

## **Presenter Bios**

**Michelle Ernst** is a Senior Researcher with a background in child development and survey research. She has extensive experience collecting data on large-scale longitudinal projects such as the New Immigrant Survey and the Multi-Site Evaluation of Foster Youth Programs. In this capacity, she has also trained hundreds of interviewers on the collection of data from children using standardized instruments, serving as a consultant for the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979's child data collection and developing and implementing the training for the child component of the New Immigrant Survey. Dr. Ernst is a co-PI on the Runaway and Homeless Youth Study, which involves qualitative interviews with youth who have run away from home or been thrown out of their home. This work is being completed in partnership with Michael Pergamit (The Urban Institute) and the National Runaway Switchboard. Dr. Ernst also works on a large-scale prospective longitudinal study of children and young people in out-of-home care where she is primarily involved in instrument design. Dr. Ernst holds a Ph.D. from Loyola University of Chicago in Developmental Psychology and a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Missouri.

**Brenda Jones Harden** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Human Development, University of Maryland College Park. She has worked over thirty years in the early childhood policy, practice, and research arenas. She focuses on the developmental and mental health needs of young children at environmental risk, particularly those involved with the child welfare system. An emphasis of her work is preventing maladaptive outcomes in these populations through early childhood intervention programs, particularly home visiting interventions. She is the author of numerous publications regarding vulnerable children and families, including chapters and articles on children in the foster care system, drug-exposed children, and prevention programs for young children and families such as Early Head Start. She is the author of the book *Infants in the Child Welfare System: A developmental perspective on policy and practice*, and is a co-author of the book *Beyond common sense: Child welfare, child well-being, and the evidence for policy reform*. She received the doctoral degree in developmental and clinical psychology from Yale University, and the Master in Social Work degree from New York University.

**Janie Huddleston** has been Deputy Director of the Arkansas Department of Human Services since 2004 and has had oversight for all ten divisions in DHS during that time period. DHS is an agency with over 7,500 employees and a budget of over \$5 billion. Her current responsibilities include oversight of the following divisions: Behavioral Health Services, Children and Family Services, County Operations, Developmental Disabilities Services and Medical Services. In this role Janie works directly with staff and key stakeholders to address systems issues. She is currently active in the Child Welfare Systems Reform, Children's Mental Health System Reform and HealthCare Payment Reform. Prior to becoming Deputy Director for the Department she worked in the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education for six years. She also has had previous experience as a first grade teacher, elementary principal, financial consultant, business owner and director of a children's center. She also has experience working at a national level on child care and fraud initiatives. Janie is a graduate of Henderson State College and the University of Arkansas.

**Judy Langford** is a Senior Fellow and Associate Director at the Center for the Study of Social Policy in Washington, D.C. Her work at the Center includes field research, policy and program analysis and technical assistance to foundations, governmental agencies, and private organizations on the development and implementation of family supportive practices and policies. She is currently leading the national Strengthening Families initiative, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Strengthening Families is being implemented in more than 35 states with assistance from enthusiastic multidisciplinary state leadership teams, including parents, and an expanding network of national partner organizations. Judy is part of the leadership team for the federal Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood, funded by the Children's Bureau. She has been a member of the Community Change Initiatives management team for the Annie E. Casey Foundation, providing leadership for early childhood strategies in *Making Connections* cities. She is the former Executive Director of the Family Resource Coalition and previously headed the Ounce of Prevention Fund in Chicago. She has been an advisor to numerous foundation initiatives, including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and the Casey Family Programs.