



National Center for  
Adoption Competent  
Mental Health Services

# Building Bridges to Improve Mental Health

The National Center for Adoption Competent Mental Health Services aims to **improve mental health outcomes for children and families who experienced child welfare systems** by providing technical assistance that **bridges the gap** between child welfare and mental health systems to increase access to the child welfare competent mental health services that children and families need.



Up to **80% of children in foster care** have experienced significant mental health issues.



Approximately **60% of children who have experienced foster care** have lifelong mental health disorders.

## Why Do We Need to Close This Gap?

The lack of collaboration between both systems creates significant barriers to children and families being able to receive the child welfare competent mental health services they need. These children and families face:



**Mental health interventions that aren't designed for their specific needs and experiences**



**Mental health service providers who aren't trained in child welfare competency**

### **Building and sustaining cross-system collaboration will help:**

- Enable mental health systems and their providers to increase their child welfare competence
- Increase the number of competent providers available to serve children and families
- Increase access to culturally responsive services for children and families



# Bridging the Gap—How Can We Help?

We will work with national leaders as well as parents and young adults with lived experience to provide a continuum of services to support cross-system collaboration between child welfare systems and mental health systems. We will offer services ranging from articles, webinars, and peer learning communities to hands-on, tailored technical assistance (TA) to deliver new and enhanced support and training to states, tribes, territories, and professionals to meet the needs of children and families. All of our services will utilize a racial and broader equity lens and are free.



### *Universal Technical Assistance*

Our **Knowledge Hub** provides a robust collection of free resources, tools, and evidence-informed materials on best practices intervention models to build child welfare and mental health systems' capacity to provide child welfare competent mental health services. The Knowledge Hub is dynamic and responsive to our audience's informational needs.

### *Intensive Technical Assistance*

We also provide **in-depth, on-site TA** to six States, Tribes, and territories each year. This TA involves partnering closely with child welfare systems and mental health systems in each TA site to create or expand cross-system collaboration to help the systems increase access to child welfare competent mental health services for children and families. Our TA team will work together with each TA site to develop a custom implementation plan that is tailored and responsive to the site's unique needs, strengths, and structure.



**Learn how Technical Assistance can benefit your system**

Scan the QR code to check out our website:  
[bridges4mentalhealth.org](https://bridges4mentalhealth.org)

*Questions?*

**Call: 888-909-2209**

## Partners

Our multi-partner collaborative team includes national leaders and experts from both child welfare and mental health work; parents and young adults with lived experience and lived expertise; and other experts in key areas such as racial equity, workforce development, collaboration, system change, sustainability, and evaluation.



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