

Transcript

Hello and welcome to our session on an integrated and institutional approach to engaging families across maternal child health population domains.

My name is Heather Smith and I am the Title five Maternal Child Health Director in Kansas. I'm honored to be joined today by two with two amazing family leaders who daily serve as my motivator to keep expanding our bureau wide family and consumer engagement initiatives.

I can't say enough about these two women, but I'll start with some brief bios.

Cassandra has been married to her husband Tony, for 28 years.

They have two boys, Kayla, one who is 20, and Stephen, who is 12. Her boys who both have a diagnosis of autism as well as other medical needs, are her guiding force for all she does to advocate for children with special needs and their families in Kansas and across our nation.

Kate and her husband, Brian have three children Lyla, eight, Ella, seven, and Carter, seven. They fostered and adopted their two girls, and both have had some significant health challenges. Carter is their surprise biological son and has had some motor skill challenges as well. Her children are the reason Kate decided to start advocating for children and families in Kansas.

So thank you again for joining our session today.

We'd like to start by talking a little bit about why we believe that family and consumer partnership is so critical to the work we do for Title five and maternal child health programs. So families and consumers provide first hand knowledge and insight to areas that our program staff may not have considered, as well as suggestions on how to drive positive change for Kansans. There is a collective vision across our state agencies that serve children and families just to support systems and services that meet the basic needs of our families, which includes access to quality health care, education, social service systems, and community based resources. So our session today will share about how Title five in Kansas has integrated the family consumer engagement efforts across our systems. And some of the frameworks that have shaped our institutional approach. And that was established by the Kansas MCH program. So we'll start with our official definition, which is adapted from the Maternal Child Health Guidance. But in short, we believe that families and consumers should be active partners in their care education.

The access they receive and services they receive in the community, that means that they're active partners in planning, developing and evaluating those programs that they receive services from.

And it means that they are active partners with us and advocacy and policy needs.

And we believe this can only be done when we intentionally plan for this kind of partnership.

So in Kansas, we've established some core values and guiding principles. Our core, our core values assure we are maintaining our focus on prevention and wellness activities, addressing social determinants of health, supporting services across life course and addressing health equity and disparities. These four core values are our upstream approach to moving the needle on Title five measurements and outcomes. They're supported by our guiding values or guiding principles, which we believe are critical to accomplishing our goals and addressing the needs of our MCH populations. We know that we can't do what is needed without collaboration relationships without addressing our communities and the norms that they experience and engaging our families and consumers. And you can see through these guiding principles that there's a theme that's threaded throughout is really how we engage with others and how we assure others are part of the work that we do. We believe that nothing should be done in isolation or without the voice of those being served at the table. And as such, in our most recent needs assessment, we established a priority focus on assuring strength. Space supports and services are available to promote healthy families and relationships.

Our objectives within this priority are focused on increasing engagement across our programs and grantees and our external partnerships with increasing opportunities for families to be supported empowering and equipping family leaders to be involved in the work that we're doing and expanding access to quality and holistic care coordination services that can wrap around the family when and where they need it so we can provide quality and timely supports, build on their strengths, and create spaces for families to thrive. Ultimately, we cannot do this without the partnership of families we are working to support.

So I've shared a bit about the what family and consumer partnership means to assist within the Kansas Maternal Child Health Program. But I think what's more important is what does this mean to the families and consumers that we are serving? So without further ado, I'd like to pass this off to Cassandra and Kate and Cassandra.

Would you like to kick us off and share what this means for you?

Sure, Heather.

Family and Consumer Partnership is bringing families to the table and allowing them to have a voice in how programs and policies are implemented. If those who are determining programs and policies do not have life experience in the area they're working in, they will not know how their decisions are going to affect the families that they serve.

By having families at the table, they can hear directly from those families and modify their programming in order to serve them in the best way, best possible way.

Kate, what about you? Just to kind of echo what Cassandra said, you know, the same thing. You can't build a program and have it be successful for the families you serve unless you're asking the families what they need. So I think that's a very important part of the work and particularly what the bureau in Kansas has done.

So Thank you, ladies. Often we talk about family and consumer engagement, but what we've learned over the years in his work is that our parents and families partnership more than engagement

families want to have their voices heard. So engaging through input opportunities like surveys and focus groups and advisory councils are all great things.

