



# Partnering with and Serving Rural Families

PRESENTED BY:

KAREN THOMPSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / PTI CO-DIRECTOR @ ASK RESOURCE CENTER, IOWA'S PTI  
CONSULTANT, REGION C PTAC @ WI FACETS



# Overview of Parent Centers

- Authorized under IDEA
- OSEP investment in every state (94 current Parent Centers)
  - Parent Training & Information Centers (PTI)
    - Every state, DC, Puerto Rico, & US Virgin Islands has at least one PTI; one PTI serving the Western Territories
    - Some states have more than one based on population
  - Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRC)
    - Up to 30 Community Parent Resource Centers targeting underserved communities





About what % of your service area is rural?

- ▶ 0%
- ▶ 1-20%
- ▶ 21-40%
- ▶ 41-60%
- ▶ 61-80%
- ▶ 81-99%
- ▶ 100%



# Why does that matter?

RURAL = ISOLATED  
SO  
RURAL = APPLICABLE  
+  
RESOURCE ALLOCATION



# Rural and Urban Similarities

- ▶ Levels of social engagement, cohesion and participation are similar in urban and rural residents.
- ▶ People living in rural and urban areas are equally supportive of people that they know. For example, providing help to relatives, neighbors or friends.
- ▶ Rural and urban residents report similar levels of social isolation from close friends and relatives.
- ▶ Levels of political involvement are similar in communities of all sizes.
- ▶ The level of trust towards other people in general is similar in both urban and rural places.

How to Reach Rural Populations:

[https://www.beststart.org/resources/howto/pdf/rural\\_manual\\_fnl\\_web.pdf](https://www.beststart.org/resources/howto/pdf/rural_manual_fnl_web.pdf)



# Rural and Urban Differences

- ▶ Residents of rural areas are more likely than urban residents to know all or most of their neighbors.
- ▶ People living in rural areas are more likely to trust their neighbors.
- ▶ Rural residents are more likely to have done some volunteer work.
- ▶ Rural residents are more likely to have a strong sense of belonging to their communities.

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# What Got Iowa Started (Systemically)?



(Type your answer in the Chat Box)



# Supporting Data

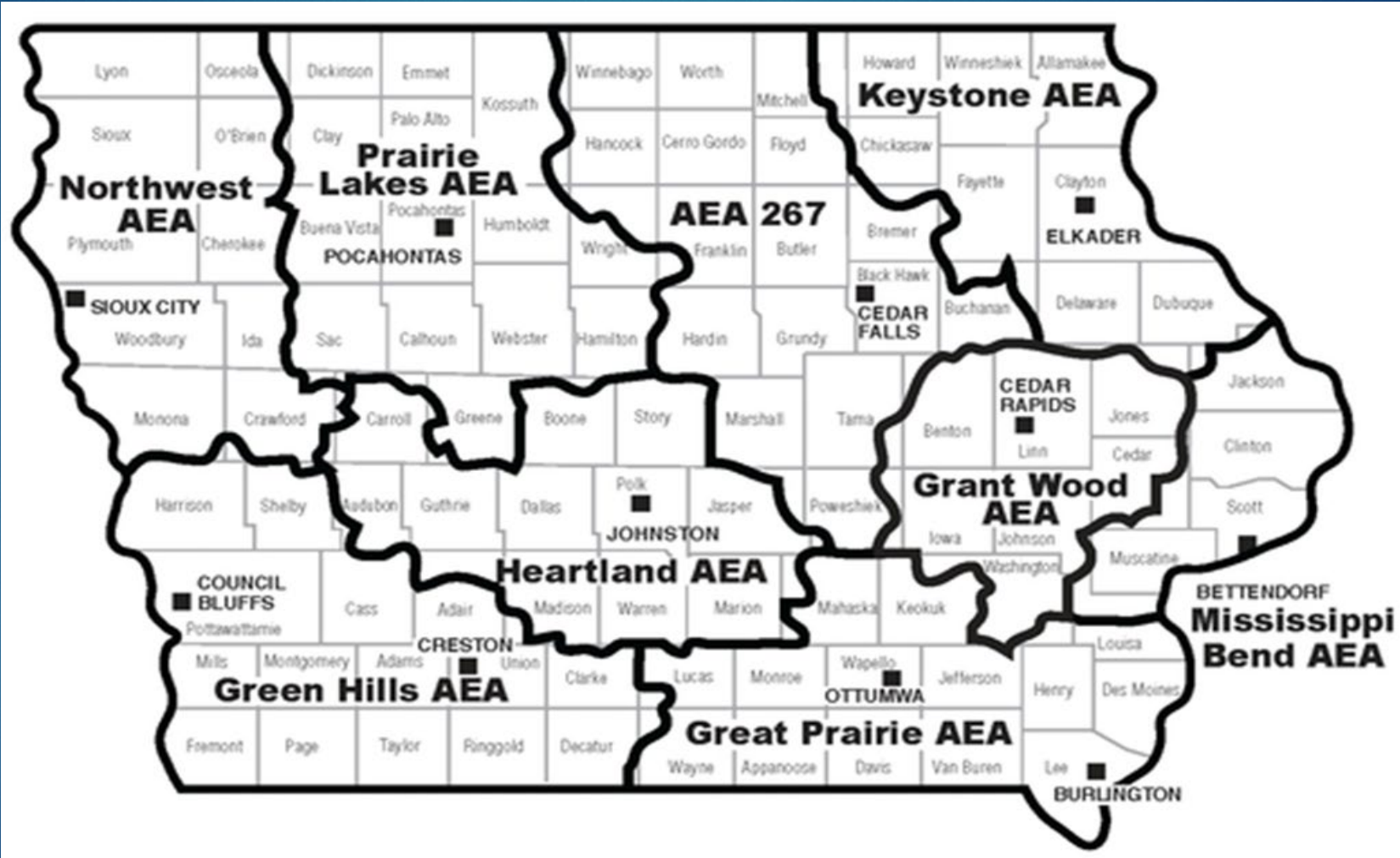
- ➔ 172 of 1300 or about 13% of 1 to 1 PTI cases
- ➔ P and A (Disability Rights Iowa) reported similar narratives
- ➔ FEP (Family Educator Partnership) reported similar narratives
- ➔ State Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) membership and other council reports reported similar narratives



