Joint Fellows Convening
Child Welfare · Youth Homelessness
Graduate Nashville Hotel
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Speaker Bios

Hannah Davis is a family support specialist at Nurture the Next, a Tennessee-based nonprofit organization providing evidence-based home visiting in over 20 counties. She offers in-home support to families in Davidson County, leveraging her bachelor’s degree in child life from Harding University, while pursuing a master’s degree in marriage and family therapy from Abilene Christian University. She was drawn to this field due to her passion for helping children and families thrive. Alongside her professional endeavors, Davis finds joy in running, reading and spending time with her two nephews, as well as traveling and exploring new cultures. She is passionate about empowering families and is committed to making a positive change in the lives of others.

David Hansell, J.D., is the senior advisor for child welfare policy at Casey Family Programs. Hansell joined Casey after a distinguished career in federal, state and local government. He served most recently as commissioner of the New York City Administration for Children’s Services. Previously, Hansell served as acting assistant secretary of the Administration for Children and Families, the commissioner of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and the chief of staff in the New York City Human Resources Administration. He became the associate commissioner for HIV services at the New York City Department of Health in 1997 and subsequently worked as associate commissioner for planning and program implementation. Hansell has also worked in the nonprofit and consulting sectors, including as a managing director at KPMG Advisory. At the height of the HIV/AIDS crisis, Hansell served in several positions at Gay Men’s Health Crisis, including director of legal services and deputy executive director for government and public affairs. Hansell graduated from Haverford College and earned a law degree from Yale.

Tara Gordon is a licensed master social worker working in Tennessee. She is a member of the senior leadership team at Nurture the Next, a Tennessee-based nonprofit organization that provides evidence-based home visiting in over 20 counties across the state. She earned her master’s degree in social work from the School of Social Work at the University of Tennessee, and her bachelor’s degree in mass communications from The Zimmerman School of Advertising & Mass Communications at The University of South Florida. In addition, she is a mother of two young, vivacious boys, and she pours her heart and soul into raising them with kindness, compassion and unconditional love. Gordon believes all children deserve to be raised in safe, stable, nurturing environments, and she has dedicated her life and her career to this cause.
Amy McKlindon, LMSW, is a research scientist in the child welfare research area at Child Trends. McKlindon’s career has centered on child welfare and adult protection, with roles spanning evaluation, system reform, policy development, advocacy and direct practice. At Child Trends, McKlindon designs and implements qualitative data collection and analysis strategies to evaluate system-level reform efforts, with a focus on preventing maltreatment, supporting transition-age youth with foster care experience and engaging individuals with lived expertise. She holds a master’s degree in social work from Temple University and a bachelor’s degree in policy analysis and management from Cornell University.

Melissa Merrick, Ph.D., is president and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America, the nation’s oldest and largest nonprofit organization dedicated to the primary prevention of child abuse and neglect. She has more than 20 years of clinical, research and leadership experience related to preventing child abuse and neglect. Previously, Merrick was a senior epidemiologist at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Merrick uses her clinical and research experiences to communicate and disseminate the critical public health importance of preventing early adversity to key stakeholders with diverse priorities, backgrounds, and knowledge, including legislators, business and civic leaders, and members of the academic and medical communities. Merrick received her bachelor’s degree in psychology, magna cum laude, from the University of Pennsylvania, and her master’s and doctoral degrees in clinical psychology from the San Diego State University/University of California, San Diego, joint doctoral program in clinical psychology, where she served as a program coordinator for the San Diego site of the Longitudinal Studies on Child Abuse and Neglect consortium. E-mail: mmerrick@preventchildabuse.org.

Kristina Rosinsky, MPP, is a senior research scientist in the child welfare research area at Child Trends. She leads Child Trends’ biennial Child Welfare Financing Survey, which is a comprehensive guide to child welfare agency expenditures in the United States. Rosinsky also has directed other child welfare financing-related projects at Child Trends, including a project that deeply explored Colorado’s approach to child welfare financing, a project focused on the financing of services and supports for older youth transitioning out of foster care, and a project focused on the use of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families for child welfare and child care. In addition to her substantial work on child welfare financing, Rosinsky has directed projects related to home visiting, human-centered design and other topics.

Terry Stigdon has a career that has spanned nursing to government work and is now CEO of the Indiana Region of the American Red Cross. In 2018, Stigdon was appointed by Gov. Eric Holcomb to lead the Department of Child Services where she transformed how the agency functioned and worked with families and children in need. During her time with the department, federal safety measures improved and the number of children in foster care decreased by 50%. Before her appointment, Stigdon was a nurse for more than 20 years. During her tenure at Riley Hospital for Children, Stigdon was an intensive care unit manager, the emergency department manager and
directed several hospital programs. She holds a bachelor’s degree in nursing from the University of Indianapolis and a master’s degree in nursing leadership and management from Western Governors’ University.

Krista Thomas, Ph.D., is a senior policy fellow at Chapin Hall. Thomas leads blended teams of policy, practice and research experts in efforts to build the capacity of state and local human service systems across the country to execute large-scale reform initiatives and improve outcomes for children and families facing adversity. Prior to coming to Chapin Hall, Thomas served for over a decade in the Children’s Bureau at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She holds a Ph.D. in social work from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a master’s degree in social work from Washington University and a bachelor’s degree in arts from Knox College.

Lynn Tiede is the Healthy Families America public policy deputy for Prevent Child Abuse America. Most recently, she was an independent consultant working with nonprofit organizations, government agencies and foundations to strengthen their programs and initiatives. As a consultant, Tiede served as senior policy advisor for CHAMPS, a national policy campaign to promote high-quality foster parenting. She also co-authored issue briefs on effective financing and implementation of evidence-based prevention programs for The Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Evidence2Success initiative. In addition, Tiede consulted with Boys and Girls Clubs of America Native Services Unit, the Redlich Horwitz Foundation, the U.S. Office of Adolescent Health, Wyman Center and the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention. Previously, as policy director for the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, she worked with staff, community and national partners and young adults with lived expertise to execute a common set of child welfare policy goals. In this role, she co-authored a series of publications on adolescent brain development and implications for child welfare policy and practice. Earlier in her career, as policy manager for Parents and Teachers National Center, Tiede worked with a national coalition of partners to develop and introduce legislation for federal funding for home visitation programs.