



**Atlantic Coast Child Welfare  
Implementation Center**

*Partners for Change*

Greetings Child Welfare Leaders,

As you know the Atlantic Coast Child Welfare Implementation Center (ACCWIC) began operations in October 2008. We have received replies from most of you as a result of our earlier correspondence introducing ACCWIC and announcing the upcoming **Regional Forum - "Navigating Change"** in Atlanta on March 17-19. This forum will give you an opportunity to hear about AACWIC, the National Child Welfare Training and Technical Assistance Network, and successful child welfare systems change reforms from across the country. The Forum will also provide you with information and technical assistance on preparing your applications for implementation projects.

In preparation for your participation in the forum we are asking you to provide the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of your 3 delegates for this forum by **February 16, 2009**. We will then contact these individuals directly to help them arrange their travel plans. (Please send these names to Ms. Dawntrell Thomas, [dthomas@ssw.umaryland.edu](mailto:dthomas@ssw.umaryland.edu)). You may call Ms. Thomas at 410-706-3014 with any questions.

To help us tailor the sessions at the forum, we are asking you to answer 5 brief questions and submit your answers to us by **March 6<sup>th</sup>**. Your answers (described as a concept paper in the attached documents), will help you begin to frame your possible submission of an application for an implementation project. Then, when we meet in Atlanta, we can help you fine tune your idea even further. Even if you prefer to submit your idea for a project in a future year, we ask you to go through this exercise in preparation for the forum so that sessions can be tailored to your interests. We have scheduled two technical assistance calls to respond to questions about the concept papers. Please dial in on either of the following dates/times:

**2-17-09, 2pm Eastern**

Toll Free Number: 866-836-2493

Participant Pass code: 6925495

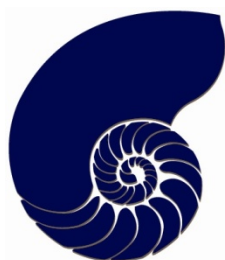
**2-20-09, 1pm Eastern**

Toll Free Number: 866-836-2603

Participant Pass code: 8230488

I look forward to meeting you in Atlanta. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at [cfisher@ssw.umaryland.edu](mailto:cfisher@ssw.umaryland.edu).

Cathy E Fisher, MSW, LCSW-C  
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410-706-1442  
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# **Atlantic Coast Child Welfare Implementation Center**

*Partners for Change*

A member of the National Child Welfare Training and Technical Assistance Network, a service of the Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## **Atlantic Coast Child Welfare Implementation Center Overview of Implementation Project Process**

February 11, 2009

## **ACCWIC: Background**

### **WHO:**

The **Atlantic Coast Child Welfare Implementation Center** (ACCWIC) is one of five Child Welfare Technical Assistance Implementation Centers established by the Department of Health and Human Services, (HHS), Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau (CB) in October 2008. The ACCWIC provides coordinated, individualized, intensive technical assistance to States, Tribes, and the District of Columbia's public child welfare agencies. These services are delivered in collaboration with National Resource Centers, other members of the National Child Welfare Training and Technical Assistance Network (T/TA Network), and the CB. The ACCWIC serves Region III (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia) and Region IV (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee).

### **WHY:**

The ACCWIC actively partners with public child welfare agencies (CWA) in the implementation of projects to improve the quality and effectiveness of child welfare services for children, youth, and families. Implementation Projects will be supported for a minimum of 2 years to assist jurisdictions in their efforts to reform child welfare services and systems. The ACCWIC also supports Peer-to-Peer networking across jurisdictions to facilitate the active exchange of information about promising child welfare system strategies and practices.

### **BENEFITS:**

States and Tribes know their areas of need, particularly those areas in which efforts are made to achieve measurable and sustainable improvements in their child welfare systems. However, resources and support are in scarce supply in our current environment. The AACWIC wants to harness and focus the training, technical assistance, and support available to help States and Tribes with new initiatives or ongoing efforts to improve outcomes for families and children. Peer to Peer networking opportunities will provide States and Tribes with valuable information that can assist them with and support the development of promising child welfare practices.

## Implementation Projects

The primary mechanism for providing training and technical assistance for a child welfare agency is through implementation projects. These projects provide an opportunity for the agency to work closely with the ACCWIC to develop implementation projects with clear action steps toward achieving measurable outcomes that contribute to successful systems change. Projects may pursue systemic change within a child welfare system or across multiple systems that are integral to successful child welfare practice. The ACCWIC will enhance existing services of the T/TA Network by providing long-term, coordinated, individualized, and intensive technical assistance.

Support (financial and technical assistance) will be provided for two types of projects in the first round: (1) **Change Management Implementation Projects** and (2) Individualized Implementation Projects which focus on **Family and/or Youth Engagement**. The goals and expectations of each project type are described below.

### **Goals for Both Types of Implementation Projects:**

1. Implement core strategies to achieve sustainable systems change.
2. Improve the organization's culture, structure, policy, and/or practice.
3. Obtain measurable progress on relevant safety, permanency, and well-being indicators of system performance.

### **Project 1: Change Management Implementation Projects**

Change Management Implementation Projects (CMIPs) are intended to "meet child welfare agencies where they are" by providing the change management tools necessary for effective implementation and sustainability of systems or program change strategies *currently underway*. Many CWA already have active projects that have been initiated as part of their Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) or Program Implementation Plans (PIPs) that could benefit from tailored T/TA around implementation and change management. CMIPs focus on the systems change process. They are designed for a CWA with an active project that could benefit from technical assistance in implementing or sustaining systems change. CMIPs will draw on resources via the ACCWIC and T/TA Network to adopt sound methodologies for systems change, including assessment, goal development, strategic planning, change management, evaluation, and action planning. These projects will build upon and share the knowledge, skills, and experiences of CWA in improving outcomes for children, youth, and families.

