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# Anchoring the FAST to meet the Family First Future

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Subject Matter Expert & Trainer

- Advocate, Trainer, Consultant, and Facilitator
- 26 years experience working in Human Services with 13 in Child Welfare
- Focus on Practice and Policy Expert focused on child welfare, system integration, social change, and technology implementation that improves the outcomes for children and families.



# Lisa Paglia

*Performance Measurement Specialist, QA Department,  
Lackawanna County Office of Social Service Research and Development*



- Leads Agency Program Evaluation and Monitoring, CQI, and Operations and Development of Agency's Case Management System.
- 20 years experience working in Human Services with a focus in Trauma Informed Care and Attachment Theory
- BA in Professional Studies/Law and Justice from Rowan University, and Masters of Social Work from Marywood University.

# Learning Objectives

- ▶ To illustrate how programs can use the FAST as the measurement for child welfare outcomes;
- ▶ To provide a better understanding of the Family First requirements for approved programs;
- ▶ To show how programs can leverage their assessment and practice skills to become a partner in their local Family First implementation;
- ▶ To provide a better understanding of data visualization tools that can be used to support their FAST assessments, increase program outcomes, and help better understand their strengths and needs.

# Family First Prevention Services Act 2018 - *the main highlights*

On February 9, 2018, President Trump signed into law the Family First Prevention Services Act, as part of Division E, in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018

- Redirects Title IV-E funds to provide services to keep children safely with their families and out of foster care
- When foster care is needed, federal reimbursement is permitted for care in family-based settings and certain residential treatment programs for children with emotional and behavioral disturbance requiring special treatment

# Family First Prevention Act

Federal reimbursement available for certain prevention services for candidates

- Title IV-E funds available to support evidence-based prevention efforts for
  - Mental Health and substance use prevention and treatment services
  - In-home parent skill-based services
- Services are limited to 12 months for children who are at imminent risk of entering foster care (candidates), their parents and relatives, and pregnant or parenting youth

# Family First Prevention Act

Federal reimbursement limited for non foster family placement expenses

- Restricts Title IV-E reimbursement to first two weeks in congregate care when not placed in these settings:
  - Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP)
  - Special Treatment settings for
    - Youth age 18 or older living independently
    - Youth who are pregnant or parenting
    - Children and youth who are, or are at risk, of being victims of sex trafficking
    - Children and youth placed in a licensed residential family-based treatment facility

# Qualified Residential Treatment Program

On-going assessments must be completed and continue to be reviewed by the court

For stays longer than 12 consecutive months, or any 18 months, the head of the state agency must approve and request HHS approval

# Additional Pieces of the Act

Evidence Based  
Kinship Navigator  
Programs

IV-B Part 2

Reauthorization of  
PSSF and Stephanie  
Tubbs Jones Child  
Welfare Services  
(Part 1)

Track/Prevent Child  
Maltreatment  
Fatality Plans

Recruitment and  
Retention of High-  
Quality Foster  
Families

Extends Chafee

Post Adoption  
Services

ICPC System

Adoption Assistance  
for Children Under  
the Age of 2

State Maintenance  
Effort

# In a NutShell....

- ▶ Family First is about **Prevention Services**
- ▶ It expands the applicability of IV-E Funds in order to **support evidence-based prevention efforts** for:
  - ▶ Mental Health and Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Services
  - ▶ In-Home Parent Skill-Based Services
- ▶ Services are limited to 12 months **for children who are at imminent risk of entering foster care, their parents and relatives, and pregnant or parenting youth**
- ▶ **Limits Congregate Care**

