



Washington State

Program Improvement Plan

Children's Administration
Department of Social and Health Services
Effective October 1, 2011

Washington State Program Improvement Plan for Child Welfare

The Department of Social and Health Services

In Washington state, child welfare services are administered by the Department of Social and Health Services, a broad spectrum agency with one vision, one mission and one set of values.

Vision

Safe, healthy individuals, families, and communities

Mission

The Department of Social and Health Services will improve the safety and health of individuals, families and communities by providing leadership and establishing and participating in partnerships

Values

Excellence in Service, Respect, Collaboration and Partnership, Diversity, Accountability

Orientations

Early Childhood Development

Person- and family-centered, strengths-based

Our Impact

Together we will decrease poverty, improve safety and health status, and increase educational and employment success to support people and communities in reaching their potential.

Government cannot and should not ensure child welfare alone. Child welfare is a shared responsibility. The department is committed to serve the state's children by acting as One Department, aligning services and leveraging resources within the department and throughout the community, to meet the multiple needs of the diverse children and families we serve statewide.

Children's Administration

Children's Administration is directly responsible for child welfare services. Safety is at the forefront of our work; we endeavor to:

Safely

- Maintain children in their own homes, preventing out-of-home placement
- Serve and support children in temporary out-of-home care
- Return children home as quickly as possible
- Support children in the homes of fit and willing relatives
- Secure permanent families for children who cannot return home
- Decrease the over-representation of children of color involved in the child welfare system

To achieve these goals CA is in the process of implementing several strategic initiatives, which promote *quality, consistency of practice, collaboration and partnership, diversity, accountability and outcomes*. Some of these strategies address the concerns identified by the State Assessment and the on-site review components of the Child and Family Services Review conducted in 2010. The Child and Family Services Review and our own quality assurance activities demonstrate that Children's Administration is capable of excellent work with children and families. However, we must strive to ensure our approach is consistent with best practice for every child and family, every day, in every area of the state.

Child and Family Services Review

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process incorporates:

1. State agency submission of a data profile
2. Completion of the statewide assessment by the state agency and partners
3. On-site review with federal reviewers and Washington's partners, which includes:
 - in-depth evaluation of 65 child welfare cases
 - interviews and focus groups with families, foster parents, courts, state legislators, staff, service providers, and other community stakeholders

The CFSR process examines seven child and family safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes and seven systemic factors that indicate a foundation for service delivery is in place; including policies, practices, and technology.

Children’s Administration submitted the Statewide Assessment in July 2010 and the on-site review occurred September 13 – 17, 2010. The cover letter to the final CFSR Report includes the following summary of the results:

“Washington should take great pride in those areas found to be strengths in its child welfare system, not only in ensuring that children’s physical and educational needs are met, but also in making significant strides in improving child safety and in promoting meaningful collaboration with community stakeholders. In addition, Washington has a very strong commitment to maintaining family connections by placing children and their siblings together with relatives whenever possible and striving for placement in close proximity to their families. Washington has also worked hard to improve the child welfare system by speeding up the investigative response times to referrals of possible child abuse, and increasing the frequency of visits to dependent children in out-of-home care, as well as those who are in their own homes. The State has also built strong relationships with Tribes in Washington, as well as community agencies, courts and service providers.”

Using the most recent data available for Federal fiscal years 2009 and 2010, Washington exceeds five out of six national data standards: absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff; timeliness and permanency of reunification; timeliness of adoptions; permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods; and placement stability. In addition, Washington has met the agreed upon amount of improvement for the national standard relating to the absence of maltreatment recurrence. As a result of this performance, Washington will not be required to measure any of the national standards in the PIP.

The CFSR Report determined that Washington is not operating in substantial conformity in the areas of safety, permanency or well-being. There are also two systemic factors not in substantial conformity: court case review and service array. Therefore, a PIP is required to address these areas.

The five systemic factors that are in substantial conformity in Washington state are:

- Statewide Information System
- Quality Assurance Process
- Staff and Provider Training
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention

The on-site review and final report held no surprises. The results of the CFSR are consistent with CA's own assessment of areas needing improvement. The full CFSR report is available at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/CFSR/round2-cfsr.asp>.

Improving services is an ongoing, multi-year effort. Even before completing the State Assessment in July 2010, Children's Administration began service improvement efforts, including some contained in this plan.

Approach to the Program Improvement Plan

Collaboration

Children's Administration developed this Program Improvement Plan with oversight of the State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care, guidance from the Children, Youth and Family Services Advisory Committee and the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee. We worked with a broad group of staff and stakeholders on the approach outlined in the plan.

In the development of this plan, we consulted with many knowledgeable resources and are fortunate to have support from private partners. We show these collaborations in the *PIP Strategy Summary and Technical Assistance Plan* which begins on page 7.

Respond to Findings in the Child and Family Services Review

This plan responds only to the areas identified through the CFSR process as areas needing improvement. Not all child welfare service improvement strategies are included in this plan. A complete update on our strategic initiatives and plan for the coming year can be found at the link provided to the Washington Annual Progress and Service Report for SFY 2012 <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/pubs/apsr-review.asp>.

Interwoven Themes Throughout the PIP

1. Reducing Racial Disproportionality

Racial disproportionality refers to outcomes that differ by the racial or ethnic group to which the children and families belong. We know that in Washington state, racial disproportionality increases at each of the following decision points: Referrals, removal from home, placement more than 60 days and placement more than 2 years; therefore, racial disproportionality worsens the longer children are in the child welfare system. Racial disproportionality has the most

significant detrimental impact on Black and Indian children. Conscientious, dedicated efforts will be necessary to better understand and address this issue. The Administration is approaching racial disproportionality and outcome disparity, not as a stand-alone or afterthought, but as a critical component of daily practice integrated into all service delivery activities and quality assurance strategies.

We have woven efforts to address racial disparities throughout this plan. Each of the training curriculums in this plan will include attention to cultural competency. During the period of the PIP, we will increase the number of reports from FamLink that include race and ethnicity in order to track outcomes and process measures by these factors. Many of the strategies included in the plan will have a significant impact on children and families of color, including Indian families, involved in the child welfare system.

Although the federal CFSR does not include a review of compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act, Washington conducts our own ICW case review. We track practice improvements needed as a result of this review. In our last legislative session, Washington enacted a state Indian Child Welfare Act, which largely mirrors the federal act. We will use this opportunity to include information and skill-building on improving identification of Tribal affiliation in FamLink and serving children associated with tribes outside Washington in the training on the new state act.

There is an increased emphasis on improving our response to Indian children and families in the following action steps in this PIP:

- Better engaging Indian fathers whose children are involved in the child welfare system (Step 3.2.2.)
- Assuring CA Family Team Decision-Making Facilitators are fully versed in Government to Government relations and offer FTDM training to Tribal staff (Steps 3.1.9 and 3.1.10.)
- Assuring cases of Indian children are included in the Permanency Roundtables, analyzing reasons, gaps and barriers to permanency by race and ethnicity and discussing with the Indian Policy Advisory Committee possible changes to the ICW case review tool (Steps 4.1.2, 4.1.5, and 4.1.14.)
- Developing inventory of available services, including identification of culturally and linguistically competent services (Step 6.1.1.)

2. Increasing Consistency

CA aims to achieve more consistent statewide child welfare practice. Consistent practice from worker to worker, community to community, in our work from Tribe to Tribe through adherence to the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding /

Local Tribal State Agreement with each Tribe, and in our response to diverse racial and ethnic groups will help achieve consistent outcomes for every child and family. Support for consistent practice in the plan is seen throughout the plan, particularly in the practice model as well as our quality assurance and improvement processes.

3. Enhancing Quality Assurance

A third theme is support for quality assurance and continuous quality improvement. This plan includes a quality assurance process for each of the improvement strategies in this plan. Some processes are currently in place; others will be created and implemented to support the identified strategy.

CA is expanding and integrating our quality assurance infrastructure and system to become more proactive. We are creating Program Evaluation Manager (PEM) positions who will conduct ongoing reviews of practice in their program area, normalizing third party review of practice by program area. These reviews will be implemented between scheduled case reviews and will determine compliance with CA policy and procedures. The PEMs will have a pulse on practice, identifying strengths and detecting smoke before fire. PEMs will be responsible for identifying practice trends and sharing lessons learned. The specific responsibilities of the PEMs for monitoring PIP strategies will be identified in the quality assurance plans submitted during the PIP period.