But one thing we've learned is that it's about how we engage and how we utilize that input that results in that true partnership in our work is about mindset and planning, and it's about intentionality.

And that's it's taking that engagement to that next level. So this mindset not only allowed us to create a priority focused on supporting families with measurements that reflect reflect families recognizing their strengths and knowing that no matter what situation they are in, the challenges, they are up against the roadblocks that might be put in their way.

They know that they have strengths to draw on to help them through. So with that, we created a family and consumer partnership program as a critical component to our Title five work to really institutionalize this work across our bureau and our agency. For over a decade, the extent of our family and consumer engagement work was really focused on a family advisory council for the children with special health care needs population only. As time went on, we recognized that there were other opportunities and ways that we could do this.

So we have reframed the supporting engagement model for our family delegates transitioned to a robust leadership program.

We've expanded to a focus on peer supports, and recently expanded our family advisory council across all populations.

So we'll talk about each of these throughout the session today. But I'd love for you to hear more from Cassandra about how our families have felt the about the growth over the years, why they support the expanded efforts that we're embarking on and what opportunities they see in the future.

Thank you, Heather.

I'm excited about the growth of the Family Advisory Council, as we've seen with the special health care needs Council. There's a lot of potential for change for the better by expanding our council to cover the other domains.

It can only make positive changes for the families in Kansas. And if we're able to eventually add fathers and youth like we want to in the future, that will be the icing on the cake for our state.

We can make changes and do better for our families. Kate, do you have anything now just to echo what Cassandra said? You know, we've seen the council grow by five times more families than we had before. So that's so much more representation of families in Kansas for the MCH work. And we've also seen a lot of our parents that were in the special health care needs go to new work groups so that those families are still being represented in the other domains as well. So I think, you know, expanding has been a really great thing and a good opportunity for not

only families to you know, give their voice, but for the bureau to hear what families need and want in the programs that they're delivering.

Absolutely, Kate, thank you so much.

And that that's so critical for us at the agency to hear what families are wanting across all of those population domains, which is why we established the Family and Consumer Partnership Program. So not only to be able to hear from more families across the domains, but to also embark upon some activities and engagement opportunities with families in different areas of the state.

In different ways and across many of these areas that are listed on the screen. So we'll briefly touch on some of these activities throughout the presentation today.

But we will be talking a lot about the expansion of our Family Advisory Council. So before we talk about the programs, though, we feel like it's important to also share about how we got to this place. Like every other title across the country, we strive to root ourselves and standards, Evidence-Based Practices and quality focused efforts. So as such, we've come through many state and national frameworks that focus on the engagement and partnership of families and consumers. We we've identified these five key frameworks, each of them offering various components that may be valuable to the work that we do, but not necessarily any one that covers all of the components that we were looking for.

So as we mentioned, it's important for us.

And from what we hear from our families, that we're rooting ourselves in this quality, focused approach and so some of these standards are focused on sharing principles to live by.

Others are around specific strategies to reach a certain quality standard. And then some are resources to help us evaluate and assess the approach to the work.

So we'll touch on four of the five of these in our session today. The first of these is the framework on the levels of family engagement with Title five.

And this is something that came from AMCHP. And this particular framework for us is about engaging families to inform program or service planning, program design implementation, ongoing evaluation.

This is about elevating the voices of families in a variety of ways, meeting them where they are supporting their involvement in the work that we're doing in different capacities. And so each of these levels offers a different way to engage families, a different level of commitment from the families and a different level and a way to partner across the work.

And so this is really important and has really framed a lot of what we do So I'd like to pass it over to Kate, considering Kate once again to talk about why it's important to them that we've incorporated this into our work and what do they think it means for families So for me, I'm implementing these standards

particularly the National Support Network standards. It gives a good guidepost for where things should be, what family engagement should look like, so that programs are being true to serving their families in a way that their families need to be served. My hope is that we can expand this throughout our state to other agencies, but I'm thrilled that you know, the bureau is doing this now.

So, Cassandra, what are your thoughts So some individuals don't want to get involved and be a voice for this debate.

Some people would just want to sit back and do a survey. So the levels of engagement they are there to allow you to be as involved as you want to be so you can be at any at any start in the process. You can be one that just sits back and fills out a survey, or you could be one that's in the middle, or you could be at the leadership level. It's it's where you feel comfortable. And so we can we have that so that, you know, you can choose.

