AFFINITY GROUP / AG-GOV

State and federal government partners

Use predictable relationships and clear decision routes to resolve implementation barriers.

Michelle Cunningham

The discussion covered kinship, family finding, older youth, long stays, and the difficulty of meeting complex needs. Participants considered revisiting relationships even when a relative or other important person cannot provide a placement. A connection may still matter to a child's support network.

State and CBC partners described the value of regular communication and established relationships. Courts, behavioral health providers, hospitals, and child welfare organizations may approach the same situation with different responsibilities and expectations.

Participants discussed escalation, reporting, implementation questions, and opportunities to learn across states. The useful common ground was a more specific account of the barrier, the decision needed, and the partner with authority to address it.

Put the learning to work

- Document one cross-system barrier without identifying a child or family, including the operational effect and the unresolved decision.
- Map the responsible partners and the route for routine questions and urgent escalation.
- Identify one state-to-state comparison that could inform a local decision, recording the differences that limit direct transfer.

Questions for your team

Which relationship can be strengthened before the next difficult case? Where does a useful family connection disappear from our process?

Proposed CY2027 connection

March and May LX; quarterly work from barrier definition to joint test, findings, and Chicago next steps.

Source and coverage: Supplied transcript of the State and Federal Government affinity discussion. Facilitator: Michelle Cunningham.