



East Coast TANF Directors Meeting

Creating a TANF Program Where Everyone Can Thrive

Wednesday, July 17, 2024

9:15-11:15 AM EDT



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Family Assistance



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Checklist

- Phone on vibrate
- Email on DND
- Refreshed your beverage of choice
- You have something at stake
- You are in the arena





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Guideposts and Guardrails

1. **Bring the positivity.** Total green light for unabashed championing of ea other.
2. **One Mic.** One speaker at a time. Listen well.
3. **B.R.E.A.T.H.E.** Pause and take a conscious breath.
4. **Make Space.** “Move up” or “move back” to share airspace and include more voices.
5. **Get in the Arena.** Lean in and play full out.
6. **Braveheart.** Be courageous. Perfection not required.
7. **Vegas Rules.** Observe confidentiality.
8. **Be Curious.** Rather than critical.
9. **Just You.** We invite you to speak for yourself rather than on behalf of a group (as “I,” not “we”).





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THRIVING

verb

gerund or present participle: **thriving**
(of a child, animal, or plant) grow or
develop well or **vigorously**.

"the new baby thrived"

prosper; flourish.

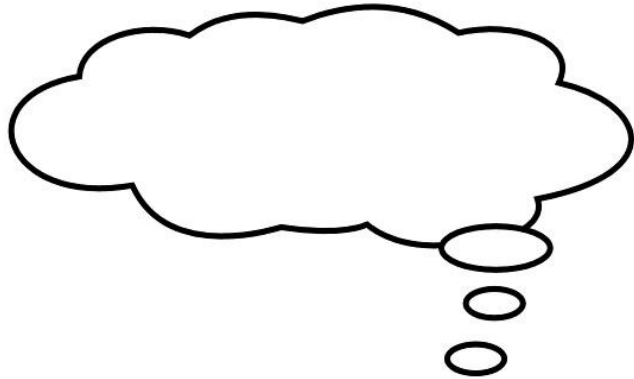
"education groups **thrive on**
organization"





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Self Reflection



Think about a time when you took something or someone and made it flourish, prosper, grow vigorously.

- What did you help flourish?
- What did you put IN that brought abOUT thriving?
- What feels like the 'X' factor in your example of making something thrive?





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Group Instructions

1. Create a group of 3 at your table.
2. Each person take a min or so to share what you did to help something, or someone thrive and your 'X' factor.
3. Pass the mic so you can get all voices in (concision is kindness).
4. Once everyone has gone, as a group take a min or 2 to vote up the TOP 3 THRIVE FACTORS you heard.
5. Be ready to share with the room.



Panelists

Rebekah Sides, Policy Associate, Social and Economic Mobility, APHSA

Dr. Karla McCullough, CEO & Principal, Tri-K Group

Jessica Womack, Family Self-Sufficiency Branch Manager, Division of Family Support,
Department of Community Based Services, Commonwealth of Kentucky

Brigette Bowmar, Program and Workforce Administrator, New Hampshire Department
of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Employment Supports



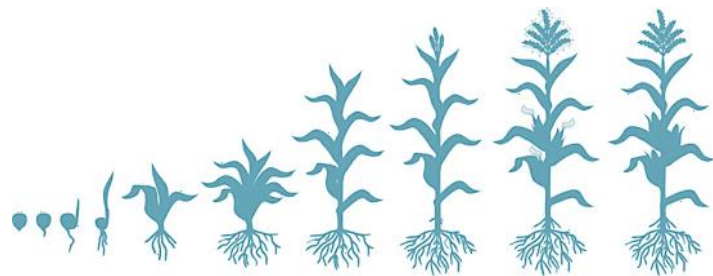
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THRIVING in TANF: A National Perspective



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Who We Are

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) supports leaders from state, county, and city human services agencies to advance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities nationwide. As a bipartisan membership association, we work with our members to generate pragmatic solutions grounded in lived experience with a lens for equity and belonging.





THRIVING in TANF

1

Clarify Our Language

2

Connect To Our Purpose

3

Apply To Our Strategy



What is your North Star statement?

“Thriving communities built on human potential.” – APHSA Vision Statement

“Healthy California for All.” – California Health and Human Services North Star

“Mississippians have the support and resources needed to thrive.” – Mississippi Department of Human Services North Star

“Individuals, families, and communities are safe, resilient and empowered to be healthy and self-sufficient.” – Iowa Societal Vision

“Families are empowered, connected, and thriving.” – Vermont ReachUp Vision Statement



What is your North Star statement?

