

## Imagine Different Family Life Facilitator Pilot Project (draft)

### Introduction

This pilot project will demonstrate the feasibility of a strategy to assist children with disabilities to move from institutional care to family living. Through implementation of a small scale project with limited staff and a small caseload, this project will allow the Imagine Different Coalition to implement and refine a model demonstrating the efficacy of a Family Life Facilitator in finding family-based alternatives for children from birth to 21 years of age who are currently residing in institutional settings. Family Life Facilitators will reach out to families of children living in congregate care settings to help them to identify and address barriers to bringing their children home. In cases in which children are not able to return to their families of origin the Family Life Facilitator will work with their families to find another family living arrangement for the child.

### Role of the Family Life Facilitator

The specific and focused goal of the Family Life Facilitator is to achieve family life for children with disabilities currently living in congregate care facilities. The Family Life Facilitator encourages and assists families to find solutions to problems that prevent their child from living with a family, either their own or another family. The Family Life Facilitator is similar to but different from service coordinators, support coordinators, or case managers. A Family Life Facilitator serves a time-limited function, beginning with engaging with a family and soliciting their interest in pursuing family living for their child and phasing out once transition of the child from a facility to a family home has been accomplished and the family is well-connected with ongoing service providers. The Family Life Facilitator terminates contact with the family when on-going supports have been put in place. The Family Life Facilitator works directly with families who want to have their child return to their own home. If a family wants to pursue an alternate family arrangement for their child, the Family Life Facilitator works with the family and the service system to recruit an alternate family, assure a good match with the child's needs and their family's preferences, and assure supports through transitioning planning. (See attachments for additional details.)

### Organizational Auspices for the Project

The project will be implemented by a non-profit organization in collaboration with a state agency using a memorandum of understanding to outline roles and responsibilities.

### Geographic Location of the Project

The pilot project will be located in an area with a population base large enough to ensure a sufficiently large participant pool. In addition, the area selected will include several congregate care facilities from which children and families could be recruited. Location of the project may also be based on funding for the project which is specific to a geographic area.

### Program Administration

A contract will be developed with a not-for-profit agency to hire and oversee Family Life Facilitators and provide administrative services and clerical support (e.g. salaries and benefits for project staff, fiscal accountability, case documentation and data collection).

### Project Staff

Full time project staff will include two Family Life Facilitators one of whom will also act as the Project Manager. The Lead Family Life Facilitator will provide support and supervision for the second Family Life Facilitator. A consultant will be retained to assist in developing a program evaluation strategy and structure.

### Budget

Approximate annual budget for the Pilot Project will be \$200,000. Budget will include salary and benefits for the Program Manager @ \$85,000, and Family Life Facilitator @ \$80,000; transportation reimbursement @ \$10,000; contracted project evaluation services @ \$10,000; and administrative support services @ \$15,000.

### Caseload Size

Family Life Facilitators for the pilot project will carry a mixed-intensity caseload of 15 to 25 children and families.

### Child Identification

Children will be identified through partnership(s) with one or more congregate care facilities or from a list of children living in congregate care settings to be provided by the relevant State agency.

### Family Participation

Family participants will be identified through outreach, engagement, exploration, and selected based on their willingness to consider an alternative to their child's current congregate placement.

### Program Activities

The process of work with the child and family will include family identification and engagement and connection to resources as appropriate. Contact with the family will be in person and by telephone and email.

### Project Evaluation

Project evaluation design will be developed with support from the contracted consultant. At a minimum, data will be collected on child and family characteristics, the number, type and duration of contacts with each child and family over the life of the case, other activities performed by the Family Life Facilitator, and outcomes for each child.

### Project Duration

The pilot project will last for 18 months to 2 years.

## Attachments

Family Life Facilitator job description

Comparison between Family Life Facilitator role and service coordination

Contractor and state agency roles