### **Project 2: Individualized Implementation Projects: Family and/or Youth Engagement**

For the first cohort of projects, the area of focus for Individualized Implementation Projects (IIP) is centered on family and/or youth engagement and involvement. This focus is based upon a review of first and second round CFSR findings. This review identified Areas Needing Improvement for the outcome areas of promoting continuity of family relationships and connections for children (Permanency 2), and enhancing the capacity of families to care for their children's needs (Well-Being 1). The Children's Bureau Regional Offices and the ACCWIC Regional Advisory Board also helped to identify family and/or youth engagement as a priority in

these Regions. Individualized Implementation Projects are designed to assist States and Tribes in achieving sustainable systems change by implementing evidence-based or promising practices related to improving family and/or youth engagement and involvement. Families and youth are expected to share in the design and implementation of this project type.

### **CWA Expectations**

Agencies agree to:

- Develop a specific implementation strategy that incorporates best practices in implementation and systems change;
- Utilize the ACCWIC and the TTA Network for expertise in systems change in further developing, implementing, and sustaining respective projects;
- Work with the ACCWIC so that individualized and tailored T/TA can be provided to support its change goals;
- Participate in the Peer-to-Peer networking process and shared learning community;
- Engage in an open process that allows other jurisdictions within and outside of Regions III and IV to support and learn from its experiences;
- Participate in a tailored evaluation designed to track the activities and outcomes of the project; and
- Enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the ACCWIC and commit to working on a project for a period of at least 24 months.

### **Eligibility**

- Public child welfare agencies in Region III (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia) and Region IV (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee)
- Tribal child welfare agencies currently receiving Title IV-B funds

## Project Selection Process

### **Step 1 – February 11, 2009: Request for Concept Paper Distributed to CWA primary contacts**

This document will be distributed to eligible agencies to start the project selection process. Each CWA should brainstorm project ideas.

### **Step 2 – February 16, 2009 or February 20, 2009: Conference Calls to answer questions about the Concept Paper request**

CWA may join 1 hour calls established to answer questions about this request for concept papers. Please dial in on either of the following dates/times:

**2-17-09, 2pm Eastern**

Toll Free Number: 866-836-2493

Participant Passcode: 6925495

**2-20-09, 1pm Eastern**

Toll Free Number: 866-836-2603

Participant Passcode: 8230448

*Child welfare leaders may also request individual TA time to ask questions by contacting Ms. Dawntrell Thomas at 410-706-3014 or at [dthomas@ssw.umaryland.edu](mailto:dthomas@ssw.umaryland.edu)*

### **Step 3 – March 6, 2009: Concept Paper Due**

Brief concept papers are designed to assist each CWA in describing their proposed projects prior to the full application process. These concept papers are not scored. The ACCWIC will review concept papers to identify compatible training and technical assistance that could assist agencies in developing a full proposal. Concept papers will demonstrate the sense of agency need and the size and scope of proposed projects in this first round of funding.

### **Step 4 – March 17-19, 2009: Regional Forum - Opportunity for T/TA on Concept Paper and Proposals**

The ACCWIC will provide training and technical assistance to enhance capacity in proposal development. The Regional Forum in Atlanta (March 17-19) will host sessions that will assist participants in developing proposals; hands-on technical assistance will also be available. Request for Applications will be distributed by March 17, 2009. Additional technical assistance teleconferences also be scheduled to respond to inquiries related to the Request for Applications (dates and times to be announced).

**Step 3 – April 17, 2009: Written Applications Due**

Applications are designed to describe the plan of the proposed project. Applicants will be expected to outline the resources and activities necessary to achieve their targeted outcomes. Specific guidelines and criteria for evaluation will be included in the Request for Applications (provided at the Regional Forum in March).

**Step 4 – May 1, 2009: Independent Panel Review for all Applications**

Applications will be reviewed by selected members of the Regional Advisory Board and Region III and IV Regional Offices. To ensure impartiality, staff from the ACCWIC will not be involved in scoring proposals.

**Step 5 – May 8, 2009 – Selected Projects submitted to the Children’s Bureau (CB)**

The ACCWIC will submit scores and comments from the independent review panel to the CB with recommendations for selection. Selected projects will be notified upon CB approval.

**Step 6 – July 1, 2009 – Implementation Projects Begin**

Technical Assistance begins and Memorandum of Agreement negotiations are finalized.



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### Request for Implementation Project Concept Paper

Concept papers are the first step in the implementation project application process. Their primary function is to outline the general concept of the project—how it will operate and what it hopes to achieve. Please complete this concept paper if you plan to apply for an implementation project this year. Form fields will automatically expand to fit your text. Concept papers should be no more than two pages long. Completed concept papers should be emailed to Cathy Fisher at [cfisher@ssw.umaryland.edu](mailto:cfisher@ssw.umaryland.edu) by March 6, 2009.

#### Point of Contact Information

Agency  
Name  
Title  
Email  
Phone  
Address

This concept paper is for (check the category that you think fits best):

- Change Management Implementation Project
- Family Engagement Individualized Implementation Project
- Youth Engagement Individualized Implementation Project

1. Describe the area of focus for this systems change project and your reasons for focusing in this area. Include your assessment of your systems' readiness for this change.
2. Provide any background your agency has in implementing systems change in this area. Include successes and challenges and technical assistance from individuals or organizations.
3. Check the outcome(s) you hope to achieve through your project.
  - Child Safety
  - Permanency
  - Well-BeingProvide a brief description of why you believe your project will help your agency performance in this outcome area.
4. Describe the overall approach to the project, including key implementation strategies and partners.
5. Describe the most significant challenges to implementing the systems change and the strategies you will employ to address these challenges.