Assessments are Critical to Family First

# The Key is the Assessment

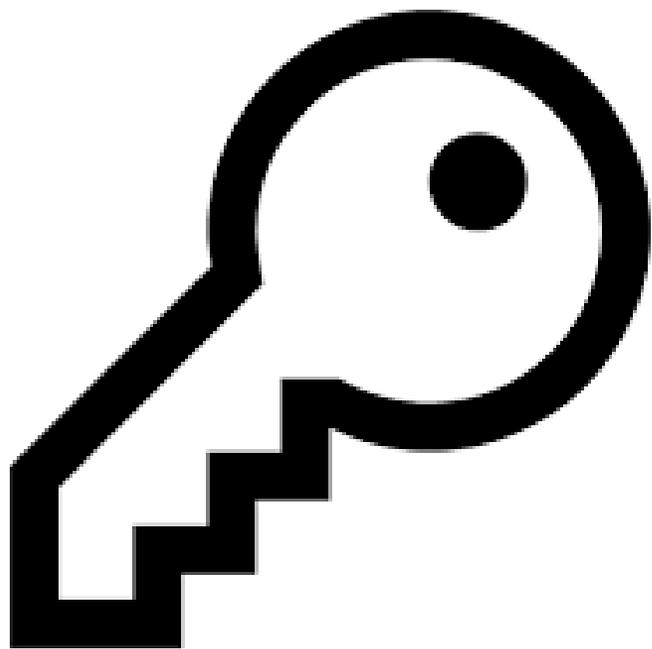
## Assessments

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graph LR; A[Assessments] --- B[High Quality Foster Families]; A --- C[Needs of Children Under 2]; A --- D[Evidence Based Services and Programs];
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High Quality Foster Families

Needs of Children Under 2

Evidence Based Services and Programs



Showing the effectiveness of programs will be key to ensuring the approval for families and the eligibility payment for the agency.

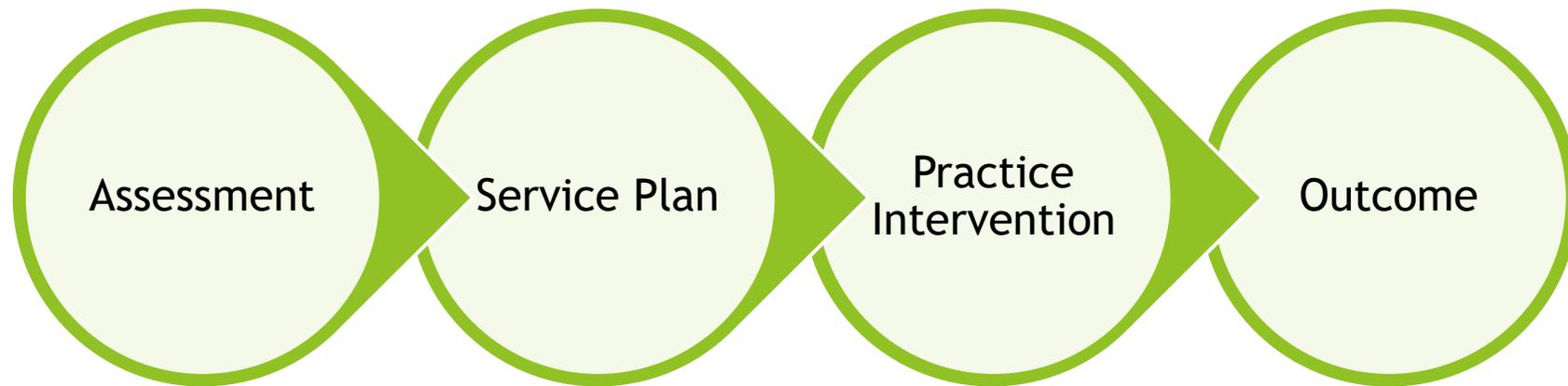
# Assessment Defined

- ▶ Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analyzing and reflecting on the evidence to make informed and consistent decisions to improve future outcomes.