Strategy Summary

To address the areas of practice and system capacity identified as needing improvement in the CFSSR, Children’s Administration will pursue six primary strategies. A summary of these strategies, the concerns they address and the technical assistance which has been used or is still needed follows:

PIP Strategy Summary and Technical Assistance Plan

PRIMARY STRATEGIES	KEY CONCERNS	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES USED OR NEEDED
<p>1. New Approach to Ensuring Child Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a new safety framework 	<p>The agency made diligent efforts to assess and address the risk of harm to the child in 60% of the cases reviewed. The most frequent concerns from the review of the remaining cases include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of ongoing safety or risk assessment in the child’s home • continued risk concerns in the home that were not addressed or monitored by the agency 	<p>National Resource Center for Child Protective Services</p>
<p>2. Increase Family Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to Implement CA’s Casework Practice Model 	<p>The agency frequently did not engage fathers and mothers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fathers were engaged in case planning in 47% of the cases reviewed • Mothers were engaged in 68% of the cases reviewed 	<p>Casey Family Programs</p>
<p>3. Improve Child and Family Well-Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance Family Team Decision Making • Increase Support for Fathers and Paternal Relatives 	<p>Reviewers determined that the agency made diligent efforts to locate and assess relatives as potential placement resources in 77% of the cases.</p> <p>Reviewers determined that children’s educational needs were met in 80% of the cases reviewed.</p>	<p>Annie E. Casey Foundation</p> <p>Stuart Foundation</p>

PRIMARY STRATEGIES	KEY CONCERNS	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES USED OR NEEDED
<p>4. Increase Focus on Legal Permanency for Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Permanency Roundtables • Implement Unified Family Home Studies 	<p>Permanency goals for children were appropriate and set in a timely manner less than half the time (45%).</p> <p>31.9% of the children in foster care for 24 months or longer were discharged from foster care to a permanent home (adoption, reunification with parents or other relatives, or guardianship) by the end of the target period.</p> <p>In 29% of the applicable cases, the agency made diligent efforts to attain the goals of reunification, permanent placement with relatives, or guardianship in a timely manner.</p> <p>35% of the applicable cases reviewed demonstrated the department made concerted efforts to achieve a finalized adoption in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Casey Family Programs</p> <p>National Resource Center for Adoption</p> <p>National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement</p> <p>National Resource Center for Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents</p>
<p>5. Improve the Court Case Review System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine Shared Planning and Family Meetings • More Timely Filings for Termination of Parental Rights • Notify Foster Parents of Court Hearings 	<p>The State is not consistent in its efforts to ensure that the case plan is developed jointly with the child's parents.</p> <p>The agency often did not file Terminations of Parental Rights (TPRs) within the Adoption and Safe Families Act guidelines.</p> <p>Foster parents reported they were frequently not notified of court hearings.</p>	<p>Washington Court Improvement Project</p>

PRIMARY STRATEGIES	KEY CONCERNS	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES NEEDED OR USED
6. Improve the service array available to children and families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of Existing Services 	Reviewers determined the state adequately assessed and addressed the service needs of children, parents, and foster parents in only 45% of the cases.	

Strategy 1: New Approach To Assuring Child Safety

The first strategy is designed to address the areas needing improvement related to Safety Outcomes 1 and 2. The key findings of the on-site review in this area are that in some cases:

- Investigations of maltreatment reports were not initiated with face-to-face contact in a timely manner.
- Although some services were provided to the family to prevent removal from the home, the services did not target the key safety concern in the family.
- No ongoing safety or risk assessment in the child's home.

In order to improve safety outcomes for children, CA will implement a new Safety Framework. This framework was selected in consultation with the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services. We are continuing our consultation with the National Resource Center as we implement the new framework. The new framework strives for clarity and consistency across child welfare workers statewide as they assess and intervene into child abuse and neglect cases. Our new safety framework emphasizes that child safety drives all key decisions throughout the life of the case, for children in their own homes and children in out-of-home placement; from the first referral through case closure. The new Safety Framework focuses on the following:

- Use of child safety rather than risk as the defining principle for Child Protective Services involvement
- Defining the differences between safety and risk in ways staff and the community can understand helps all to make good safety decisions
- Reliance on precise language in the application of safety threat analysis

- Analysis of a safety threat focuses on the collection and assessment of discrete information rather than evaluating/intervening into every aspect and detail of each family member’s life
- Formalizing our practice concerning visits with parents
- Identifying present and impending danger threats to help determine if a child is safe or unsafe in the family home or in out-of-home care
- Maintaining children/youth safely at home when safety threats can be managed and controlled
- Identifying and responding to concerns about well-being or risk factors for the child and family but not basing decisions on these concerns

We can all make better decisions about the level and type of intervention needed by having dialogue about safety threats with families, Children’s Administration staff, providers and the community.

Training on the new safety framework will provide the knowledge and teach the skills necessary to apply the framework consistently and appropriately across diverse racial and ethnic groups.

The Safety Framework will be integrated throughout CA practice by:

- Using the Practice Model Coaches as trainers for the Safety Framework
- Integrating Safety Framework practices with the case consultations supporting the practice model
- Retraining Social Work Supervisors within 6 months of implementation
- Providing on-line training and resources to staff

Primary Strategy: 1 Implement a New Safety Framework		Applicable Outcomes or Factors: Safety Outcome 1 & 2	
Goal: Improve child safety throughout the entire life of the case		Applicable Items: 1, 2, 3 & 4	
Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	PIP Due Date
<u>1.1 Strengthen Child Safety Practice by Implementing a New Safety Framework to:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure child safety is assessed, analyzed, and controlled throughout the life of a case using precise language in the application of safety threat 	Becky Smith, Interim Director of Practice and Quality Support		

<p>analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include the family, their natural supports and community partners in keeping children safe in their own home when possible ● Formalize the policy expectation and practice of visiting parents at least monthly 			
PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE			
1.1.1 Request assistance from the National Resource Center to review practice in Washington State and recommend ways to strengthen child safety practice	Denise Revels Robinson, Assistant Secretary	Request to National Resource Center on Child Protective Services for technical assistance	Q1 By December 31, 2011
1.1.2 Identify practice standards that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen assessment, analysis and controlling for child safety throughout the life of a case. ● Move beyond incident based assessments ● Focus on identified safety threats versus risk of maltreatment 	Becky Smith, Interim Director of Practice and Quality Support	Copy of on-line overview made available to all CA staff	Q1 By December 31, 2011
1.1.3 Develop policy and procedures for the new Safety Framework, incorporating Solution Based Casework	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Finalized written policy and procedures	Q1 By December 31, 2011
1.1.4 Develop training curriculum to ensure transfer of learning that will support the Safety Framework, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skills to apply the framework consistently with children and families of all races and ethnicities, including Tribal children ● The importance of monthly visits with both parents of children who remain at home and those in out-of-home care ● Racial disproportionality ● Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act 	Marjorie Fitzgerald, Chief, Office of Training and Development	Training curriculum	Q1 By December 31, 2011
1.1.5 Design and test FamLink tools and integrate the Practice Model to support Child Safety Framework	Stephanie Sarber, CATS Business Analyst	Screen Prints of Safety Assessment, Safety Plan, Family Assessment, Assessment of Progress and Case Plan	Q1 By December 31, 2011

