

MiFAMILY STRONGER TOGETHER NEWS

MiFamily, Stronger Together is MDHHS' approach to a prevention-oriented child well-being system.

MiFamily, Stronger Together comprises the efforts of all MDHHS employees, Tribal governments, and stakeholders that are undertaken to preserve, strengthen and ensure success for Michigan children and families, and to move us from a reactive "child welfare" system to a proactive "child well-being" system.

The name MiFamily, Stronger Together was chosen by our parents with lived experience in Michigan's child welfare system as a representation of what occurs when families can access and receive services to support their needs in a true prevention framework.

There are a set of efforts currently underway to support our movement towards a prevention-oriented system. Those efforts include:

- Developing an understanding of staff roles within the prevention service continuum.
- Revisions to the maltreatment type definitions.
- Centralized Intake transformation (Structured Decision Making intake tool and development of a prevention pathway from Centralized Intake).
- Implementation of new safety and risk assessments.
- Expansion of our prevention service continuum (FFPSA IV-E Prevention).

In this issue of MiFamiy, Stronger Together we offer an overview of "Motivational Interviewing Implementation" and "Honoring Juneteenth".

Contact Us:

MDHHS-FFPSAPrevention@michigan.gov

MDHHS-InHomeBureauCommunications@michigan.gov

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Motivational Interviewing	2
Honoring Juneteenth.....	3

Contact Us

Mailbox

[MDHHS-
FFPSAPrevention@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-FFPSAPrevention@michigan.gov)

Mailbox

[MDHHS-
InHomeBureauCommunications
@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-InHomeBureauCommunications@michigan.gov)



Motivational Interviewing—A Transformational Opportunity

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a well-supported, evidence-based practice that MDHHS has incorporated into the agency's FFPFA Title IV-E Prevention Program Plan. MDHHS acknowledges that families involved in child welfare frequently experience a feeling of power differential. MI is designed to increase and improve engagement and willingness to change behaviors with the goal of keeping families together when otherwise the children are at risk of needing out-of-home care.

The MI trainings are intended to equip caseworkers with improved communication skills, allowing for a greater ability to partner with families in developing their unique service/prevention plans, crafting strategies to meet their needs, identifying realistic personalized goals, and achieving those goals. Supervisors and program managers will also be a critical part of the success of MI as they will coach and support their staff as they effectively utilize the new skill set.

MDHHS is committed to the successful implementation and delivery of MI techniques in child welfare. The state's training plan includes a broad set of child welfare staff, including but not necessarily limited to: program managers, supervisors, Foster Care – both public and private agency staff (not Child Caring Institution (CCI) staff), Child Protective Services (CPS) investigators, CPS ongoing case managers, prevention case managers, adoption staff – private agency, Post Adoption Resource Center staff, licensing – both public and private agency staff, Michigan Youth Opportunity Initiative (MYOI) staff, Family Preservation contracted staff, Tribal partners, Purchase Of Service (POS) monitors when they have direct case management assignments for a child(ren).

The training plan is based on job title. Although the trainings are lengthy, they are extremely beneficial and helpful to understand the dynamics of MI, and how it can assist with our MDHHS priorities.

Implementation considerations that will impact various roles upon completion of the training:

Caseworkers - Learn and implement new MiSACWIS documentation requirements on "How to add a prevention record." This is necessary for the State of Michigan to claim Title IV-E funds for the MI work being completed. Begin utilizing MI skills with families. Coordinate with a supervisor to demonstrate utilization of skills.

Supervisors - Utilize MI skills during interactions with staff. Observe and coach staff on use of new skills. Begin using the new MiTEAM Fidelity tool.

Program Managers - Model a positive outlook on integrating MI into daily interactions. Support supervisors in the implementation and facilitate learning groups for supervisors in the ongoing development and improvement of MI and coaching skills over time.

Training Survey Comments

"I really found the training relevant and useful in both my professional and personal life. It provided a clear understanding of where we may be missing out sometimes when trying to promote change. A simple missed statement which could have otherwise changed someone's directional course."

"This training was awesome, and I am so glad that more staff are getting it. It is so beneficial for us as workers to look at the way we talk to people and understand the benefit of changing our language to help elicit the change."

"I truly enjoyed this training. It helped me see what aspects of motivational interviewing I already used daily and I cannot wait to incorporate the other aspects into my day-to-day correspondence with the clients."

"I came to this class dreading having to sit through three days of this. It was engaging and interactive and I feel like I can really use some of this even in my personal life."

"This will be highly effective to use in my position. It will allow me to be more engaging with my staff and with clients."

