

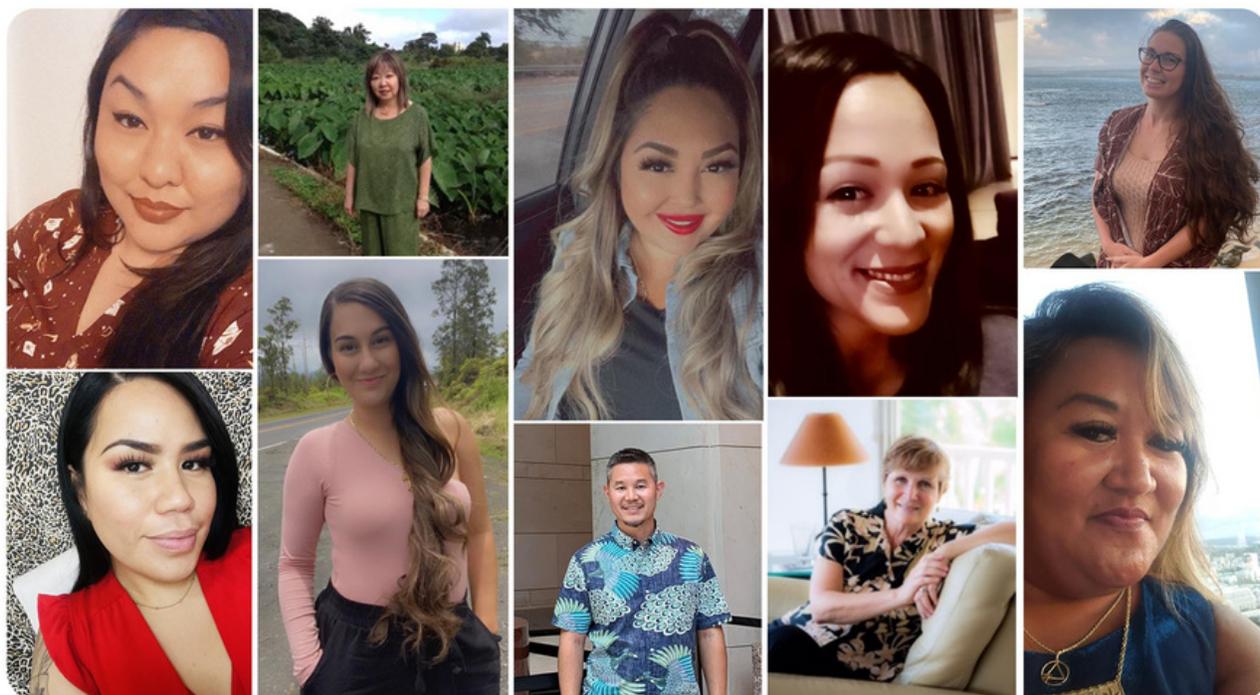


AUGUST 2022 | ISSUE 5

FAMILY FIRST HAWAII

Keeping Families Together (FFH)

LIVED-EXPERIENCE ADVISORY GROUP



LEAG members: (top, from left) Kim Nabarro, Lynne Kazama, Chassidy Kruse, Kristen Bachiller, Amando Mundon, (bottom) Asha Autele, Kayla Samson, Mitchell Odo, Wilma Friesema, Vivian Kim Seu

The LEAG (Lived Experience Advisory Group) consists of birth parents, young people, young parents formerly in foster care, and resource caregivers (RCGS) also known as foster parents. The LEAG is led by a trio including a member with lived experience, a community partner, and a Child Welfare Services (CWS) staff.

The LEAG has a critical role to play in informing the implementation of Family First Hawaii (FFH) services and DHS's overarching approach to better serving children, young people, and families in their homes and communities.

One of the LEAG's projects involved giving feedback to the revisions to the new electronic Family Service Plan (FSP) and also participating in the FSP training for CWS staff. LEAG birth parents who also serve as Parent Partners developed a training video for the FSP and participated in Q&A sessions in the trainings. The trainings by the LEAG birth parents demonstrated courageous sharing. The sessions were well received by the CWS staff and sparked courageous conversations between staff and the LEAG parents.

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FFH UPDATES



EXPECTANT AND PARENTING YOUNG PEOPLE (EPYP)

CWS is working on a pathway for Expectant and Parenting Young People in foster care to receive Family First Hawai'i services. As young parents or expectant young parents who are in the system as foster youth themselves, it is crucial that CWS staff support these young people with tools, information, and resources. Development of the procedures are underway and expect to be completed by January 2023.

RACE EQUITY AND INCLUSION

FFH is one of the many strategies CWS is leveraging to address inequities within the child welfare system, with a long-term goal of reducing disparities experienced by Native Hawaiian children and families. CWS is committed to integrating race equity throughout our work, using the FFH project to advance CWS' race and equity efforts. To demonstrate this commitment, FFH recently merged with the Race Equity Improvement Collaboration to target ethnic disparities and disproportionality within child welfare. The workgroup will identify and engage in strategic opportunities in FFH to contribute to education and training of CWS staff and leadership utilizing a Race Equity and Inclusion framework and identifying services and resources that are most responsive to the dynamic needs of marginalized communities in Hawai'i.



Mahalo

Thank you to all who have helped contribute to this work thus far. We will continue to engage and update you with the efforts of FFH. As a reminder, you can now reach us by email with questions or comments at ffh@dhs.hawaii.gov. Also, keep an eye out for more information on our website in the future at:

<https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/ssd/home/child-welfare-services/>