After viewing the video presentation Why Housing Matters, use this Discussion Guide to facilitate further conversation within your team. Feel free to discuss the questions that are most relevant to your program. At the conclusion of the discussion, formulate and assign specific action steps as a way to move forward.

1 DISCUSS THE WHY - WHY HOUSING IS IMPORTANT

- Discuss housing as a basic human need and essential for recovery and reunification. In what ways have you and/or your community seen housing as a reward vs. basic human need?
- Discuss the four domains of recovery - home, health, purpose, and community and how this aligns with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. How do these frameworks change the way you prioritize housing and/or view motivation of participant families?

2 DISCUSS THE HOW - WHAT ARE KEY APPROACHES WHEN SEEKING HOUSING SOLUTIONS

- Examine your current governance structure - does it have the recommended three levels - Operational, Steering, and Oversight - to address the complex issues of housing? Have the following discussions:
- All levels: Explore team members' views on Housing First vs. Housing Ready approaches. Should families involved in or at risk of being involved in child welfare services and affected by substance use first demonstrate readiness prior to receiving housing support? Why or why not?
- Steering - Discuss primary concerns surrounding implementing a Housing First approach for families involved in child welfare and have been affected by parental substance use disorders. How will you ensure child safety?
- Steering - Do you know the nature of the housing problem of families you serve and the larger child welfare population in your community? Discuss how you will gain greater understanding of the nature of the housing problem. For instance, do you know what percentage of the families struggling with rent burden, substandard housing, living in an untenable doubled-up situation, or living with domestic violence?
- Steering - How will you engage community partners, including city and county leaders, banks, builders, and affordable housing advocates to better meet all affordable housing needs?
- Oversight - Discuss what it would take to implement and support a Housing First approach in your community. What mind-sets would need to change? What practices and policies would need to change? What partnerships would need to be secured to make that vision happen?
3 DISCUSS THE WHAT - WHAT YOUR TEAM CAN DO TO CONNECT FAMILIES TO HOUSING

- Is housing generally addressed early in your participants’ treatment or CWS case plan or in aftercare and closer to reunification? Does aftercare programming include housing? What have you learned about a systematic approach in early screening and identification of substance use disorders that could be translated to housing?
- Discuss the continuum of housing programs and supports in your community. If you are unaware of all the options, what steps can your team take to learn more?
- What is the continuum of residential treatment programs in your community? Are all ASAM Level 3 options covered? Do any of the programs allow children to join their parents? Do they serve fathers?
- How are you connecting families to housing after completion of residential treatment? What are the greatest barriers and challenges? What questions do you have for other communities that have solved this?
- Does your CWS agency have access to flexible funding for housing needs?
- Does your community have a Continuum of Care (CoC)? Does your local child welfare agency get involved with the CoC?

4 DISCUSS THE WHAT - WHAT YOUR TEAM CAN OFFER TO THE HOUSING COMMUNITY

- Discuss what your local public housing authority and other housing partners offer. What kind of vouchers do they offer specifically for families involved in child welfare and affected by parental substance disorders? What types of supports are available in addition to a subsidy? If your team is not familiar with what is available, how can you learn more?
- Discuss what your program can offer to housing partners so they can be “consumer-ready.” Do you know what your housing partners need? What can you do to engage in these conversations and learn more?
- What kind of training and education is needed in your community, including housing providers, on substance use disorders, family recovery, and family safety? How are you helping change the way your community thinks, feels, and responds to families?
- What can your team do to champion and advocate for what families need to be successful in their recovery, safety, and permanency? How can your team help housing partners prioritize families involved in CWS and affected by parental substance use disorders?

5 DISCUSS WHAT’S NEXT - WHAT’S PRIORITY?

- Identify 1-2 specific priority action steps your team should focus on as a result of your discussion. Share any challenges or barriers with your Steering Committee.
- Download the Take Action Guide for additional next steps for your team.

CONTACT INFO

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