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*“**Healthy California for All.**”* – California Health and Human Services North Star

*“**Mississippians have the support and resources needed to thrive.**”*

– Mississippi Department of Human Services North Star

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What do we mean by


thrive ?



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What do we mean by

thrive :



to **grow** or develop well or vigorously

to **prosper** or **flourish**

to be **fortunate** or **successful**





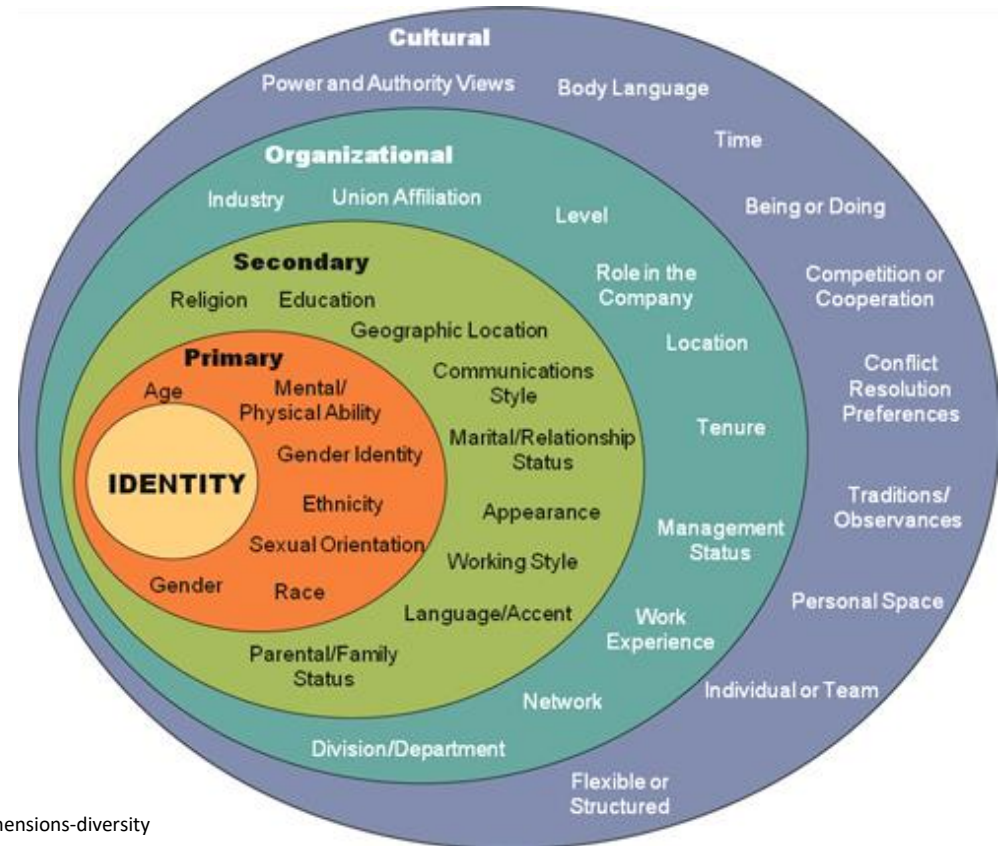
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Acknowledge Differences

- Characteristics
- Experiences
- Professional
- Community/Cultural
- Era



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TANF's Core Purposes

The intent of TANF is to disrupt long-term intergenerational poverty, to bridge gaps toward economic and social mobility.