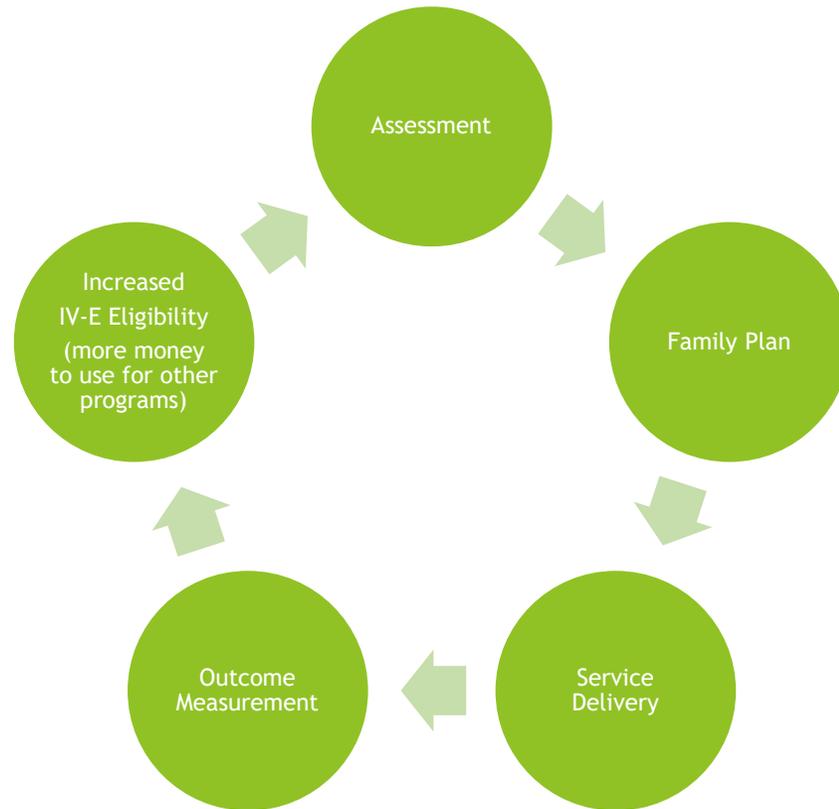


*This is where the FAST Assessment can really make a difference!*

# Common Path...



# Path with the Family First Implementation



It's CQI using the FAST!

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# How The FAST Can Provide The Evidence To Show Impact

# Connecting the Dots

- ▶ An engagement tool utilized to identify the needs that impact family functioning.
- ▶ It aligns with most therapeutic modalities recognized by the Department's Prevention Services Catalog
- ▶ Can be easily shown visually to aide in understanding progress

## Did you know?

FAST is an Assessment that is being looked at favorably by the Department to replace the Risk/Safety Assessments