“Juneteenth to me means communication is key. Juneteenth shows me that sharing resources and information is important to the work that I do because I never know whose life, I may change by sharing information.” Andrea Edwards – St. Clair County

HONORING JUNETEENTH

This June, we would like to take a moment to celebrate a very important day in American history: Juneteenth.

Juneteenth is a holiday that marks the end of slavery in the United States. In 1863, during the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared more than 3 million enslaved Black people living in the Confederate states to be free. However, it was not until two years later that word of this proclamation reached enslaved Black people in Texas. On June 19, 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas and spread awareness to the state’s African American residents, that slavery had been abolished. Upon receiving this news, former enslaved African Americans immediately began to celebrate with prayer, feasting, songs, and dance. The following year on June 19, the first official Juneteenth celebration took place in Texas. This original observance of Juneteenth included prayer meetings, the singing of spiritual songs, and wearing of new clothes as a way of representing this newfound freedom.

Celebrations to commemorate this day of freedom have continued across the United States into the 21st century that include prayer and religious services, speeches, educational events, family gatherings, and festivals with music, food, and dancing. Since 1980, various states have declared Juneteenth as a state holiday. As of June 17, 2021, Juneteenth is now recognized as a federal holiday after President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law.

While this wonderful occasion is honored throughout our nation, this day holds personal meaning to many of our State of Michigan employees. Here are some of the personal expressions from our staff across the state on what Juneteenth means to them:

“Our people are free!!! It is a celebration of new beginnings that our ancestors fought so hard for. To recognize that our people matter, and we belong. For people to embrace Black culture as a whole and celebrate our contributions to society. I am happy to say Happy Juneteenth. This is a day Black culture is supported, acknowledged, rejuvenated, praised, and encouraged to fight on!” Shari Vines - Kalamazoo County

“What Juneteenth means to me is the importance of recognizing the commemoration of the 13th Amendment in abolishing slavery, this gives an opportunity for people to become educated and work toward the goal of equity. Also, as a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., it makes me proud that Dr. Opal Lee who is also a member of Zeta, played a key role in Juneteenth becoming a federal holiday.” April Newing – Wayne County

“Juneteenth is a celebration for me, it celebrates the end of my ancestor’s enslavement. Where freedom was not so free, but it broke them from the shackles that were bound to their feet and gave them a fresh start. Juneteenth is a reminder that although my ancestors endured so much, they are the only reason I am where I want to be today, and not where society chose me to be.” Shynequa Williams - Kent County

“Being the child of a strong, Black, Atlanta, Georgia-born father, and an even stronger, White, Marquette, Michigan-born mother, I could not be prouder of my race and the opportunities it has afforded me in life. However, if we remain honest, just because slavery was abolished, does not mean systemic racism ended. We are still working toward racial and economic justice in this country and by celebrating Juneteenth, it allows us to celebrate the freedoms for African Americans and provides a promise of hope.” Lesley Keyton – Central Office

“Juneteenth is dedicated to celebrating the freedom of enslaved people during Civil War Era America; for me as a privileged, white woman, however, it is a day I have come to critically reflect upon how, despite the ratification of the 13th Amendment, racism and legal enslavement continue too today. Juneteenth drives my commitment to be an active member of our Equitable Practices and Accountability Team (EPAT), a group vital to our education and cultural change, dedicated to anti-racism within St. Clair and Sanilac Counties. Juneteenth is a reminder to continuously educate myself, my family, and other employees, promote courageous conversations through a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens, and develop ways to advocate and elevate the voices of People of Color around me with hope they will lead to change.” Tabitha Jenson – Sanilac County

“Early in my CRC career, a co-worker sent me an e-mail asking if I had anything planned for Juneteenth. I replied asking, “what’s Juneteenth”? My co-worker explained that Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 did not automatically release all the slaves, slaves in Union states were still in slavery. Until June 19, 1865, when the last state of the Confederacy proclaimed freedom for enslaved people of Texas. I was embarrassed, humbled, and somewhat ashamed that I was completely unaware of this important date and celebration of such. So, what does it mean to me today, the end of slavery in the United States = FREEDOM, also the need for continuing education on cultures other than my own.” Misty Wojnarowicz – St. Clair & Sanilac County

“Juneteenth reminds me of just how recent slavery was and how freedom does not come easily. This holiday is a reminder and call for all to continue the fight for freedom and justice for all people. This country has made a step in the right direction, but there is much more work to be done.” Therese Mancini – Huron, Lapeer, & Tuscola County

To echo the voices of these MDHHS staff, we celebrate this day of freedom with you, and encourage everyone to take time to not only celebrate, but also reflect on both our personal and collective responsibilities to ensure that all citizens experience the true freedom that was declared on this day.

Happy Juneteenth!