

The National Center for Adoption Competent Mental Health Services

Improving mental health outcomes for children and families who have experienced the child welfare system by building bridges between child welfare and mental health systems.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) awards a five-year grant to the Center for Adoption Support and Education (CASE) to launch the first-ever National Center for Adoption Competent Mental Health Services (the Center).

The Center will:

- 1 Build bridges to strengthen collaboration between child welfare and mental health systems to improve availability and accessibility of adoption competent mental health services
- 2 Deliver on-site tailored intensive technical assistance to six sites per year, provided by a team of subject matter experts

Selection for intensive TA sites will happen one of two ways:

- STTs can self-refer by reaching out to The Center Director Mary Wichansky wichansky@adoptionssupport.com
- The Center will identify and proactively outreach to promising prospective child welfare TA sites based on capacity and readiness

- 3 Provide access to a dynamic national knowledge hub for dissemination and mobilization of knowledge to improve collaboration between child welfare and mental health systems and increase the awareness about and delivery of adoption competent MH services, website launching January 2024!

This knowledge hub will connect users to:

- ➔ **Universal services:** Access to a diverse collection of information and resources such as podcasts, webinars, and toolkits to support adoption competence, promote equity, and engage youth and families designed to improve practice
- ➔ **Peer-to-peer services:** Engagement with peer groups to learn about how other STTs are improving systems collaboration and coordination of adoption competent services

- 4 Create sustainable systems change that benefits youth and families impacted by foster care, adoption, and guardianship

This Center is designed to build upon the National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI) by increasing the utilization of the NTI training within mental health systems and leveraging existing partnerships to increase the competency and capacity of mental health practitioners. All Center work will be informed by a race equity lens and guided by individuals with lived experience.

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The Center Partners: The Baker Center for Children and Families, FosterClub, the Family Run Executive Director Leadership Assoc. (FREDLA), the National Adoption Assoc. (NAA), PolicyWorks, and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Center on Children, Families, & the Law (CCFL).

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