1.1.6 Design and develop FamLink report to track visits with fathers and mothers (for children who remain in the home and those in out-of-home placement) with the capacity to separate data by race and ethnicity	Debbie Willis, Policy Manager	Copy of FamLink Report	Q5 By December 31, 2012
TRAINING AND INFORMATION			
1.1.7 Disseminate Bench Guides and Cards to judicial officers concerning the new Safety Framework	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Letter from the Administrative Office of the Courts confirming distribution of Bench Guides and Cards to judicial officers	Q1 By December 31, 2011
1.1.8 Provide Training to CA staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Administrators and Supervisors trained first to help support the practice • Family Team Decision-Making Facilitators • Direct service staff 	Marjorie Fitzgerald, Chief, Office of Training and Development	Written summary report of attendance demonstrating 90% of Area Administrators, Social Work Supervisors, Social Workers, and Family Team Decision Making Facilitators trained by staff group and region	Q2 By March 30, 2012
1.1.9 Communicate and provide education to critical partners, for example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal child practitioners (those who choose to attend) and Indian Policy Advisory Committee • Court partners • Community partners, such as service providers, advocacy organizations and others 	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Schedule of events and written summary report of attendance	Q2 By March 30, 2012
1.1.10 Provide refresher training to Social Work Supervisors which will include guided coaching for supervisors to replicate with their staff. The training will also address areas of practice that have been identified as needing to be strengthened	Marjorie Fitzgerald, Chief, Office of Training and Development	Written training content Written summary report of attendance demonstrating 90% of, Social Work Supervisors trained, by region	Q3 By June 30, 2012
IMPLEMENTATION			
1.1.11 Implement the new Safety Framework including monthly visits with both parents of children who are in-home	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Written communication from CA Leadership announcing implementation of new safety framework including	Q2 By March 30, 2012

		implementation of formal policy on monthly visits with both parents of children who are in-home Written policy will be sent	
1.1.12 Implement requirement for monthly visits with both parents of children in out-of-home care	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Written communication from CA Leadership announcing implementation of formal policy requiring monthly visits with both parents of children in out-of-home care Written policy will be sent	Q3 By June 30, 2012
1.1.13 Remind staff of the supplemental on-line training and resources to support learning practices consistent with the new Safety Framework	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Copy of announcement	Q3 By June 30, 2012
1.1.14 Integrate Safety Framework practice into the coaching sessions to support the Practice Model (This step is also 2.1.3.)	Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written summary of coaching sessions	Q3 By June 30, 2012
MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE / IMPROVEMENT			
1.1.15 Develop a quality assurance plan to monitor and support consistent implementation of the Safety Framework. The plan will include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data will be collected, analyzed and reported, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Case Review ○ FamLink data on monthly visits with both parents • Staff responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data • Timeframes for collecting, analyzing and reporting data for reporting to local offices, CA Leadership and ACF 	Becky Smith, Interim Director of Practice and Quality Support	Written plan for quality assurance	Q2 By March 30, 2012
1.1.16 Provide summary report of implementation status, results of quality assurance process, adherence to the model, quality and outcomes to CA Leadership	Becky Smith, Interim Director of Practice and Quality Support	Written report	Q4 & Q6 By December 31, 2012

1.1.17 Develop plan to refine practice and address the issues identified in the QA report through continuous quality improvement within a self correcting learning environment. This will include setting timeframes, actions steps, improvement goals and any additional monitoring processes	Becky Smith, Interim Director of Practice and Quality Support	Written plan	Q5 & Q7 By April 30, 2012
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Strategy 2: Increase Family Engagement

The second strategy is designed to address the areas needing improvement related to Permanency Outcome 2. The key findings of the on-site review in this area are:

- Permanency Outcome 2, *The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children*, was substantially achieved in 67.5 % of the cases reviewed.

To improve family engagement, Children’s Administration will continue to implement our Practice model based on Solution-Based Casework . Many of the strategies included in other areas of this plan will support and improvement family engagement as well. We will:

- Increase our contact with parents as outlined in the Safety Framework
- Increase our support for fathers and paternal relatives.
- Enhance our Family Team Decision-Making meeting
- Combine shared planning meetings to improve family involvement in case planning

Continue to Implement Consistent Practice Model

The CA Practice Model, based on the tenets of Solution-Based Casework (SBC), developed by Dr. Dana Christensen from the University of Louisville, Kentucky, provides:

- A model for social workers to focus their day-to-day work with children and families
- A child-focused model that emphasizes family engagement and partnership throughout the life of a case
- A consistent approach to completing a comprehensive child welfare assessment
- Specific prevention skills tied to the family’s tasks

This practice targets specific everyday events in life that caused the family difficulty and led to a lack of child safety. It engages the family in the development of partnerships for safety and case plans to address safety threats.

CA’s Practice Model provides a common model for social workers to work with children and families statewide. SBC supports social work practice that is consistent across the regions, courts, provider interactions, and other community resources. This consistent approach to practice strongly emphasizes family engagement and involvement throughout assessment, case planning, and case management. As detailed below, the principles of the WrapAround approach will be incorporated into the Practice Model in order to strengthen our ability to individualize services to each child and family.

Children’s Administration first implemented SBC as our Practice Model in 2007. With support from Casey Family Programs we have established field coaches to work with staff to strengthen the skills needed to embed this Practice Model throughout the state. As of January 2010, all DCFS and DLR staff have been trained. Since completing training, staff continue to participate in activities to sustain practice knowledge and support integration of the Practice Model into our day-to-day work. To reinforce practice change, case consultation with practice model coaches have become a standard for each office, with units conducting case consultations twice a month as outlined in their local Quality Assurance Plan.

To further implement and integrate the Practice Model into CA’s day-to-day work:

- CA’s information system (FamLink) will have new and refined tools that support the Practice Model such as the family assessment, assessment of progress, and case plan
- The new Safety Framework will be integrated with the Practice Model in training, coaching and case consultations
- The principles of the WrapAround approach to service delivery will be incorporated into the Practice Model
- Further work to embed the Practice Model into policies and procedures as well as training will occur

<p>Primary Strategy: 2. Increase Family Engagement</p>	<p>Applicable Outcomes or Factors: Permanency Outcome 2</p>
<p>Goal: Increase family engagement to safely maintain more children in their own homes or with relatives safely shorten the length of time children are in out-of-home care, and increase well-being for children and families</p>	<p>Applicable Items: 12, 13, 14, 15, 16</p>

Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	PIP Due Date
<p>2.1 Continue Implementation of CA's Practice Model to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the consistency of practice statewide • Reinforce CA's commitment to child safety • Support a solution-based approach to working with families 	Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach		
PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE			
2.1.1. Incorporate the principles of the WrapAround approach to working with families into materials describing the Practice Model	Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written description of the Practice Model incorporating the Safety framework and WrapAround approach	Q3 By June 30, 2012
2.1.2 As CA develops new policy and procedures (e.g., to address the new safety framework) incorporate the Practice Model throughout CA practice	Simon Pipkin, Practice Model Coach Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written policies and procedures issued	Q4 By September 30, 2012
TRAINING AND INFORMATION			
2.1.3 Provide Solution Based Casework training to Department of Corrections staff to improve the consistency of practice in the Parenting Alternative Program (authorized in 2010 by SSB 6639). The families in this program have open cases with both CA & the Department of Corrections	Simon Pipkin, Practice Model Coach Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Training announcement Written summary report of attendance Summary of training content	Q1 By December 31, 2011
2.1.4 Provide coaching to CA staff to ensure ongoing learning and application of the Practice Model throughout implementation, integrating the safety framework and the WrapAround approach	Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written summary of coaching sessions conducted by region	Q3 By June 30, 2012
2.1.5 Revise and strengthen CA Training Academy for new workers and supervisors to include SBC practice with attention to racial disproportionality as well as cultural considerations for Tribes and other groups	Charlie Watts Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written sections of the training curriculum with major revisions	Q4 By September 30, 2012

IMPLEMENTATION			
2.1.6 Implement new case plans, incorporating SBC language and processes as well as cultural considerations concerning children and families of all races, ethnicities including Tribes	Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written communication from CA Leadership announcing implementation of new case plans	Q1 By December 31, 2011
2.1.7 Integrate case consultations as a standard of practice for all units twice per month	Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written statewide summary report of the number of case consultations by unit for Q2	Q2 By March 30, 2012
MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE / IMPROVEMENT			
2.1.8 Develop CA quality assurance processes to monitor and support consistent implementation of the Practice Model. The plan will include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data will be collected, analyzed and reported, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Case Review data from coaching sessions (2.1.4) ○ Data from case consultation with units (2.1.7) • Staff responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data • Timeframes for collecting, analyzing and reporting data for reporting to local offices, CA Leadership and ACF 	Simon Pipkin, Practice Model Coach Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written plan for quality assurance	Q2 By March 30, 2012
2.1.9 Provide summary report of implementation status, results of quality assurance process, adherence to the model, quality and outcomes to CA Leadership	Simon Pipkin, Practice Model Coach Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written report	Q5 By December 31, 2012
2.1.10 Develop plan to refine practice and address the issues identified in the QA report through continuous quality improvement within a self correcting learning environment. This will include setting timeframes, actions steps, improvement goals and any additional monitoring processes	Simon Pipkin, Practice Model Coach Carlos Carrillo, Lead Practice Model Coach	Written plan	Q6 By March 31, 2013

Strategy 3: Improving Child and Family Well-Being

The third improvement strategy is focused on improving child and family well-being by enhancing family's capacity to meet their children's needs and addressing educational needs. Specifically the On-Site Review found:

- Well-Being Outcome 1, *Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs*, was substantially achieved in 41.5 percent of the cases reviewed. The outcome was substantially achieved in 52.5 percent of the 40 foster care cases and 24 percent of the 25 in-home services cases. The State has not made consistent, concerted efforts statewide to locate and engage parents, especially fathers, in case planning, assessment, and service provision.
- Well-Being Outcome 2, *Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs*, was substantially achieved in 80.5 percent of the cases. The outcome was substantially achieved in 84 percent of the 32 applicable foster care cases and 67 percent of the 9 applicable in-home services cases.

