

From Data To Decisions: What Is Needed For Planning Public Services?

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Thomas Finnegan is executive director of Kaleidoscope, Inc. A 30-year-old child welfare agency, Kaleidoscope provides services to approximately 250 children in foster homes and approximately 60 young men and women living in supervised but independent living arrangements. Finnegan has more than 26 years of experience in social services, including roles in direct service, administration, management, litigation and consulting. The majority of his career was spent at the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, where he most recently served as the deputy chief of staff and chief of staff operations. In this position he was responsible for the conceptual design, planning and implementation of the DCFS System of Care for Seriously Emotionally-Disturbed Children and Youth.

Nancy La Vigne is director of the Urban Institute's Justice Policy Center. She is an expert on crime prevention and prisoner reentry and the founding director of the U.S. Department of Justice's Mapping and Analysis for Public Safety program. She joined the Justice Policy Center in 2001 as a senior research associate after six years at the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the research arm of the Justice Department, where she also was a special assistant to the assistant attorney general for justice programs during the Clinton administration. At the Urban Institute, she has overseen a groundbreaking study of prisoners returning to their communities and families. She received her doctorate in criminal justice from Rutgers University and is an associate editor of *Security Journal* and *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*.

Erwin McEwen is director of the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services. He has committed more than 20 years of service to youth and families in the state of Illinois at Kaleidoscope, DCFS, and Hull House and is a former child welfare administrator at Lakeside Community Committee where he oversaw four core child welfare programs. He holds an A.M. from the University of Chicago, School of Social Service Administration with a clinical concentration in family systems. He has been nationally recognized for his innovations and accomplishments and was named the 2008 Social Worker of the Year by the Illinois Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

Robert Goerge is a Chapin Hall research fellow with more than 20 years of research focused on improving the available information on children and families, particularly those who require specialized services related to abuse/neglect, disability, poverty, or mental illness. He developed Chapin Hall's pioneering Integrated Database on Children's Services in Illinois, which links the administrative data from multiple service agencies to provide a comprehensive picture of children's use of publicly provided or financed service programs. His work provides high quality information to policymakers to improve the programs serving children and their families. He received a Ph.D. from the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago. He is also cofounder of the International Society for Child Indicators.

Matthew Stagner is the executive director of Chapin Hall and a senior lecturer at the Irving B. Harris School of Public Policy Studies at the University of Chicago. Prior to joining Chapin Hall, he directed the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, and also served as director of the Division of Children and Youth Policy, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He is an expert on youth risk behaviors, child welfare services, and program evaluation. He holds a MPP from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and a Ph.D. from the Harris School of Public Policy Studies.