And I think that's the best part of it. And so we're not pushing anybody out of their comfort zone and they can they can make that choice, but we give them that option back to you have their things and that's absolutely right. Exactly why we wanted to create space for these conversations to happen at different levels.

That last framework was around doing that from a program design and implementation perspective. The next set of standards that I want to talk about, our Kansas

Family Engagement and partnership standards for early childhood And while these were established by early childhood partners for early childhood providers, there is much like there is a lot in here that public health and message partners can apply in our work. And these standards to us are more about that engagement on a one to one level, that one to one collaborative relationship that we have with those that we serve and becoming family partners with the families in the provision of individualized services and supports. So these view families as the foundation of their child's learning or in our case, their care and their and their ability to thrive. They views families as communicators around what they need and want for their child to thrive

and advocates and shared decision making and those kinds of things. And so this is really rooted into a lot of what we do and talk about when we think about person centered or family centered care and services.

And so these standards really align in that way.

The next set of standards are the standards of quality for family strengthening and support.

And in it, these set of standards were created and are promoted through the National Family Support Network. And really focus on that family centered strength space services, assuring families for having experience optimal outcomes.

These standards also cover how well programs support diverse populations and culturally respectful and mindful practices and how we evaluate the work that we're doing.

So these national standards we actually first learned about in 2019 and introduce them to our family advisory council as hey what do you guys think about this?

And unanimously they came back and said We want Title five in Kansas to adopt these and figure out how you're going to integrate these into the work that we do.

So they helped us kind of work through them.

We looked at them together in depth and they helped inform and draft a proposal on how we would incorporate these into our title five 2025 needs assessment process this most recent time and came Cassandra actually went. At that time we asked them to go for us to a certification training to learn more about them and bring them back to Kansas and tell us how they feel like we can incorporate these and this past year they took that the next step further and became trainers for these standards.

So really excited about bringing those in to Kansas. And Kay talked a little bit about the importance of why that is, but I want to pass it back to them as well to see if you have any other thoughts about how you feel it will make a difference for families or your vision of how we might go about doing this Thanks, Heather.

The standards of quality are critical for Kansas families. They're going to provide a framework for all of our partners to work under the same set of standards. Each program will know what is expected for the foundational quality of their program and what it will take to get to a higher quality program. This will only make our programs better for our Kansas families as we strive to implement the standards throughout our state. Kate, do you have anything else to say now? I think you covered it.

So to Heather

Thanks, ladies.

And so our last framework is around assessing family engagement as it relates to systems change.

And this came from family voices and is a really great way to think about our commitment as an agency and an organization and how well we are promoting and ensuring meaningful and sustainable family engagement is happening at that system level. And so we've talked about program level and individually, one on one and sets of standards.

But this really takes us up to that really big systems level.

And we're really trying to integrate this as well. So some of the the things that we'd like to hear also is really important to Title five is to hear from our families about how they feel evaluation and

assessment frameworks can support the work that we're doing and why it means something to those that we're serving.

So I'll pass it back to our lovely family leaders Yeah.

Heather, I think that without assessment, you don't know how to improve or to make improvements and for persons.

And so I think that's what's so critically important. And in order to move to having good programs you have to evaluate, assess and then form a formalized structure around making changes to improve programs for families think.

You know, it's it's critical to the work.

You can't do it without assessing and then making changes.

So because I agree, Kate, by evaluating and assessing our programs, it shows the commitment our programs have to making sure that they're doing what they need to engage our families. And then if during the assessment and evaluation period, a program would find that they're lacking and one of the four domains, they would be able to focus on that area and move forward with engaging more families Absolutely.

Thank you so much.

And you'll hear a little bit about how we're trying to incorporate some of these standards and these frameworks into some of the work in the program activities that we'll talk about here in a moment.

But now let's get into the details of some of our program components and how we have really tried to institutionalize what we're doing.

It is a work in progress.

We will talk about a couple of the bullet points that are on this slide for each of these areas.

But there is work happening to continue to expand and elevate that as time goes on as well.

So the first we'll talk about are advisory

opportunities and specifically the Family Advisory Council. And I'm going to pass this over to Cassandra to talk a little bit about the history of the council and where we've been And Q Heather. And so when we say Family Advisory

Council just started in 2008, it was some families and there were some youth.

