

**CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES
CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS**

Resolution 5

In Support of UPSTREAM: Strengthening Children and Families through Prevention and Intervention Strategies: A Court and Community Based Approach and the National Upstream Consortium

WHEREAS, a national initiative, UPSTREAM: Strengthening Children and Families through Prevention and Intervention Strategies: A Court and Community Based Approach was launched in 2019 (formerly the “Blueprint”), with funding from the State Justice Institute, to develop a conceptual framework based upon the Sequential Intercept Model for use in and for the improvement of the courts, the child protection system, and services to at-risk families; and

WHEREAS, a committee of the National Judicial Task Force to Examine State Courts’ Response to Mental Illness serves as an advisory committee for the further development of *Upstream*; and

WHEREAS, *Upstream* provides support to court leaders to guide collaborative community actions to identify points of prevention and intervention within available community services, the child welfare system and the courts to develop a more prevention-focused system and connect children and families to supportive community services; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has placed a great strain on families, particularly those experiencing mental illness, substance use, job loss, housing insecurity, domestic violence and food insecurity; and

WHEREAS, state courts are predicting an unprecedented increase in the number of juvenile and family court case filings as communities and courts begin to resume full operation, and many courts lack the capacity and resources to effectively manage the surge in cases and the resulting backlogs; and

WHEREAS, court leaders are uniquely positioned to initiate and lead community efforts, utilizing *Upstream* and sequential intercept mapping, to support a community-based approach that is less reactive, more holistic, recognizes bias, and is focused on keeping children safely with their families and out of foster care, thereby minimizing the need for the filing of child protection cases; and

WHEREAS, in 2021 the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) partnered with the Executive Office of the Massachusetts Trial Court to pilot *Upstream*, and with the Indiana Supreme Court to pilot a model train-the-trainer program for *Upstream*; and

WHEREAS, because many state courts have expressed an interest in bringing *Upstream* to their states and communities, the NCSC has proposed the creation of a National Upstream Consortium to provide strategic assistance to state court leaders, train facilitators to conduct child welfare community mapping, develop prevention and intervention strategies, and promote peer-to-peer learning;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators support the continued development and use of a conceptual framework based upon the Sequential Intercept Model for use in and improvement of the courts as implemented and distributed by the National Upstream Consortium; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators support the creation by the National Center for State Courts of the National Upstream Consortium and encourage interested states to join and participate.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Courts, Children, and Families Committee and the National Judicial Task Force to Examine State Courts' Response to Mental Illness at the CCJ/COSCA 2021 Annual Meeting on July 28, 2021.