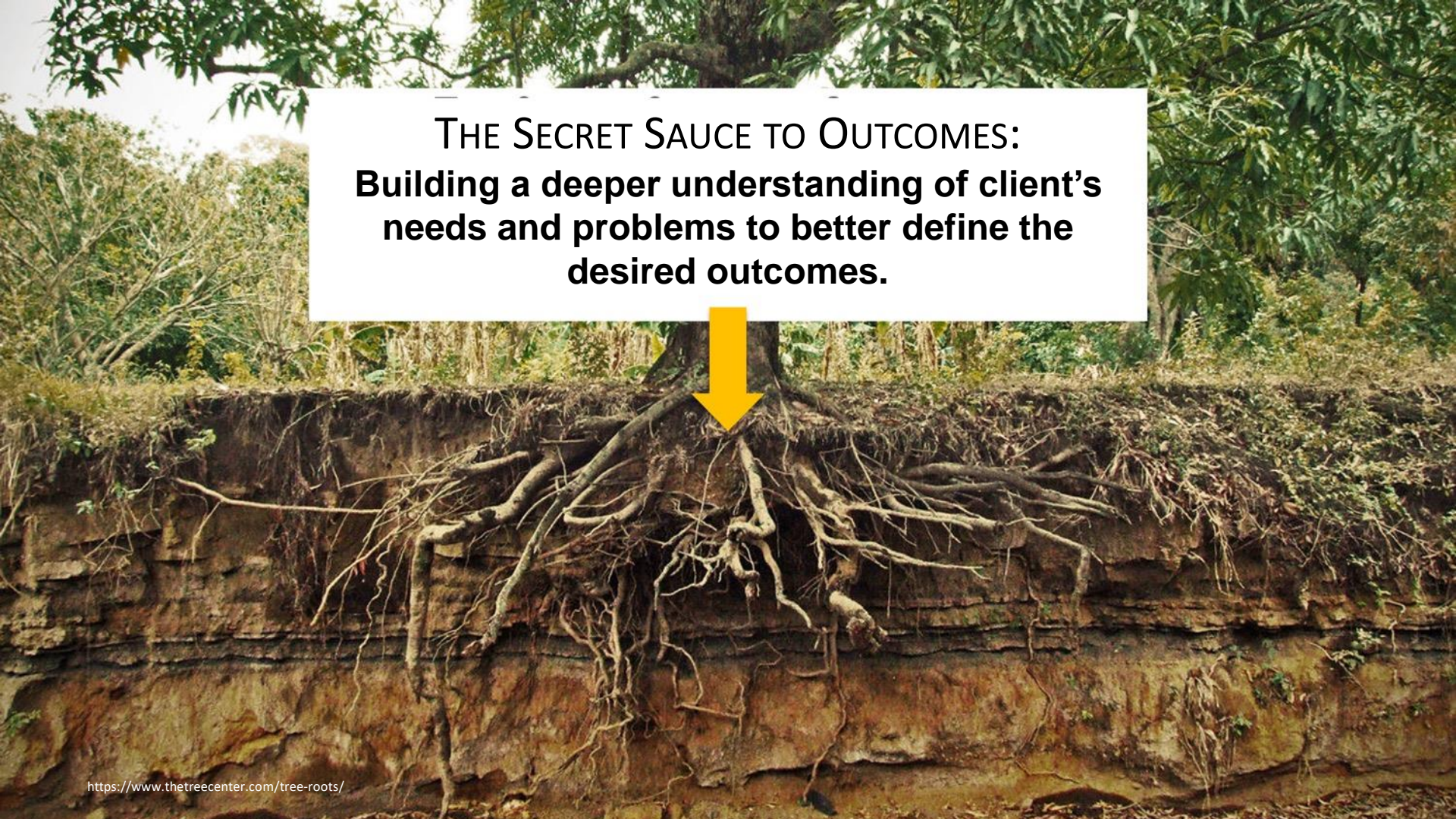


**Are you focusing more
on outputs or outcomes?**

**OUTPUT:
A product, service, feature or
deliverable that you create.**

**OUTCOME:
How a person's life or
organization's health is
improved by solving a
particular problem with the
output.**

**THE SECRET SAUCE TO OUTCOMES:
Building a deeper understanding of client's
needs and problems to better define the
desired outcomes.**



Who is excluded? Who is not performing well?

Policy Lever	Analyze Disparities
Eligibility Thresholds	<i>Are income thresholds too low to be useful? Who is excluded?</i>
Asset Tests	<i>Is it difficult to become financially stable while on the program?</i>
Work requirements	<i>What resources/skills are needed to be able to comply with work requirements?</i>
Non-assistance uses of TANF	<i>How might your state assess who is benefitting from these funds?</i>
Child support enforcement	<i>Who is receiving good cause? Who isn't?</i>
Sanctions	<i>Are certain populations benefitting or burdened by your sanction policies?</i>
Time limits	<i>Are certain populations benefitting or burdened by your time limit policies?</i>
Child-only TANF	<i>Are certain populations benefitting or burdened by your child-only policies?</i>
Service referrals	<i>Who is or isn't able to successfully receive services from a referral?</i>