And that started and they decided it was going to be a working group. So they worked through and initially and made some transition booklets. And then a couple of years later they revised the bylaws in the membership structure and at that point we worked

on our stories and wrote them out. And within those stories we created some white papers that were and to be used to choose provide them to providers because a lot of times providers don't know what we go through as raising and special children with special health care needs. And so we wanted them to know what the financial impact it was to have a child with special healthcare needs or the what it was like

for us to be a caregiver and and things like that. And and then the next year, we formed a work group so that we were specifically working in different projects. And so we had there showing how some of the projects now and then we moved into our big project and that was we were wanting to create a peer to peer support network. And it was because that is lacking.

Peer to peer support is one of the most important things.

And that was something that we had as part of a council.

We became a family because we knew what the others went through. And And one of the other things that we created was this trauma informed approach.

We wanted our programs to know about this. And trauma is so important to know about and understand. So we wanted to make sure that they had that knowledge and knew how to recognize it and knew how to help a child that had undergone some trauma. So going back to the peer support network, we

created a website that we can connect peers together, one that has life experience and then one that, you know, they may have just been recently diagnosed or one that, you know, just may have had their child may have had a diagnosis for a while, but they are just having a difficult time and need someone to talk to. So that is where and then we come to our expansion and Heather will talk more about that later. Kate what's really important about how Kansas Title five has built this program? It's not just about them as an agency it's about what they can offer back to their families and their family leaders that join the Family Advisory Council. So many of us as FAC members have experienced peer support with the other FAC members that, you know, are kind of like family for us.

And that's really important.

It's it's the space that Kansas Title five allows for us to build that support within

They're also very intentional in providing leadership, leadership, skill building, advocacy, training and growth opportunities so that we have a chance to be a part of something that will greatly impact families, communities

and the systems that we all engage with long term anxieties.

It is so exciting for me to see the growth of this Council over the years as Cassandra in Capel demonstrated, we went from a group that was focused in on one specific

population, and I'm excited to share with you kind of how we've re-imagined that and what we've expanded to that now moving forward.

And I think for anybody that knows me, I'm super passionate about this group, and it has been one of the best parts of my job over the last 12 years that I've been with the agency.

It is one of the most consistent and overwhelmingly positive activities that I feel like we've been able to do. But I think again, as team has demonstrated the impact it had on our work as huge the members of this council are the movers and shakers.

They produce tangible products like you talked about.

They've provided us insight and information to help us with policy recommendations.

And then just like Cassandra talked about and as you'll hear about a little bit more in a moment, they developed a program for our agency. So the families over the years have really helped us remain focused, driven and transparent in the work, especially as we've expanded and evolved to the special health care needs.

Program in our state.

But they keep us striving for better programing, better engagement opportunities, better partnership overall. And they really strive for innovation and encourage us to move forward, which is where we have come today with being able to expand. So even they were like, hey, we need more families here that don't have just special health care needs experience. But and we actually want to talk about the other stuff that's happening across the state for maternal child health and not just what's in our special health care needs.

We're all too.

And so that's why we kind of started this this discussion about expanding the council.

And we started talking with the existing Family Advisory Council members about what it would look like to expand to those broader to all age populations. They were on board immediately and worked with us to establish a new purpose, mission and vision that will work for all populations. And so a large portion of our meetings in 2020 after we went virtual due to the pandemic, really we're focused on reimagining what the council would look like and that we they and the agency felt really strongly about making sure we were aligned with other initiatives and activities. So we have the Kansas Maternal Child Health Council, which is our, our title five Professional and Partnership Council, and the group decided we wanted to align our purpose with that broader council as well. Align our mission with Title five and create this vision so that families and consumers are central to the programing and making sure that they're first and foremost our minds and what we do. And so like I said, 2020, they spent much of the year talking with us about what this looks like establishing new bylaws, creating a new structure.

And then we started transitioning at the end of 2020. So the special health care needs work group kind of launched their new work group and then we started and did a soft launch with all with additional work groups.

And then I'll talk about the different groups here in the second. But we also realized that we needed more members before we could really fully form into the new fact, the five new work groups. So halfway through 2021 we decided to engage in a project or an initiative while we focused on the recruitment for the work groups with developing out a family and consumer engagement toolkit, hearing from families in different capacities and in different ways, and helping us build out some of some other components of the Family and Consumer Partnership Program. And then we just launched our new structure just earlier this year in January.