Enhance Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) Meetings

In 2004 - 2005, Children's Administration implemented FTDMs in seven urban offices under the first Program Improvement Plan. Complete implementation was not possible at that time due to the lack of resources. Since then we have developed the capacity to hold FTDMs in a majority of offices statewide. Our goals for this second Program Improvement Plan include enhancing FTDMs to provide a meeting in every office of the state for every placement decision and achieving greater statewide consistency and model fidelity in our FTDM practice.

The practice of Family Team Decision Making, in concert with SBC and our new Safety Framework, is our fundamental approach to the early and ongoing engagement of parents and their natural supports to give them an authentic voice at the decision making and planning table. All FTDM facilitators have been certified to conduct SBC case consultations to assure practice which integrates these approaches.

The purpose of an FTDM meeting is to determine the safest, least restrictive and least intrusive placement decision for a child. The meeting ensures all available and relevant information and perspectives of birth families, community members, resource families, service providers and agency staff is taken into consideration with all placement decisions.

Through this process the family's voice is clearly brought forth and considered on an equal basis as the team searches for innovative solutions. Family and community resources, not previously considered, are often suggested by team members that can provide for less intrusive alternatives to manage and control safety threats.

When families are respectfully included in the decision making process they are capable of identifying and participating in addressing their needs. Members of the family's own community add value to the process by serving as natural allies to the family and experts on the community's resources.

FTDM practice strives to:

- Maximize the child's safety and stability
- Prevent unnecessary placements and placement moves
- Reach consensus regarding a decision that provides the safest and least-restrictive placement in the best interest of the child
- Create a network of support for the child and family

The FTDM process helps a social worker create a plan that will keep children safe by bringing together a team of individuals focused on that priority. An FTDM will occur at several points in the life of a case. The plan developed at an FTDM may allow a child to safely remain with his or her parents; or it may mean placing the child with a fit and willing relative or other licensed foster home, moving a child from one relative or foster home to another, or creating a plan to reunify the child with his or her parents.

FTDMs and the other strategies in this plan which will increase family engagement will assist CA to better meet the educational needs of children by improving the information that we have about the child's educational status upon entry into care and effectiveness of previous strategies to meet the child's educational needs.

Increase Organizational Support and Social Worker Awareness for Fathers

CA recognizes that involvement of fathers and paternal relatives is important to the well-being of children and can provide important support when a child is involved in the child welfare system.

The State of Washington's Fathers Engagement Project (FEP) was a collaborative partnership operating within CA's King County office, funded by the Children's Bureau via the National Quality Improvement Center on Nonresident Fathers (NQIC-NRF). Partners included Children's Administration, University of Washington School of Social Work, Divine Alternatives for Dads Services, the Department of Social and Health Services Division of Child Support, the Washington State Office of the Family and Children's Ombudsman, and Catalyst for Kids. The FEP was one of four national sites selected through a competitive process. Funding ran from October 2008 to March 2011. The grant specifically required sites to host an ongoing series of 20-week facilitated father peer support and educational groups for which non-resident fathers could voluntarily enroll.

Based on promising client outcomes, CA elected to continue this effort through its budget, when federal funding ended, as a strategy to address inequitable service delivery to fathers. Enrollment was opened to all fathers in King County (resident and non-resident) with an open CA case (e.g., out-of-home placement, in-home services, and voluntary services). The number of sessions provided to each cohort was reduced from 20 weeks to 12 weeks. This funding runs from March 15, 2011 to September 30, 2011.

CA will expand these efforts during the period of the PIP to the other counties in Region 2, including Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom, San Juan and Island counties. An expansion plan will be developed and will include training and information, specific outreach to Native American fathers and leadership at the regional level.

At the statewide level we will implement an awareness campaign aimed at social workers, training and information for CA leadership and an emphasis on fathers and paternal relatives in statewide efforts to reduce disproportionality.

Primary Strategy: 3. Improve Child and Family Well-Being		Applicable Outcomes or Factors: Well-Being Outcome 1 & 2	
Goal: Enhance family's capacity to meet their children's needs and address educational needs		Applicable Items: 17, 18, 19, 20, 21	
Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	PIP Due Date
3.1 Enhance Family Team Decision-Making Meetings The practice of Family Team Decision Making is our fundamental approach to the early and ongoing engagement of parents and their natural supports and to give them an authentic voice at the decision making and planning table.	Cheryl Rich , FTDM Statewide Program Manager		
PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE			
3.1.1 Assess current infrastructure and capacity of FTDMs to determine whether enhancements are needed	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Written results of assessment and recommendations	Q1 By December 31, 2011
3.1.2 Finalize FTDM training plan for case carrying staff and related personnel	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Written training plan	Q1 By December 31, 2011

3.1.3 Update FTDM practice guide to support consistent FTDM practice and align with Safety Framework Language	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Revised practice guide	Q2 By March 30, 2012
3.1.4 Adopt standard tool for observations of facilitators to ensure consistent practice and maintain the fidelity of the FTDM model. Train supervisors of facilitators in use of the tool so observations are consistent across regions	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Standard tool Training schedule	Q2 By March 30, 2012
3.1.5 Identify trained back-up facilitators to ensure capacity is available to conduct FTDMs when needed	Regional Facilitator Supervisors	List of trained back-up facilitators	Q2 By March 30, 2012
3.1.6 Re-align supervision of facilitators so that all facilitators report to staff who are primarily focused on FTDMs	Regional Facilitator Supervisors	Revised organizational charts	Q2 By March 30, 2012
3.1.7 Develop new FamLink Production Report to monitor FTDM use against the standard of a meeting for every placement decision with the capacity to separate data by race and ethnicity	Stephanie Sarber, CATS Business Analysis	Copy of FamLink report	Q2 By March 30, 2012
TRAINING AND INFORMATION			
3.1.8 Train social work staff in FTDM Basics (on-line training)	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Written summary report of attendance demonstrating 80% of all Social Workers (except Intake SWs), Supervisors and AAs trained by staff group and region	Q1 By December 31, 2011
3.1.9 Hold discussion in all unit meetings statewide on the purpose and timing of FTDMs, Government to Government relations with tribes, the need to involve Tribes early in the process, and awareness of cultural considerations in relation to children and families of all races, ethnicities and Tribes in order to reduce racial disproportionality	Regional Facilitator Supervisors	Written schedule of meetings with 90% of CPS, CFWS, and FVS units. The number of total units and the number where this discussion occurred will be included.	Q4 By September 30, 2012
3.1.10 Offer training to Tribes who choose to use the FTDM training to build capacity to conduct FTDM meetings collaboratively or within Tribal programs	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Written training schedule Training attendance sheets Summary of Training Content	Q5 By December 31, 2012

MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE / IMPROVEMENT			
3.1.11 FTDM facilitator observation by supervisor occurs in all areas of the state using the standard observation tool to ensure consistent practice across different facilitators and the fidelity of the FTDM model	Regional Facilitator Supervisors	Written summary of observation reports	Q3 By June 30, 2012
3.1.12 Develop the CA quality assurance plan to monitor and support consistent implementation of FTDMs. The plan will include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data will be collected, analyzed and reported, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exit Survey for family members participating in FTDMs asking about their experience, with the capacity to separate data by race and ethnicity ○ Use of FamLink Data at the local, regional and state level • Staff responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data • Timeframes for collecting, analyzing and reporting data for reporting to local offices, CA Leadership and ACF 	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Written plan for quality assurance	Q3 By June 30, 2012
3.1.13 Provide summary report of implementation status, results of quality assurance process, adherence to the model, quality and outcomes to CA Leadership	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Written report	Q4 By September 30, 2012
3.1.14 Develop plan to refine practice and address the issues identified in the QA report through continuous quality improvement within a self correcting learning environment. This will include setting timeframes, actions steps, improvement goals and any additional monitoring processes	Cheryl Rich, FTDM Statewide Program Manager	Written plan	Q5 By December 31, 2012

Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	PIP Due Date
3.2 Increase Social Worker Awareness and Organizational Support for Fathers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding support for fathers throughout all of Region 2 Conducting an internal, statewide awareness campaign and training 	Bernice Morehead, Stakeholder Communications Manager		
PREPARATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT			
3.2.1 Continue Father Engagement Specialist in Region 2	Joel Odimba, Regional Administrator	Appointment Letter to Region 2 Father Engagement Specialist	Q1 By December 31, 2011
3.2.2 Assess and develop plan to expand efforts to engage fathers in Region 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on lessons learned during the project at the University of Washington With a focus on initial engagement Including collaboration with Region 2 tribes to develop strategies to better engagement Native American fathers 	Joel Odimba, Regional Administrator	Written plan Summary of outreach to Tribes and Tribal involvement in developing strategies to better engage fathers	Q2 By March 31, 2012
3.2.3 Finalize communication plan for the statewide information campaign	Sherry Hill, CA Communications Director	Written communications plan	Q4 By September 30, 2012
3.2.4 Develop and/or acquire awareness materials for the statewide information campaign	Sherry Hill, CA Communications Director	Campaign materials	Q4 By September 30, 2012
TRAINING AND INFORMATION			
3.2.5 Provide training to CA Statewide Leadership	Region 2 Fatherhood Specialist	Written summary of training content Summary report of attendance	Q2 By March 30, 2012
3.2.6 Provide training and informational workshops to Region 2 staff	Region 2 Fatherhood	Summary report of attendance demonstrating	Q4

	Specialist	80% of case carrying Social Workers (except those in DLR, Intake and Adoption Units) in Region 2 participated	By December 31, 2012
3.2.7 Conduct internal awareness campaign statewide	Sherry Hill, CA Communications Director	Written report of actions taken	Q5 By December 31, 2012
IMPLEMENTATION			
3.2.8 Expand Fatherhood project activities to all of Region 2 as outlined in plan referenced in 3.2.2	Region 2 Fatherhood Specialist	Written report of activities	Q3 By June 30, 2012
NEXT STEPS			
3.2.9 Assess the effectiveness of fatherhood activities in Region 2 and determine whether to expand to other areas of the state	Bernice Morehead, Stakeholder Communications Manager	Written report of assessment and recommended next steps	Q7 By June 30, 2013

Strategy 4: Increase Focus on Legal Permanency for Children

The fourth strategy is designed to address the areas needing improvement related to Permanency Outcome 1. The key findings of the on-site review in this area are:

- Permanency Outcome 1: “Children have permanency and stability in their living situations” was only substantially achieved in 22.5 % of the cases reviewed. This outcome was partially achieved in another 72.5% of the cases.

Washington made progress in achieving more timely permanence for children who cannot safely return home. Since FFY 2009, we have achieved the national standard for all CFSR four composite measures of permanency. Median length of stay for children in care over 60 days has also dropped. For the quarter October – December 2010 the median length of stay is 499 days, down from 584 days in January – March 2009.

One important effort to achieve more timely adoptions was our Expedited Adoption Project. We are not including this project in the PIP it has been completed. This project concentrated staff resources on completing the pre-adoption work, including adoptive home studies and Child Medical and Family Background Reports for children who were legally free and in the home of the family we expected would adopt them. This project finalized 906 adoptions from November 2010 - June 2011 in addition to approximately 200 other children who were also adopted during this period.

Achieving timely permanency for children will be supported by many of the strategies included in this Program Improvement Plan. Increased family engagement through monthly meeting with parents, increased support for fathers, and enhanced Family Team Decision-Making will support parents' efforts to be reunified with their children and maintain connections with the extended family if reunification efforts fail. In addition, consolidating shared planning and family meeting as well as more timely filings for Termination of Parental Rights will increase our focus on the important decisions that must be made and the statutory timeframes in which to make them.

This strategy includes the following specific efforts to continue to safely shorten the time children are under a court dependency order:

Permanency Roundtables

With collaboration and support from Casey Family Programs, we will create a version of Permanency Roundtables and expand their use from two regions to statewide. The roundtable process brings permanency consultants, master practitioners and other resources together to develop a Permanency Action Plan for specific children or sibling groups. We will use a process that emphasizes children and youth who have been in care the longest by providing expert consultation and planning to social workers and supervisors to identify and overcome barriers to permanency. We will also identify gaps in services that may prevent permanency to all children / youth. The focus upon those children/youth that are the longest in care is also of special importance given that the demographic these children/youth represent is strongly indicative of racial disproportionality in our child welfare system.

A design team has been convened and is making high level decisions regarding the scheduling and training of Permanency Roundtable members, social workers, supervisors and stakeholders. The design team is co-led by Casey Family Programs and Children's Administration.

By learning from both the case history and progress gained in these cases we will develop lessons learned and strategies for ensuring that an appropriate permanency plan is developed and stability supported for all children and youth. The lessons learned during the

process and the barriers to timely permanency identified will be documented. The design / oversight team will make recommendations to CA Leadership concerning needed changes. Regions will develop improvement plans once CA Leadership priorities are set.

Unified Family Home Studies

The goal of the Unified Home Study project is to provide a single approval for foster care and adoption home study applicants. The Unified Home Study will reflect CA’s dedication to strengthening out-of-home placements for dependent children by designing and supporting a single assessment tool that addresses relative, non-relative, and pre-adoption placements. We anticipate the following benefits will be realized by implementing Unified Home Studies:

- Improve outcomes for children in out-of home care
- Improve CA relationships with out-of-home caregivers
- More relative caregivers for CA dependent children will become licensed
- Reduce duplicate work by CA staff
- Save state funds that currently go toward duplicate fingerprint-based background checks.

Using the Unified Home Study will better serve children by:

- Ensuring that all caregivers meet safety standards for placement and are both willing and able to care for children
- Reducing placement disruptions when children become legally free (all placement will meet adoption criteria after they complete the home study)
- Expediting the completion of permanent plans (the home study and background checks are complete before the child is legally free).

<p>Primary Strategy: 4. Shorten The Time To Legal Permanence For Children</p>	<p>Applicable Outcomes or Factors: Permanency Outcome 1</p>
<p>Goal: Safely shorten the time children spend under a court dependency.</p>	<p>Applicable Items: 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10</p>

Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible
4.1. <u>Expand Permanency Roundtables Statewide:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use process with focus on children who have been in out-of-home care the longest • Analyze demographic and system characteristics of children in care over 5 years 	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager		
PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE			
4.1.1 Convene Permanency Roundtable Design Team	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Written notes from first meeting	Q1 By December 31, 2011
4.1.2 Analyze the characteristics of children with the longest lengths of stay, including the capacity to separate data by race and ethnicity, for statewide policy and practice implications	Cindy Ellingson, CFSR Program Manager	Written report of analysis including: child demographics, legal status, placement history and reason for placement	Q1 By December 31, 2011
4.1.3 Implementation plan to conduct Permanency Roundtables finalized	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Written implementation plan	Q2 By March 30, 2012
4.1.4 Prepare for roundtables, including case selection and logistics	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Written training schedule and case list	Q2 By March 30, 2012
TRAINING AND INFORMATION			
4.1.5 Train roundtable members and back-ups in the skills needed to participate in Permanency Roundtables including culturally competent language and awareness of cultural issues for the Tribes and other cultural communities	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Written summary report of attendance demonstrating 90% of Roundtable members and back-ups trained	Q2 By March 30, 2012
4.1.6 Train social workers and supervisors who will present cases to the Permanency Roundtables	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Written summary report of attendance demonstrating 90% of Social Workers and Supervisors presenting cases trained by staff group and region	Q2 By March 30, 2012
4.1.7 Provide Values Training to additional staff and community partners including culturally competent language and awareness of cultural issues for Tribes and other cultural communities. Highlight Lessons Learned during the	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Written attendance summary	Q4 By September 30, 2012