# Misunderstandings

- “...above the 12<sup>th</sup> percentile so won't be eligible...”
- “...it is too late in the year for an evaluation...”
- “...it is too early in the year for an evaluation...”
- “...we don't do mental health...”
- “...we have to complete our RTI interventions first...”
- “...she didn't request an evaluation in writing...”
- “...we don't have to explain our results in writing because we are not recommending an evaluation...”
- “...she appears to be doing fine at school...”







# Iowa's Response, Part 1

State Director of Special Ed Recommended Collaboration

Multiple Meetings, Data Reviews, Stories Shared

2-Pronged Solution Developed

Additional Layer of Informal Procedural Safeguards Developed



# Iowa's Response, Part 2

4 Towns per Year

2 Trainings each Town

Parents as Partners in Mentoring

Facilitated IEPs and Mediation Attendance



What are the main concerns you hear from your rural service area families?  
(Choose ALL that Apply)

- ▶ Evaluation
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ School Health Services/Personal Nurse/Medicaid
- ▶ Postsecondary Transition
- ▶ Mental Health/Behavior
- ▶ Concern over the use of formal Procedural Safeguards
- ▶ Other (Please tell us more using the chat box)



# Summing Up Rural and Isolated Services



Parent Centers are typically minimally funded.



Communities are each uniquely diverse.



Cultural brokering is necessary.



In person, trust-building and networking is essential.



Procedural Safeguards are used sparingly, if at all.



- Multiple Meetings
- Well Placed Champions
- Engaged Leadership
  - Stories
  - Attitudes
  - Beliefs
  - Data
  - COMMITMENT



KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
START  
COLLABORATING



“ If a story is not about the hearer he will not listen. And here I make a rule — a great and interesting story is about everyone or it will not last. ”

(East of Eden)



# Favorite Rural Resources...

- ▶ [https://www.beststart.org/resources/howto/pdf/rural\\_manual\\_fnl\\_web.pdf](https://www.beststart.org/resources/howto/pdf/rural_manual_fnl_web.pdf)
- ▶ <http://www.ruraledu.org/>
- ▶ <https://www.acres-sped.org/home>

Place One of Yours in the Chat Box...



# Our Contact Info

David Emenheiser

- U.S. Dept of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
- [David.Emenheiser@ed.gov](mailto:David.Emenheiser@ed.gov)

Karen Thompson

- PTI @ ASK Resource Center in Iowa / Region C  
Parent Technical Assistance Center @ WI  
FACETS
- [karen@askresource.org](mailto:karen@askresource.org)