So again, the Family Advisory Council was reimagined.

We launched five workgroups, one on each of the five core stage populations. We did split some of the work between with perinatal and then and put some of that work in the women maternal, which was focused on or is focused on all things for women before during and after pregnancy, and then things like postpartum care and things like that for moms who were putting their women maternal group and then our our perinatal at work that's focused on parents learning about infant health, safety and nutrition like safe sleep and breastfeeding were added to our early childhood group and that gave us the space also for our child group to focus on that six to 11 population. That so often gets kind of lost in a lot of our work and then our adolescent and special health care needs.

The work groups are really focused in on the priority work under our state action plan for those those priority areas and populations

So just to give you some sense as to our growth in December of 2020, we had ten active family advisory council members of all parents of children with special health care needs.

And today we have 37 who cross all of those populations and we have growth and opportunities for up to 55 members across these five work groups. So we're still growing but we but we've seen a really, really amazing expansion

just in the short time and our goal is again to have between nine or 11 members for each group and continue to expand that. The voices that we're hearing liking I think as you mentioned earlier, some of our special needs families actually when we relaunched said holidays our special healthcare needs group anymore.

I want to be part of this other work and so we have special health for these families across all five of our work groups as well, which is also really exciting to see that growth and that expansion. So just a couple of things to put on just to share about as we reimagine the group, we revised our bylaws, which kind of keep us grounded and focused and provide guardrails for our discussions and provide some exact information about how we composed the work groups and what the membership benefits are and how how we want membership to look.

All of this was drafted and supported by our Family Advisory Council members and approved by them.

And if we want to make changes to these they have to balance those as well. So the bylaws also outline our application process to join the council as well as how we select those and then what membership expectations and term limits look like. In addition, it's really important to us that our members are receiving support to attend the meetings, and so they do receive the raise the stipends and the reimbursements that are available that we have available that are on the screen.

We review this annually with our executive committee,

so we look at that and we make adjustments and changes as necessary and as recommended and as feasible. So the final thing kind of about our structure we still meet on Saturdays. That's something that the Council has done for years and we meet quarterly and we also have added in some extra capacity within our agency to support the Family Advisory Council. So when we started talking about expansion, we added on a new staff position in our family and consumer partnership coordinator who was 50% of their job, is dedicated to supporting the Family Advisory Council.

The other part is supporting is focus on supporting the Supporting You program.

Which we'll talk share in a minute.

We also have three other staff within our system, a support team that include our maternal and child health and special health care needs.

Director as well as a Title five system, a care consultant. So we have four staff who are who have some level of role and responsibility to support the Family Advisory Council In addition to that, we also created a structure within the Council to receive support in each of the work groups from our executive committee chair, who happens to be our family delegate elect. Thank you, Kate.

And to member co-chairs who serve as leaders for their individual work groups.

And we also then provide a bureau staff person

for each of those work groups to help guide and answer questions. So we have a lot of we've really invested a lot of our team and our staff to really integrate with our family advisory council to support that growth and expansion, as well as make sure our family leaders feel supported. So the a couple of other things that we have kind of established or we've put in place as we we started utilizing the new online or social media platform to help with communication and resource sharing.

And we also plan to have an annual weekend retreat. So we were doing this every year with our Family Advisory Council As you can imagine, growing from ten to potentially 55. We may have to back that up that, but we are planning to do that every other year when we're able to get back into our in-person meetings and swing of things. But we'll have with the larger group, we've also decided to do two virtual meetings a year and then to in-person meetings.

Hopefully one of those are for every year being that that whole weekend retreat where they can really engage with one another and get to know each other in a little bit different way than when

you're just in a meeting So that's about our Family Advisory Council. That's kind of been the biggest family engagement work that we've done over the years. But our second component of our program is around peer to peer connections and peer supports.

And because Andrew's talking a little bit more about this program earlier and we wanted to kind of kick this off and share a little bit about the peer, the supporting new program. So I'm going to actually pass it to Kate, who serves as a family advisory council, kind of staff person for the supporting new network.

So I'll let her talk about that.

So one of the biggest projects that the FCC has gender over the years is to develop a peer to peer support program called Supporting You.