Roundtable Process to support continuing focus on timely permanency			
IMPLEMENTATION			
4.1.8 Complete Permanency Roundtables	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Written summary report of process	Q2 By March 30, 2012
ANALYSIS			
4.1.9 Assess effectiveness of roundtables in leading to completed permanent plans, increased permanency as measured by the Casey Child Permanency Status Chart, and completion of the Action Plans created during the Roundtables	Scott Steuby & Cindy Ellingson, CFSR Program Managers	Written report of assessment	Q5 By December 31, 2012
MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE / IMPROVEMENT			
4.1.10 Analyze reasons, barriers and service gaps that delay completion of permanent plans including possible differences by race and ethnicity, including Indian children	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Written report	Q4 By September 30, 2012
4.1.11 Permanency Roundtable Design and Oversight Team to develop recommendations concerning needed improvements	Deborah Purce, Director, Quality Management and Accountability Ron Murphy, Casey Family Programs	Written recommendations	Q5 By December 31, 2012
4.1.12 CA Leadership determines next steps	Deborah Purce, Director, Quality Management and Accountability	Written CA Leadership Team decision	Q5 By December 31, 2012
4.1.13 Discuss with the Indian Policy Advisory Committee changes to the ICW case review tool that would support reducing the disproportionate number of Indian children in long-term foster care placements	Deborah Purce, Director, Quality Management and Accountability Lyn Craik, Supervisor, Central Case Review	Written recommendations	Q6 By March 31, 2013

4.1.14 CA Regional Administrators develop local improvement plans	Marty Butkovich, Joel Odimba, and Nancy Sutton Regional Administrators	Written regional improvement plans	Q7 By June 30, 2013
Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible		
4.2 Implement Unified Family Home Studies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assure adoption requirements for the caregiver are met when a child is initially placed Reduce duplicate requirements for additional home studies and background checks, which expedites permanency for children 	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources		
PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE			
4.2.1 Consult with NRC and other states about lessons learned from other implementations	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written summary of lessons learned	Q1 By December 31, 2011
4.2.2 Review changes to the home study and expectations to approve caregivers with internal workgroup	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written recommendations	Q1 By December 31, 2011
4.2.3 Update DLR staff on progress	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	E-mail to DLR staff	Q1 By December 31, 2011
4.2.4 Conduct discussions with community partners (kinship caregivers, foster parents, judges, Indian Policy Advisory Committee, State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care) on the implementation plan	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking points Schedule of meetings Written quarterly progress report to State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster care 	Q2 By March 30, 2012

4.2.5 Finalize Initial Implementation Plan for Region 2 North including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule for training Communication plan 	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written plan	Q2 By March 30, 2012
4.2.6 Finalize training curriculum, including culturally competent language and awareness	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written training curriculum	Q2 By March 30, 2012
TRAINING FOR INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION			
4.2.7 Train staff involved in Initial Implementation Area - Region 2 North	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written summary report of attendance demonstrating 80% of licensors and home study staff in initial implementation area trained by staff group and region	Q2 By March 30, 2012
INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION			
4.2.8 Implement Unified Home Studies in Region 2 North	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written communication from CA Leadership announcing implementation of unified home studies	Q2 By March 30, 2012
4.2.9 Report of Lessons Learned from initial implementation finalized and discussed with Internal Workgroup (including feedback from clients)	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written report of Lessons Learned	Q3 By June 30, 2012
4.2.10 Discuss Lessons Learned with staff and external stakeholders statewide	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Summary of contacts	Q3 By June 30, 2012
4.2.11 Revise implementation plan if necessary based on Lessons Learned in initial implementation	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Statewide implementation plan	Q3 By June 30, 2012

TRAINING AND INFORMATION FOR STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION			
4.2.12 Training for licensors and home study staff to apply the framework consistently with children and families of all races and ethnicities, including Tribes	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written summary report of attendance demonstrating 80% of licensors and home study staff trained by staff group and region	Q5 By December 31, 2012
IMPLEMENTATION			
4.2.13 Statewide implementation, including transfer of staff to the Division of Licensed Resources in a phased approach	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Revised organizational charts	Q4 By September 30, 2012
MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE / IMPROVEMENT			
4.2.14 Develop a quality assurance plan to monitor and support consistent implementation of unified home studies. The plan will include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data will be collected, analyzed and reported • Staff responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data • Timeframes for collecting, analyzing and reporting data for reporting to local offices, CA Leadership and ACF 	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written plan for quality assurance	Q3 By June 30, 2012
4.2.15 Provide summary report of implementation status, results of quality assurance process, adherence to the model, quality and outcomes to CA Leadership	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written report	Q6 By March 31, 2012
4.2.16 Develop plan to refine practice and address the issues identified in the QA report through continuous quality improvement within a self correcting learning environment. This will include setting timeframes, actions steps, improvement goals and any additional monitoring processes	Jeanne McShane, Acting Administrator Division of Licensed Resources	Written plan	Q7 By June 30, 2013

Strategy 5: Improve the Court Case Review System

Regarding the Court Case Review system, the review found:

- The State is not consistent in its efforts to ensure that the case plan is developed jointly with the child’s parents.
- Although the State provides a process for TPR proceedings, this process is not effective in ensuring that TPR petitions are filed in accordance with the provisions of ASFA consistently.
- The state is inconsistent in practice with regard to providing notice to caregivers about hearings held concerning children in their care and providing caregivers with an opportunity to be heard in those hearings.

Clarify and Consolidate Case Planning Meetings

Case Planning meetings provide an important opportunity for all family members and others involved with a family to assess status, progress being made and the next steps to achieve permanency for the child(ren). Shared planning is important to assure decisions are made with all the available information and perspectives taken into consideration. CA holds many types of case planning meetings. Despite previous efforts to combine planning meetings into a “Shared Planning Meeting”, there is still a need for further clarification on the purpose and timing of case planning meetings. Shared planning meetings need to focus on permanency planning and occur at the times most critical in determining a child’s future, while making the most effective use of the time spent by families, community partners and CA staff.

The internal Family Engagement Workgroup has drafted a streamlined approach to Shared Planning meetings. To assess the best approach to consolidating shared planning meetings, CA will map the typical stages of a child welfare case and determine when shared case planning meetings, in addition to FTDMs, are needed. We will consult with birth families to develop a new meeting structure to consolidate and unify the multiple and various case related meetings that social workers, families and community partners are required to attend. A consolidated meeting structure will be developed and implemented to foster consistent and quality meetings which promote timely permanency and improve family engagement. A defined timeline will be set so that staff, families, community partners and other professionals do not attend separate and individual meetings at arbitrary points in a case. The re-designed meeting structure and process will be based on the following principles:

- Child safety comes first and CA staff have ultimate decision-making responsibility
- Families are encouraged to participate in every meeting

- Families can bring support people of their choice to the meeting
- All participants have an equal opportunity to be heard
- Decisions are not made outside of the meeting; all issues are on the table for straightforward discussion
- Meetings are facilitated to support full participation and fidelity to family centered practice
- A strengths-based approach that recognizes and reinforces families' capabilities and not just their needs and problems
- Recognition of foster and adoptive parents as resources for the children in their care and the entire birth family
- Individualized service plans that go beyond traditional preset service packages (e.g., parenting classes and counseling) and respond to both parents' identified needs, specific circumstances, and available supports
- Concrete services that meet immediate needs for food, housing, child care, transportation, and other costs, and help communicate to families a sincere desire to help
- Praise and recognition of parents who are making life changes that result in safe and permanent living situations for their children (including reunification, adoption, kinship placement, or guardianship)

The redesigned meeting structure will not include Child Protection Team staffing (which are required under state law) and Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee staffing.

As reported during the Stakeholder Interviews, the Practice Model, FTDM, and other family engagement strategies are useful tools to successfully engage parents in case planning.

Termination of Parental Rights

Washington's performance in filing for Termination of Parental rights (TPR) is not clear. Prior to 2009, caseload statistics maintained by the Administrative Office of the Courts did not include coding, and hence tracking, of reasons a petition for termination of parental rights might appropriately not have been timely filed. Those codes include relative placement, compelling reasons not to file, and failure to obtain a finding of reasonable efforts. A review of coding activity revealed that codes were used in only 3.9% of all eligible cases in calendar year 2010. It is strongly believed that more than 3.9% of eligible cases have appropriate reasons for not filing termination petitions after 15 of 22 months in out-of-home care.