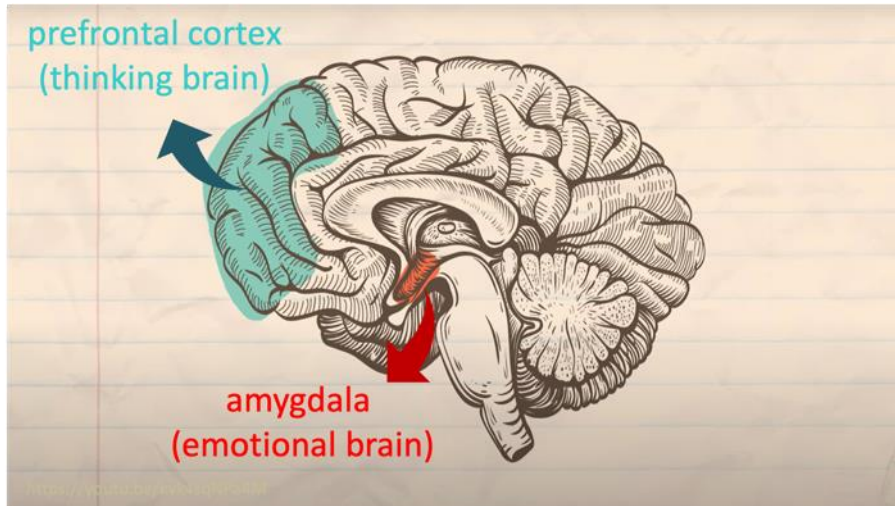
How Do Adults Ages 18-22 Fare In Your Program?



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Policymakers must meaningfully engage people experiencing poverty in policy development if they are to re-envision TANF as a program that centers participants' autonomy, dignity, and privacy.



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What Strategies Could Address Disparities?

time limit extensions

increasing grant amount

vehicle insurance

good cause policies for CS
cooperation

changing sanction policies

driver license assistance

motivational coaching

housing

CS passthrough policies

vehicle provision & repair

education and training

child care



Voice of the Customer



Family Voice Council



**Families and Children
Requiring Assistance Advisory
Board**



Parent Advisory Council



**Governor's Poverty Reduction
Workgroup**



Participant Advisory Board



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West Virginia's Transportation Program



DONATE A CAR Change a life!

In 2000, the Good News Mountaineer Garage in Charleston, West Virginia was started with the help of a grant from Benedum Foundation. Soon afterward, the garage received TANF funds to test a pilot program repairing vehicles and donating them to TANF recipients upon request. By 2001, the garage donated a car to its first TANF recipient. By 2005, it was serving the whole state.

West Virginia supports TANF participants by:

Assessing their vehicle needs and pairing them with an appropriate vehicle for their family size and commuting needs

- Providing collateral insurance
- Servicing vehicle repair
- Paying for vehicle insurance
- Helping the participant obtain their driver's license
- Driver's Education courses