They helped establish a definition for this in Kansas. So companionship information or knowledge assistance and or emotional, social or practical help received through positive connections with a peer.

So ultimately, the members established the program. They didn't want it to replace the need for professional care, but to help connect others who have experience, who have experienced something or got or are experiencing something. So the belief is that when there is robust peer to peer connection and support happening, that families and communities are healthier, stronger and more connected.

So here's a video to kind of get a bit more about supporting you One of the things we're talking about today is launching and supporting you, which is our peer to peer support network.

And why don't we start for families that have children with special health care needs?

Because we know that individual and family support is really critical to overall health.

My child has cystic fibrosis.

And to talk to another mom who has a kiddo with the same disease, we get each other.

So it's huge. It's mental health support.

It's laughter.

It's relief.

It helps with depression.

I mean, it helps in many, many ways to know you're not alone. I think is is the biggest piece many times of course, we don't take care of ourselves as parents, especially if your child has special health care needs.

And so I think that it's going to help relief. A lot of that stress, a lot of that unknown, like I don't know what this diagnosis means.

I know what they're telling me at the doctor's office.

I know the the medical name of this.

But I don't know beyond that, like, I don't know what tomorrow is going to bring.

My oldest had to have a craniotomy.

That's a big deal.

So being able to talk to someone and knowing you know, this is what to expect.

This is what you're going to see when you get home.

These are the things you're going to have to deal with. But I would also now that I know that this program is available, I would like to be able to give that gift to somebody else.

I know I'm not alone.

And I feel confident in that.

So I can reach out and ask for help and it's okay.

And that there are others that are doing that, too.

If you're a parent with a to a child with special health care needs, you have a lot of knowledge that you don't realize that you have and you have a lot of gifts to give and a lot of knowledge to share.

Like, just to have another person there saying, Oh, yeah, we remember that.

And or maybe you don't even talk about that diagnosis.

Necessarily, but just what's going on in life in general.

You know, your experience is important.

It matters, and it could benefit somebody else. So I think what's really amazing about that program is that it was something that our family leaders felt so strongly about, and we've been able to establish funding and growth opportunities. And we've actually established the Supporting You program as a pure network so a network of peer to peer connection programs and the opportunity for that to be to grow beyond the special health care needs population as well.

So the video talks a lot about special health care needs, but we are actually under currently working on establishing a program for foster adoptive and kinship parents in the state. And so we're working with some of our state partners and our child welfare agency to establish a program. So it's not just special health care needs families, but families with all types of live experience and opportunities for that continued growth.

So I think that's just such an amazing component.

Of when the family said they wanted this program. They also wanted us to assure that there was a way to connect with other families and not just be an isolated and special health care needs program, but the opportunity for those families to engage in other parts of the networks of other peer support opportunities. So they were they were really adamant about making sure we had built in growth opportunities, which is what I love so much. So the Family Advisory Council actually continues to kind of maintain some oversight of that program. And when we want to make major changes to it, we go back to the Family Advisory Council and say, here's what we want to do. And they kind of support making sure we're staying true to the fidelity of the program that they created.

And so there's ongoing engagement in that way.

So another program or component of our family

Consumer Partnership program is around leadership, and a natural progression to this is really expanding from our Family Advisory Council to serving in a more formal leadership role.

And we talk about some of that being built into the council with co-chairs.

But we also have this as part of our family delegate program. So our family delegate program is aligned, of course with the National AMCHP Delegate Program, which is an active advocate for all families in our state. And territory, including those with children and special health care needs and delegates really work within the state or the system that they work with to advise, promote and educate families.

So in Kansas, we did expand our delegate program a little bit. And so in addition to the connection and the the opportunity to engage with AMCHP and the formal delegate program, we also expanded that and created this more leadership program around it.

So for us, the family delegate program provides a pathway for families and consumers to build upon their lived experience and then grow as a leader within the field.

And our hope is that anybody that signs up for this program really desires that building leadership skills, learning about community change, advocating for the needs of consumers across all of our populations and somehow I start sharing. Yes. Makes

it we're going to have to start from the beginning of this slide.

Has can Yes.

All right.

I forgot what I said

of it.

Three to one.

So in Kansas, we took our family delegate program, expanding from the collection to arm chip and and the formal role that this delegate program plays at the national level. But we really established this as a leadership program and a pathway for families and consumers to build upon their lived experience and grow as a leader in the maternal child health field. And we we really strive to help family delegates build their leadership skills, learn about community change, advocate for the needs of families of consumers across message populations.