We will conduct a sample onsite case review to help determine potential weaknesses in proper usage and tracking of the codes. Unless these codes are used accurately, compelling reasons for not filing a TPR may be reflected in the court file but not in the SCOMIS data, which is used along with FamLink data to report the timeliness of TPR filings.

Additionally, work remains to be done on securing a regular and sufficient data exchange between the courts and the Children's Administration. A full-time research position at the Administrative Office of the Courts has been created to help secure this exchange and ensure the accuracy of data used to track timely filings.

Even with the uncertainty in the data it is clear that some counties have significantly stronger performance in timely filing of termination petitions. A comprehensive study of their court practices may reveal duplicable processes and practices that can enhance trial court performance in timely termination filings. Conversely, some courts have significantly lower than average performance of this measure. Drilling down into the obstacles that prevent timely filings should reveal unresolved, but resolvable, difficulties in the court and its child welfare partners working together toward timely filings.

Planning in advance for timely filings requires being acutely aware, at every stage of the case, of how long a child has been placed in out-of-home care. Each of the identified challenges and respective solutions will require training and diligent follow-up to ensure appropriate and effective implementation. Through Reasonable Efforts Symposia, judicial conferences, and Web-based training, judicial officers, staff, and child welfare partners, including assistant attorneys general and social workers, will learn new practices and procedures that can help guide significant improvement in the timely filing of termination petitions in appropriate cases, and accurately record and track cases where termination petitions are not warranted.

Notifying Foster Parents of Court Hearings

We have a need to improve our notification to foster parents of court hearings for the children in their home. The FY 2010 survey of foster parents conducted by Washington State University shows that a little over 70% of the licensed and unlicensed caregivers agreed that the agency notified them of court hearings within 10 working days prior to the hearing, excluding hearings called on an emergency basis. Over 900 people responded to this question.

In July 2006, the *Caregiver Notification of Hearings and Staffings* policy became effective. The policy describes how notification must occur and sets a new timeline for the notification. The Caregiver Notice of Hearing and ISSP cover letter has been combined into one document and is now standardized across the agency.

To support social workers, tools will be developed in FamLink to alert them that there is an upcoming court hearing and notice needs to be sent to the caregiver within 10 days of the court hearing. FamLink will generate the letter to be sent to the caregiver. To ensure that social workers are providing timely notice to caregivers in accordance with policy, a report will be developed in FamLink to monitor performance.

We will also provide additional information and training to caregivers, social workers and judicial officers about the importance of notifying and including care givers in court hearings.

Primary Strategy: 5. Improve the Court Case Review System		Applicable Outcomes or Factors: Court Case Review System	
Goal: Safely shorten the time children spend under a court dependency.		Applicable Items: 25, 28 & 29	
Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	PIP Due Date
5.1 Restructure Case Planning Meetings so that the process is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear to social workers and families • Better engage families in case planning • Meetings are consolidated, whenever possible and more efficient • Support the appropriate, timely setting and changing of permanency goals 	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy		
PREPARATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT			
5.1.1 Draft initial proposal for improving case planning meetings	Greg Dootson, FTDM Program Manager	Written Initial proposal	Q1 By December 31, 2011
5.1.2 Map the typical stages of a child welfare case, including timing of court hearings and determine when shared case planning meetings, in addition to FTDMs, are needed	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts	Map of typical stages of a case, including timing of court hearings, and indicated timing of case planning meetings	Q2 By March 30, 2012

5.1.3 Discuss the proposed meeting structure with Children Youth and Families Advisory Committee, Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee, the Indian Policy Advisory Committee, and the Washington State Parent Advocacy Committee	Scott Steuby, CFSR Program Manager	Schedule of Meetings with Advisory Committees	Q2 By March 30, 2012
5.1.4 Develop policy and procedures for the improved structure and timing of Shared Case Planning Meetings	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Written policy and procedures which emphasize improving parent engagement in case planning and support the appropriate, timely setting and changing of permanency goals	Q2 By March 30, 2012
TRAINING AND INFORMATION			
5.1.5 Train staff on new timing and structure for case planning meetings	Marjorie Fitzgerald, Chief, Office of Training and Development	Written training curriculum	Q3 By June 30, 2012
5.1.6 Provide information to community partners who attend Shared Planning meetings and the Washington State Parent Advocacy Committee about new meeting structure	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Written communication about shared planned meetings to community partners and the Washington State Parent Advocacy Committee	Q3 By June 30, 2012
IMPLEMENTATION			
5.1.7 Implement new meeting structure	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Communication from CA Leadership announcing implementation of new case planning meeting structure	Q4 By September 30, 2012
5.1.8 Review the materials and processes, across each program area, which inform parents about Case Planning meetings and determine whether modifications to the content or process are necessary for alignment with the new case planning structure. Parents' Guide to CPS is one example	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	List of materials and processes reviewed and summary of any modifications needed	Q5 By December 31, 2012

MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE / IMPROVEMENT			
5.1.9 Develop a quality assurance plan to monitor and support consistent implementation of new structure of case planning meetings. The plan will include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data will be collected, analyzed and reported, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Case Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FamLink Data on Shared Planning Meetings • Staff responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data • Timeframes for collecting, analyzing and reporting data for reporting to local offices, CA Leadership and ACF 	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Written plan for quality assurance	Q3 By June 30, 2012
5.1.10 Provide summary report of implementation status, results of quality assurance process, adherence to the model, quality and outcomes to CA Leadership	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Written report	Q6 By March 31, 2013
5.1.11 Develop plan to refine practice and address the issues identified in the QA report through continuous quality improvement within a self correcting learning environment. This will include setting timeframes, actions steps, improvement goals and any additional monitoring processes	Leah Stajduhar, Chief, Office of Program and Policy	Written plan	Q7 By June 30, 2013
Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	PIP Due Date
<u>5.2 Improve the Timeliness of Filing for Termination of Parental Rights</u>	Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts		

PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE			
5.2.1 Review a year's worth of data in court files in two counties and compare the file information with the data in the Superior Court Management and Information System (SCOMIS) maintained by the Administrator of the Courts to verify accuracy of timeliness, taking into account compelling reasons for not filing a TPR	Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts	Written report of visits and analysis of results	Q4 By September 30, 2012
5.2.2 Clarify the definitions and linkages of the information in SCOMIS with that in FamLink, to assure accurate reporting of the timeliness of filing of TPR, including whether compelling reasons exist not to file	Matt Orme, Senior researcher, Administrative Office of the Courts	Written data linkage protocol	Q6 By March 30, 2013
5.2.3 Gather qualitative information from 3 counties concerning accurate coding and successful practice to achieve timely TPRs	Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts	Written summary report of local court practices	Q6 By March 30, 2013
5.2.4 Develop training for judicial officers and court clerks, based on these assessments	Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts Tim Jaasko Fisher Director, Court Improvement Training Academy	Written training curriculum	Q6 By March 30, 2013
TRAINING AND INFORMATION			
5.2.5 Include information about the requirements and successful practices related to timely filing of TPR petitions in Reasonable Efforts Symposiums sponsored by the Court Improvement Project and in list serve emails to all superior court commissioners, judges and county clerks	Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts Tim Jaasko Fisher Director, Court Improvement Training Academy	Written schedule of Reasonable Efforts Symposiums held with Agendas	Q8 By September 30, 2013

IMPLEMENTATION			
5.2.6 Host meetings in collaboration with the Court Improvement Project in 3 populous counties who are below the state average for timely TPR petition filings. Include Judicial officers, AAGs, CA managers and others who are involved in filing TPRs. Develop county specific strategies to improve timeliness of filing for TPR petitions	Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts Tim Jaasko Fisher Director, Court Improvement Training Academy	Written summary of county specific strategies	Q6 By March 30, 2013
MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE			
5.2.7 Monitor timeliness of TPR filings through improved data reporting	Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts	Annual Dependency Report for 2012	Q8 By September 30, 2013
Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	PIP Due Date
<u>5.3 Improve Notification to Foster Parents of Court Hearings</u>	Myra Casey, Deputy Administrator of DLR		
PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE			
5.3.1 The 'Caregiver's Report to the Court' will be accessible to caregivers through the foster parent web page. Currently this form is on the CA Intranet and inaccessible to caregivers. Short instructions will be included that explain the need to keep comments concise	Meri Waterhouse, Supervisor of Permanency and Placement	Screen shot of the form on the foster parent web page	Q1 By December 31, 2011
5.3.2 Collect and maintain foster parents' and relative caregivers' email addresses in FamLink and develop a List Serve for timely automated communication with caregivers	Meri Waterhouse, Supervisor of Permanency and Placement	Number of emails and the percent this represents of all caregivers in FamLink and on the List Serve	Q2 By March 30, 2012
5.3.3 Remind Social Workers of the CA Policy on Notice to Caregivers of Court Hearings to reinforce the importance of caregiver's information in making decisions about the child	Meri Waterhouse, Supervisor of Permanency and Placement	Copy of all staff memorandum or notes from all staff video conference	Q2 By March 30, 2012