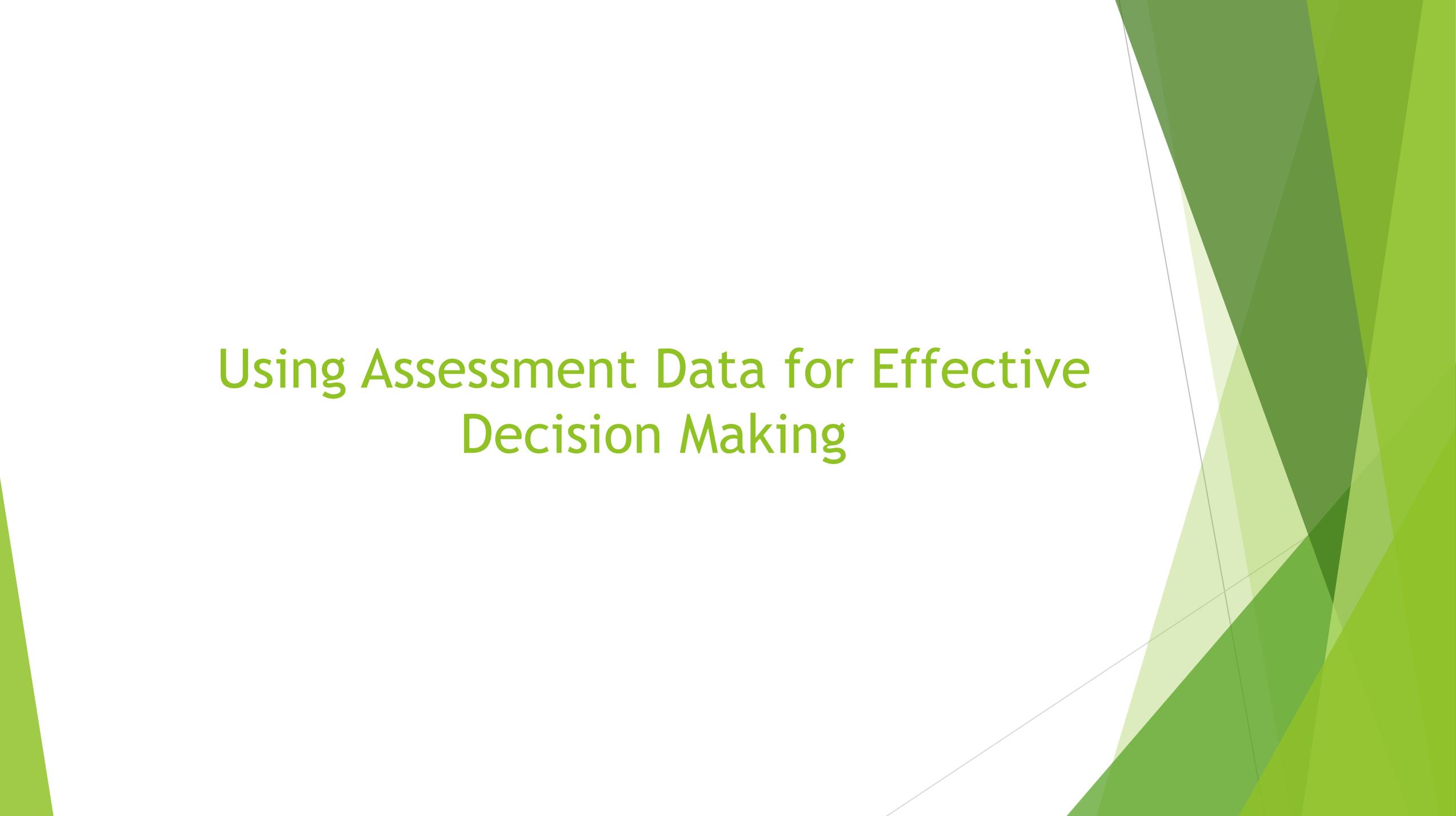
**Stay Tuned!**

# Connecting the Dots: From Assessment to Outcome

- ▶ Identifying the 2s and 3s is easy when you can visually see the overall picture
- ▶ Use the Strengths of the Assessment to inform the Family Service Plan (FSP)
- ▶ By selecting the related Category and Objective services were focused on Extended Family Relations and Natural Supports within the FSP.
- ▶ Services were selected from the Prevention Services Catalog and implemented.

Family Assessment Details

#	Question	Total Answer	
		8/15/18	6/25/19
1	Parental/ Caregiver Collaboration	1	0
2	Relations among Siblings	0	0
3	Extended Family Relations	2	1
4	Family Conflict	1	1
5	Family Communication	0	0
6	Family Safety	0	0
7	Financial Resources	0	0
8	Residential Stability	0	0
9	Natural Supports	2	1
10	Involvement with Care	1	0
11	Advocacy Skills	0	0

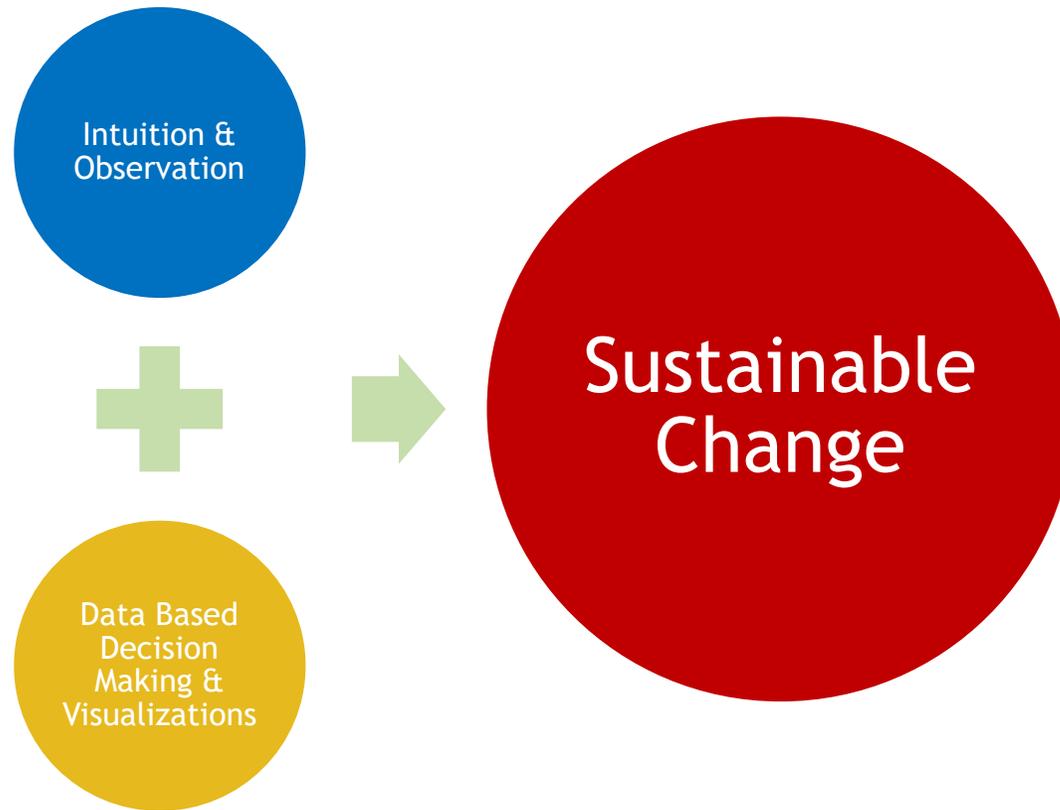
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# Using Assessment Data for Effective Decision Making

