

TITLE: Helping Families Thrive: Economic Stability and Concrete Supports for Families

ABSTRACT:

This session explores the critical connection between economic stability and child safety for families engaged with the child welfare system and affected by substance use disorders (SUDs). Participants will examine how economic hardship can compromise child well-being and how focused, concrete supports—such as housing assistance, employment services, and financial aid—can mitigate these risks. The session will highlight innovative strategies to respond to economic instability more effectively. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how strengthening economic and concrete supports not only enhances child safety but also fosters long-term family resilience and stability.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Describe how economic stability improves child safety for families involved in child welfare and affected by substance use disorders (SUDs)
2. Identify key concrete supports that enhance child safety and promote family well-being
3. Explore practical strategies to improve system responses to economic hardship

Alexis Balkey is a Program Director at Children and Family Futures, working with the National Family Treatment Court Training and Technical Assistance Program. She mentors Associates and Specialists, supports project management and reporting, and has provided TTA to FTCs nationwide, responding to more than 1,600 requests over fourteen years. She served as a Change Leader for statewide system-improvement efforts and for the Prevention and Family Recovery initiative, helping jurisdictions strengthen family-centered care for families affected by substance use disorders. Before joining CFF, she managed the Riverside County Family Preservation Court and oversaw multiple funding streams, including a SAMHSA CAM grant. She is a certified addictive disorder counselor and holds a B.A. in Psychology, a B.A. in Criminal Justice from Temple University, and an MPA from California State University, San Bernardino.