5.3.4 Include information on the importance of caregiver participation in hearings in the Caregivers Monthly Newsletter at least quarterly	Meri Waterhouse, Supervisor of Permanency and Placement	Copy of one newsletter with information on court hearings	Q3 By June 30, 2012
5.3.5 Develop tools in FamLink to alert the social worker that there is an upcoming court hearing and notice needs to be sent to caregiver. FamLink will generate the letter to be sent to the caregiver U.S. Postal Mail or email.	Stephanie Sarber, CATS Business Analyst	Screen shots of operational FamLink tools	Q5 By December 2012
5.3.6 Develop FamLink report to track compliance with CA policy Notification to Caregivers of Court Hearings, with the capacity to separate data by race and ethnicity	Stephanie Sarber, CATS Business Analyst	Copy of FamLink report	Q5 By December 31, 2012
TRAINING AND INFORMATION			
5.3.7 Provide information to judicial officers on foster parents' right to be heard in court hearings	Janet Skreen, Senior Court Program Analyst , Administrative Office of the Courts	Written information which is provided to judicial officers	Q2 By March 30, 2012
5.3.8 Enhance <i>PRIDE Preservice</i> training for foster parents to include pointers on how to write information in the 'Caregiver's Report to the Court'	Marjorie Fitzgerald, Chief, Office of Training and Development	Written, updated training content	Q3 By June 30, 2012
5.3.9 Mandate licensed foster parent participation in " <i>So You Have Your First Placement, Now What???</i> ", a three hour training for newly licensed homes when they receive their first child. How to best to communicate with the Court using the 'Caregiver's Report to the Court' is one of the topics discussed	Marjorie Fitzgerald, Chief, Office of Training and Development	Written requirement Training curriculum	Q3 By June 30, 2012
MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE			
5.3.10 Develop a quality assurance plan to monitor and support consistent implementation of notification to foster parents. The plan will include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data will be collected, analyzed and reported, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Case Review ○ Number of emails and the percent this represents of all caregivers in FamLink and 	Myra Casey, Deputy Administrator of DLR	Written plan for quality assurance	Q3 By June 30, 2012

<p>on the List Serve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data • Timeframes for collecting, analyzing and reporting data for reporting to local offices, CA Leadership and ACF 			
5.3.11 Provide summary report of implementation status, results of quality assurance process, adherence to the model, quality and outcomes to CA Leadership	Myra Casey, Deputy Administrator of DLR	Written report	Q6 By March 30, 2013
5.3.12 Develop plan to refine practice and address the issues identified in the QA report through continuous quality improvement within a self correcting learning environment. This will include setting timeframes, actions steps, improvement goals and any additional monitoring processes	Myra Casey, Deputy Administrator of DLR	Written plan	Q7 By June 30, 2013

Strategy 6: Improve the Service Array Available to Children and Families

The sixth strategy is designed to address the areas needing improvement related to Well-Being 3 and the Service Array. The key findings of the on-site review in this area are:

- There are areas of the state that do not have access to the full range of services.
- Information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews indicates that, although the state uses assessments and practices that can result in individualized service plans, the State does not individualize services consistently to meet the unique needs of children and families.
- In 77 percent of the applicable cases, reviewers determined that the agency had made concerted efforts to address the mental health needs of children.

Inventory of Purchased Services by Area of the State

Children's Administration purchases client services that:

- Safely support children remaining in their own home

- Maintain and improve the well-being of children placed out of their home
- Support timely and safe permanency for children placed in out of home care
- Respond to the unique cultural and language needs of children and families

We will conduct an assessment to understand the availability of core services necessary to each Children’s Administration office. Through this assessment we intend to identify gaps where services do not exist or where additional resources are needed. Language and cultural needs will be included in the inventory. We will work with stakeholders to develop strategies to improve the array of core services.

We will focus on the services that safely support children remaining in their own homes. We have chosen this emphasis to assist in our efforts to control safety threats early in a case, before out-of-home placement is necessary. These services are the most important to be available in local areas for families to access and the need for these services is expected to increase as we implement the Child Safety Framework.

Efforts to Individualize Services for Children and Families

Efforts to individualize and tailor service to meet the unique needs of children and families are described throughout this plan. The new Safety and Family Assessments which are being implemented as components of the new safety framework will provide a more precise basis to build the service plan to address the threats to child safety. The Solution-Based Casework Practice Model, provides the foundation for understanding the unique strengths and needs of the family. The Practice Model is being strengthened by incorporating the principles of the WrapAround Approach. One of those principles is individualized service delivery. Engaging parents in case planning meetings also supports individualized approaches to children and families. The action steps associated with these efforts are in the earlier section of the report and not repeated here.

<p>6. Primary Strategy: Improve the Array of Services to Children and Families</p>	<p>Applicable Outcomes or Factors: Well-Being 3 Service Array and Resource Development</p>
<p>Goal: Better meet the individual needs of children and their families in all areas of the state.</p>	<p>Applicable Items: Items 23, 36 & 37</p>

Action Steps & Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	PIP Due Date
6.1. <u>Inventory Purchased Services that Safely Support Children Remaining in Their Own Homes</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and analyze the availability of necessary services at the local office level 	Rich Pannkuk, Director Finance and Operations Support Becky Smith, Interim Director of Practice and Quality Support		
PREPARATION			
6.1.1 Develop inventory structure, including the identification of culturally competent and language fluent services	Tammy Hay, Office Chief, Budget, Forecasts and Contracts Tammy Cordova, Performance Based Contracting	Inventory structure completed	Q1 December 31, 2011
6.1.2 Train contract managers and service managers to gather information for the inventory of services	Tammy Hay, Office Chief, Budget, Forecasts and Contracts Tammy Cordova, Performance Based Contracting	Written summary report of attendance demonstrating 95% of contract managers and service managers gathering information for the inventory trained	Q1 December 31, 2011
CONDUCT INVENTORY			
6.1.3 Begin gathering information for inventory of purchased services	Tammy Hay, Office Chief, Budget, Forecasts and Contracts Tammy Cordova, Performance Based Contracting	Email notification of assignment to contract and service managers	Q1 December 31, 2011
ANALYSIS			
6.1.4 Compile results and analyze the characteristics of services available by office. Send inventory results to leadership for review; and to determine the stakeholders and community partners needed to help	Tammy Hay, Office Chief, Budget, Forecasts and Contracts Tammy Cordova,	Written inventory results available	Q2 By March 30, 2012

strategize about unmet need	Performance Based Contracting		
6.1.5 Discuss results of inventory with stakeholders and community partners to identify strategies to address unmet service needs at the office and statewide level	Tammy Hay, Office Chief, Budget, Forecasts and Contracts Tammy Cordova, Performance Based Contracting	Schedule of meetings with stakeholders and community partners Written recommendations developed	Q3 By June 30, 2012
NEXT STEPS			
6.1.6 Recommend strategies to increase availability of required core services to safely support children remaining in their own home to CA Leadership	Tammy Hay, Office Chief, Budget, Forecasts and Contracts Tammy Cordova, Performance Based Contracting	Written recommendations to improve availability of services finalized	Q4 By September 30, 2012
6.1.7 Finalize action plan to increase the availability of required core services to safely support children remaining in their own home	Tammy Hay, Office Chief, Budget, Forecasts and Contracts Tammy Cordova, Performance Based Contracting	Written action plan	Q5 By December 31, 2012

Measuring Improvement

The plan for measuring improvement in practice is under discussion with the PIP Management Advisory Group.