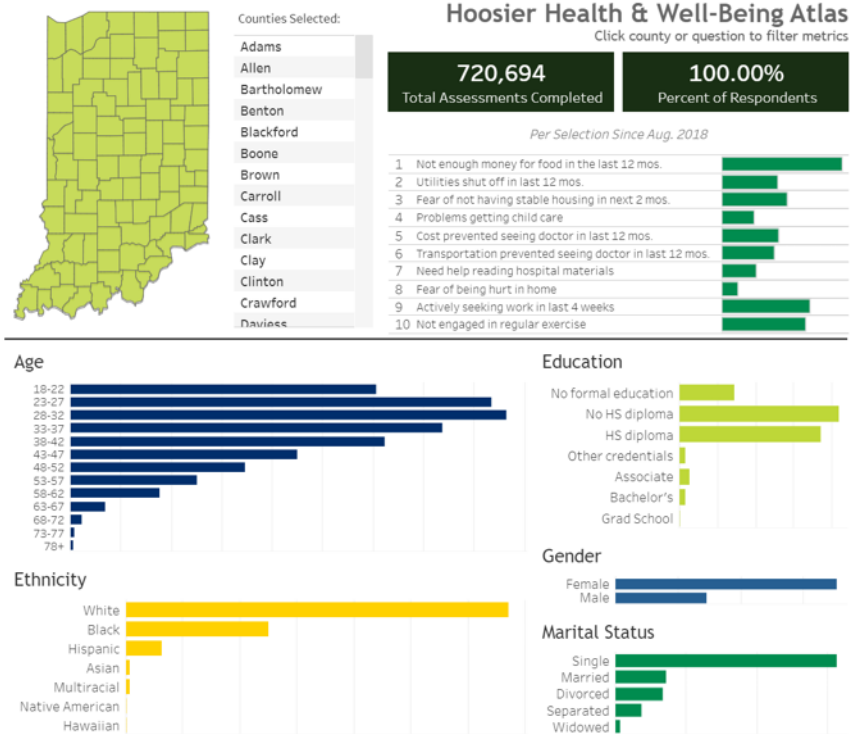


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Indiana's Hoosier Health and Wellbeing Atlas

In August 2018, to better understand how social determinants of health (SDOH) are impacting Indiana communities, 10 optional questions were added to all online applications for health coverage, SNAP, and TANF.

[Hoosier Health and Wellbeing Atlas](#)
(HHWA)



Steps Toward Thriving in Washington



- 1 Expanded time limit extensions to those who are unhoused, those impacted when statewide economic instability occurs, and to families with infants.
- 2 Eliminated time limits for ineligible parents, so children can continue to receive benefits.
- 3 Conducting root cause analysis to better understand disproportionality observed in sanction-related grant reductions and fully family sanctions.
- 4 Sharing data with service partners, interested community members, and the public to ensure transparency around current policies' impact.
- 5 Sharing data in consultation with tribes, a key impacted group.
- 6 Continuing to work toward expanding time limits extensions to additional populations (future legislation).
- 7 Required annual reporting to the legislature by our agency on time limit/sanction disproportionality.







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THE SECRET SAUCE TO OUTCOMES:

Building a deeper understanding of client's needs and problems to better define the desired outcomes.





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GATHER YOUR THOUGHTS...

Thought Joggers

- what did I hear/see that might facilitate greater thriving for: me, TANF staff, families, and/or program overall?
- what info might help me with a real challenge in my TANF program?





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What Families Are Saying How Can Hope Remain or Be Restored?

Karla L. McCullough, Ph.D.

CEO, Tri-K Group



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The Research

1. **Premise** – Understanding feelings of being devalued (Dehumanization)
2. **Exploratory Research** – Study to understand the lived experiences
3. **Results/Findings** – Lived experiences through engagements with social service providers





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Thriving in Human Services

1. Understanding what thriving means and how it feels and is interpreted
2. Service-delivery of service providing agencies that increases feelings of being valued and an opportunity to thrive
3. Approaching every engagement with human factors





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Factors That Inhibit Thriving

1. Negative encounters
2. Decisions that end in no longer seeking services
3. Challenging perceptions





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Humanizing Practices

1. Trust
2. Humility and Understanding
3. Transparency/Clarity
4. Solitude





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Jessica Womack - Kentucky

**What thriving has
meant for us.**

**Where we
started.**

Our journey.

**Outcomes and
accomplishments.**

**Key lessons
learned and
wisdom earned.**



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Brigette Bowmar - New Hampshire

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BREATH BREAK



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Sketchpad

- **What's the biggest insight/aha/reminder I learned from this panel?**
- **What's 1-2 small but meaningful actions I can take to support more thriving in my program? For example:**
 - **What can I add in (or do more of) to make it easier for staff to meet our mission with all families that might use our TANF program?**
 - **What barriers can we remove or smooth out to make it easier for our families to seek out and utilize our services in my TANF program?**
 - **How can I keep pushing my own learning and stay connected with peers also doing the hard work of ensuring everyone can thrive in our TANF program?**





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Community Sourcing Actions for Thriving

Self-Reflection

What 1-2 actions are you energized and excited to take on in your TANF program to facilitate more thriving for...

- *yourself? Or,*
- *your team? Or,*
- *families you serve?*





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Community Sourcing Actions for Thriving

Group Instructions

1. Everyone briefly shares their response to the reflection question above.
2. After everyone shares, as a group identify the common themes from the ideas shared.
3. As a team, vote up which 3 actions have the most energy or would be valuable for the whole group to hear.
4. Be ready to present (EXTRA POINTS AWARDED FOR CREATIVITY)!

