth with information about their housing rights

# **Goal 2**



**Build and Enhance Permanent  
Connections for the Target  
Population**

# OBJECTIVES

- Assess fidelity of Virginia's child services practice model
- Improve support and training across disciplines
- Through the transition plans of the Virginia Department of Social Services and the Department of Juvenile Justice enhance non-system natural supports (coaches, teachers, extended family, etc.)
- Support foster care to age 21

# **Goal 3**



**Increase Access to and Success  
in Education and Employment  
for the Target Population**

# OBJECTIVES

- Incorporate peer support and outreach, to promote education and employment
- Create *Youth on the Move* social media package (website with apps)
- Educate stakeholders and service providers on resources
- Identify corporate sponsorship and apprenticeship opportunities for job training and placement

# OBJECTIVES

- Establish Single Points of Contact (SPOC)s at institutions of higher education
- Coordinate with “mainstream” workforce systems and private employers
- Identify best practices that address barriers to employment for homeless LGBTQ youth, youths with criminal records, and youths at increased risk due to immigration status
- Explore expanding Great Expectations to serve youth identified as experiencing homelessness, or at risk of homelessness including those identified by local McKinney-Vents Liaisons

# **Goal 4**



**Increase Social and Emotional  
Functioning of the Target  
Population**

# OBJECTIVES

- Weave strengths and evidence based practices across agencies (system focus)
- Train Workforce with renewed focus on strengths and evidence based on practice
- Developing, supporting, and empowering youth resiliency through youth engagement, training and skill development

# Connecting Locally

- IPPEYH Work Group Participation
- Involvement in Continuum of Care (CoC)
- Project Hope
- Great Expectations
- Other Ideas?
- Article: *Families at the Nexus of Housing and Child Welfare* – November 2014, First Focus; State Policy Advocacy & Reform Center

[Nexus of Housing and Child Welfare](#)

# Contact

**Pamela Kestner, MSW**

Special Advisor on Families, Children and Poverty  
Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources

[pamelakestner@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:pamelakestner@governor.virginia.gov)

**Paul D. McWhinney, MSW, ACSW, MAPA**

*Deputy Commissioner for Programs*

Virginia Department of Social Services

[Paul.mcwhinney@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:Paul.mcwhinney@dss.virginia.gov)



# Questions & Answers