*“An intervention cannot be called an intervention if it is not progress monitored. An intervention without progress monitoring is just an activity.”*

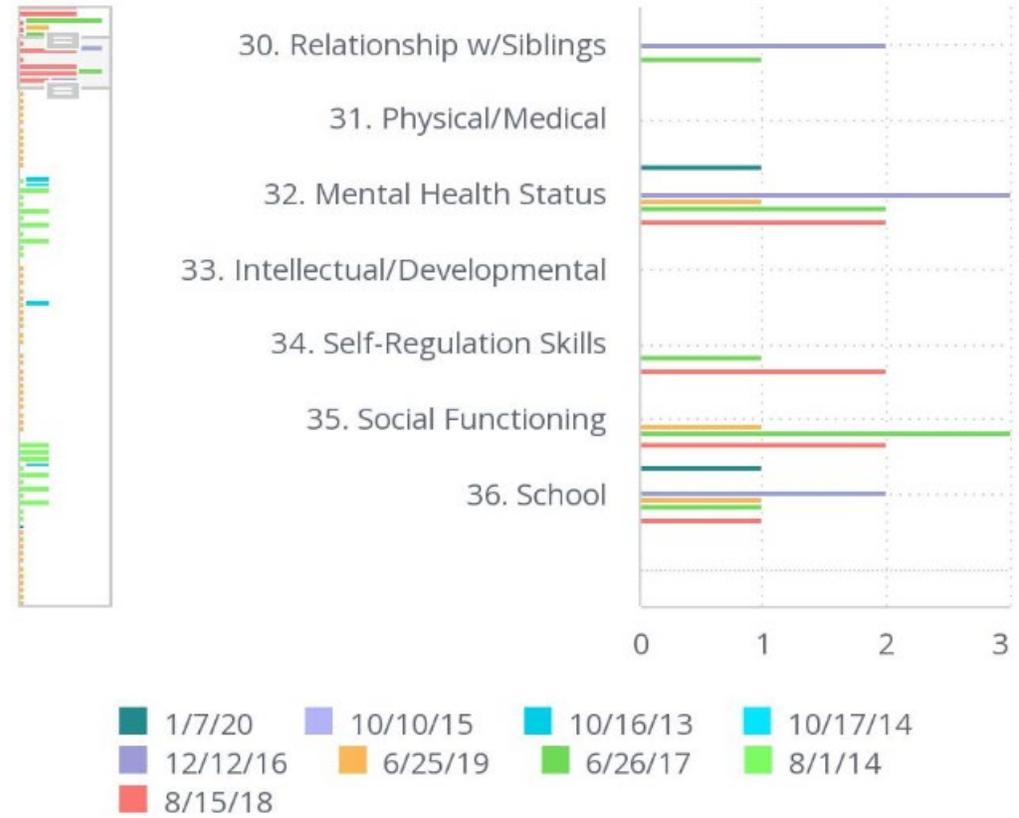
*-Anonymous*

# An Equation for Success



# Monitoring the Effectiveness of Programs

- ▶ Entering in an assessment results allows for easy visual representation that can be used with stakeholders, judges, parents, youth, and team members.
- ▶ Showing the improvement or decline on an indicator of the FAST could lead to conversations around service delivery and effectiveness, engagement of additional resources, and create a sound measurement of the service impact.



By having the components of your INTUITION reaffirmed by FAST assessment proven by the DATA, you can feel confident that the APPROVED SERVICES you put into place will address the ROOT CAUSES.

This combination leads to successful Family First Implementation and Improved Child Welfare Outcomes!