And so they advise us both at the program and policy level.

And they are there to really support the Title five work. But we really tailor their learning and their activities to meet each of their individual needs and interests and goals.

So within the state, we actually created this is a four year leadership commitment.

So in the first year, we select a new delegate elect.

And their goal within that first year is really to learn about and save systems and networks support active engagement in state and national meetings. So we're trying to help prepare them for that formal role that they have and they get peer mentorship during this time from the current delegate. They engage in an orientation and onboarding with our maternal child health and special health care needs.

Directors.

They complete the Maternal and Child Health Navigator Self Assessment, develop a personalized training and leadership plan, and then they also act they serve in the chair of the Executive Committee role for the Family Advisory Council.

So they serve in that formal leadership role within our family Advisory Council structure in their second and third years.

That's when they become the formal delegate and move into that representative role on our Kansas maternal Child Health Council as a family delegate within the organization, they serve alongside the agency as part of a family leadership team that's across systems within our state, and they participate in the annual block grant and move really from that learning

phase to the active participation and represent a representative role. They also they in that first year, they continue to receive peer mentorship from the past, delegate but then they also transition into a mentorship role in the second year of their delegate term. And then in that fourth year of the leadership commitment, they kind of transition into a past delegate role and continue that mentorship. But they also continue to engage in opportunities and are invited to many of the same activities but those are now voluntary for them. And we also invite them to serve in a leadership role within our alumni mentorship and policy team.

So the final component of the program that we want to talk about is really around building out and expanding support for family and consumer engagement across the state with our local partners and our other fellow state agencies and others that might want to do this work as well. And so we we are working on building out a kind of a technical assistance component to the program.

And as such, we established an engagement toolkit.

And so I mentioned this with our Family Advisory Council that they really helped us build out a toolkit to help share about way meaningful and mutually beneficial ways to engage families across the state and in different levels. So the toolkit is really aligned with the levels of engagement for that AMCHP has out there.

And it provides opportunities for us as a state to really support our locals and our partners to help engage families more.

So the toolkit, again, is comprised of input and feedback directly from Kansas families.

It's going to include Web-Based content resources, examples of activities and we also established a planning tool that is that can be used in conjunction with the toolkit, or it can be used and on its own. But the overall goal of our toolkit is not to guide people on how to do family and consumer engagement, but a resource or really a toolbox that provides a variety of community resources. Examples of how this is done across the state, highlighting best practices and innovative ideas so that we can that programs and organizations can meet families where they are and work together to continue to expand opportunities for families to be involved. And so within each of the toolkit sections, we talk about the different strategies of what looks like benefits to what that means or what that means for the organization as well as for the family. And then we provide from the voices the family some of the tips and tricks that they have that help us with making sure families are at the table and where they're at.

And so again, the goal will be that there will be a repository of resources. And while this is definitely a work in progress, we do hope to provide many of these similar resources from things that are happening in Kansas, but also highlighting the best practices and resources from around the country and things that we've been involved in or we have experienced or seen work well in other parts of the country. So we would love anybody's partnership on this if you're interested in being involved.

And then like I said, there's a tool that we've been establishing, and the goal with this is really to be a standalone resource by encouraging our grantees and our partners who we fund to establish a plan

for engaging families and consumers. And so the planning tool is just under development and we're getting ready to pilot this. But the goal of this really is to help programs kind of understand the needs of the consumers and stakeholders that they're trying to engage, understand where they are in their family engagement journey. Identify goals for themselves and for the families that they're going to be engaging in, and then actually help them define what that looks like and design a plan for moving forward. So we are getting ready to launch a community, a practice for our four partners who might want to engage in this work. Test that our planning tool, they'll be able to receive some technical assistance from us, as well as facilitation support and some funding to actually host some engagement events.

If they would like to do that.

So with that, that is a lot about the work that we've been doing

and how we've really engaged families to institutionalize this for title theater across Kansas, how we've integrated from various systems and other models, but how we're really trying to build this out and establish this for the long term. So we really appreciate your time listening to the session today, and we look forward to getting to chat with you during the live Q&A session. So feel free to reach out to us at any time and we will see you over in that live Q&A.