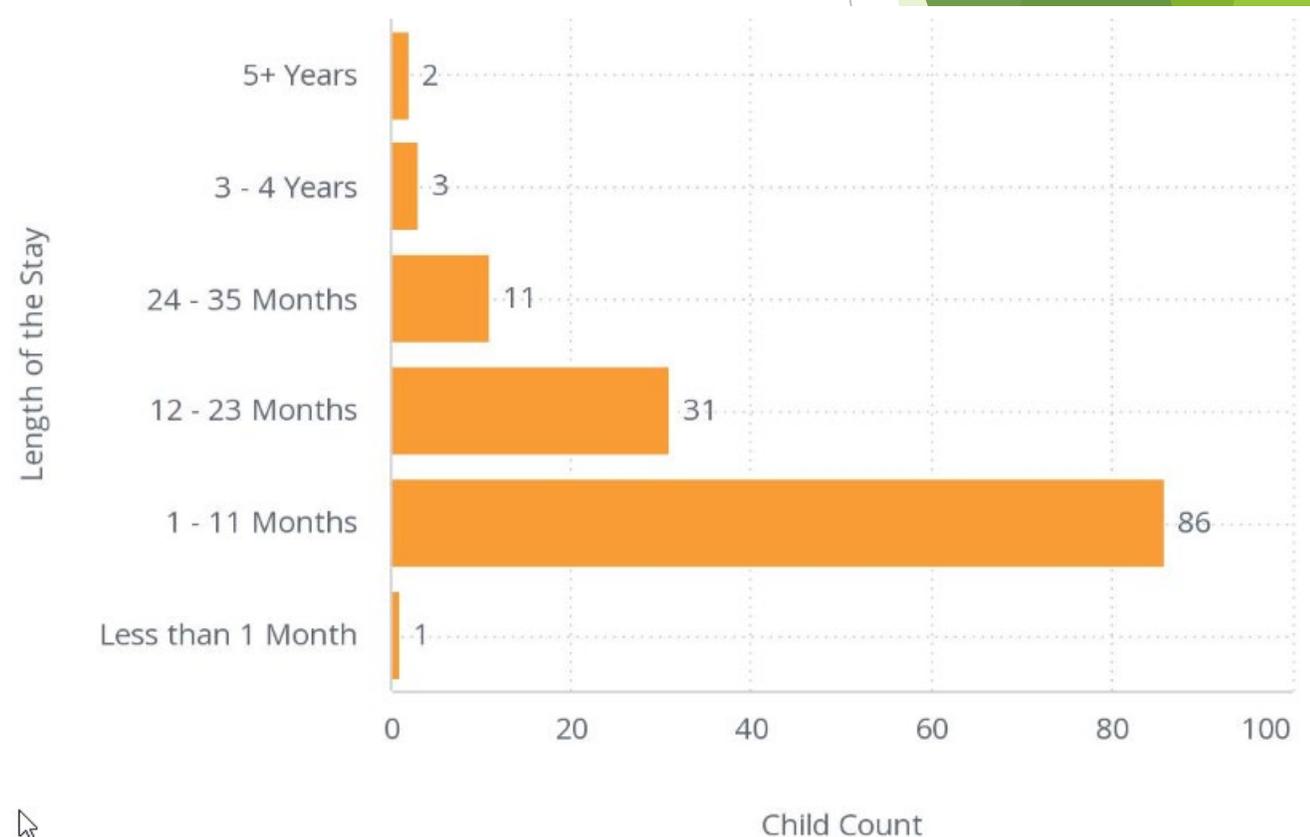
# Systemic Issue to Resolve: Time

- ▶ On average, it can take a caseworker 2 hrs to complete the FAST with a family.
- ▶ This is the preferred way to conduct the assessment.
- ▶ In today's practice, it is difficult to implement this into the casework with a family.

How can you make it worth it to caseworkers who have very little time?

# Create Easy Ways to See and Interpret the Information They Collect

- ▶ Visually depict their impact on the lives of the children involved with the agency.
- ▶ Show them how the assessment information can be used to show impact of services, changes in outcomes, and improved family functioning
- ▶ Using data to no longer over-tax workers but improve their use of case information and to make better decisions is message throughout the Family First Act.



# Using Data to Tell Your Family First Story

- ▶ Use the FAST Assessment data to show where the family started and the progress they made over time.
- ▶ Overlay time in your visuals to show that progress doesn't happen overnight but it does happen even with the toughest cases.
- ▶ If specific therapy programs are used with success, note it.
- ▶ Share the story with your families. Their work in partnership with you led to the Family First Story.

# Getting stakeholders on board

- ▶ Show how the use of approved therapies, good assessment data collection, regular monitoring creates an opportunity for increased funding.
- ▶ Show them how using the FAST is the key to this Family First transformation.
- ▶ Establish ways in which they can help.

# Remember

- ▶ Family First is focused on:
  - ▶ Higher Quality Foster Homes
  - ▶ The Needs of Children Under 2
  - ▶ Better Use of Evidence Based Programs and Services
- ▶ Limiting Congregate Care and Increasing Prevention Services
- ▶ Using the FAST can help you structure the decision making, data visualizations can help you tell the story.
- ▶ Finding ways to make both useful to caseworkers will make it easier for your program to gather the data they need to be IV-E Eligible.

Q&A

# For more information

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**THANKYOU!**