

Nevada

Court Improvement Program

2017 Annual Report



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Administrative Office of the Courts
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State Court Improvement Program 2017 Annual Self-Assessment Report

This self-assessment is intended as an opportunity for Court Improvement Programs (CIPs) to review progress on required CIP projects, joint program planning and improvement efforts with the child welfare agency, and ability to integrate CQI successfully into practice. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

I. CQI Analyses of Required CIP Projects (Joint Project with Agency and Hearing Quality Project)

Joint Project with the Child Welfare Agency:

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM

Provide a concise description of the joint project selected in your jurisdiction.

The purpose of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program (JDMP) is to improve system processing of dependency cases; thereby decreasing time to permanency and termination of parental rights (TPR). In so doing, it is expected to help stabilize children's lives by getting them into safe, stable, and permanent homes in a timely manner consistent with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.

Mediation has been used to enhance the quality of the dependency process by providing the parties an opportunity to enter into a discussion in which the parties voluntarily resolve the issues that brought the family into the dependency system and produce a written agreement in lieu of a contested hearing. Contested hearings tend to be especially painful for children, as they may be required to testify against their parents. Mediations allow children to avoid this trauma, as mediations tend to focus on the family's strengths. Benefits of mediation in child dependency cases include: improved outcomes for children from decreased time to permanency to improved well-being, enhanced parental engagement to safely reunify with the child, time savings, and system efficiency.

Dependency mediation has been identified by child welfare, the judiciary and the CICs throughout the State as an intervention to ameliorate timeliness issues. Following extensive research to verify that mediation was an appropriate service, the Division of Child and Family

Services and CIP agreed that this was indeed a viable, evidence-based best practice to help the children move into a permanent home situation in a more timely manner.

Identify the specific safety, permanency, or well-being outcome this project is intended to address.

The specific outcome expected as a result of implementing a statewide juvenile dependency mediation program is to improve timeliness to permanency and TPR by improving case processing and parental engagement.

Approximate date that the project began:

July 1, 2016

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?

Implemented and being fine-tuned.

How was the need for this project identified?

Dependency Mediation was initially identified in the 2nd Judicial District's (JD) CIC action plan as a means to improve timeliness to permanency and termination of parental rights (TPR) by improving case processing and parental engagement. This area in need of improvement was identified during the Round Two of the Child and Families Services Review (CFSR) and resulting Program Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP outlined several Systemic Factors to be addressed during the PIP implementation period. Specifically, Primary Strategy (3) "Improve the Timeliness and Appropriateness of Permanency Planning across the Life of the Case" and goal number 1 under that strategy "Reduce the number of children in out of home care for 18 months or longer and reduce barrier to adoption and TPR."

CIP first funded dependency mediation as a pilot project in the 2nd JD in 2011. Research indicates that programs implemented in a manner consistent with national and state guidelines can be expected to offer an improvement over traditional child welfare proceedings. National evaluations of mediation programs find that mediations tend to result in full or partial agreement in at least 70% of cases. Of course, simply producing agreements is not the only goal of mediation. There is substantial support across a variety of studies that mediation provides parents and other participants an opportunity to talk and discuss the issues they believe are necessary for the family's success. The ability to be heard has been a consistent theme in the 2nd JD's program's exit surveys which provide quantitative and qualitative data on non-professional (parents, foster parents, etc.) and professional participant's response to mediation.

As a result of the success of the pilot juvenile dependency mediation project in the 2nd JD, using the same refined protocols, three additional mediation programs were launched in the 5th and 8th JDs and in northern rural Nevada. These three programs had similar success – 78% to 100%

agreement rates, improved parental engagement particularly in hearings, and enhanced communication among case parties.

Research has demonstrated that not only is juvenile dependency mediation successful in producing agreement at every stage of a dependency case, but it also provides an atmosphere in which all parties feel heard. When parties are heard they are likely to become more engaged in the case with an increased likelihood of positive outcomes. Additionally, research has shown that time from petition to permanency is less for mediated cases when compared to a control group of cases not mediated.

What is the theory of change for the project?

The engagement of all case parties in a non-adversarial dispute resolution process when disagreements occur (e.g., denial of the petition or TPR petition, and disagreements over case plan or placement), is expected to reduce contention among the parties, lead to agreement, and allow both the professionals and the parents to feel fully engaged and vested in the process. This is expected to lead to increased parental engagement in future hearings and increased likelihood that parents will work their case plans. This will, in turn, lead to long term outcomes such as improved time to permanency and reunification rates.

Some of the lack of timeliness to permanency and TPR may be due to the fact that parents may not be engaged in working their case plans. Research has demonstrated that not only is mediation successful in producing agreement across a wide range of case types, but it also provides an atmosphere in which all parties feel heard. When parties are heard they are likely to become more engaged in the case with an increased likelihood of positive outcomes. Additionally, research has shown that time from petition to permanency is less for mediated cases when compared to a control group of cases not mediated.

Mediation is used to improve the quality of the dependency process by providing the parties an opportunity to enter into a discussion in which the parties voluntarily resolve the issues that brought the family into the dependency system and produce a written agreement in lieu of a potentially traumatic contested hearing. Mediations tend to focus on the family's strengths. Benefits of mediation in child dependency cases include: time savings, efficiency, parental engagement, and improved outcomes for children.

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it?

Yes, Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation implemented in a consistent manner using a facilitative model with continual quality improvement.

What has been done to implement the project?

CIP worked with the 2nd JD's mediation program director, the judiciary, and child welfare to design program guidelines, and protocols that could eventually be implemented statewide. CIP

has helped start mediation programs in the 2nd, 5th, and 8th JDs. The 2nd and the 5th JDs have sustained their mediation programs. The 8th JD's program was put on hold while the court focused on implementing child safety decision-making and the Blue Ribbon for Kids Commission recommendations. The 8th JD is restarting its mediation program under the JDMP. And mediation expanded into the western, rural judicial districts (the 3rd, 6th, 10th, and 11th JDs) and the Washoe Tribe. The 1st JD was using its Family Mediation Services to mediate dependency cases as well. As a result of mediation's success, the CICs, Child Welfare and CIP launched the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program (JDMP) on July 1, 2016.

In all districts, the judges and their CICs have been actively involved in determining how mediation will function within their districts. The program design allows referral to mediation at any stage during the legal process. It includes collecting participation and outcome data with standardized data collection tools designed by NCJFCJ.

To build a mediation panel of trained and qualified dependency mediators for the JDMP, CIP worked with the 2nd JD's mediation director and lead dependency mediator to develop a 40-hour training curriculum. CIP contracted with this mediator, who also conducts 40-hour mediation certification trainings at University of Nevada Reno, the National Judicial College, and Pepperdine University, to conduct the training. On March 7 – 11, 2016, 20 people, nominated by district court judges across the state, completed the 40 hour dependency mediation course. Following additional screening, 14 were invited to join the Statewide JCMP panel.

A highly qualified Program Administrator was contracted to manage the program. She conducts monthly mediator trainings via facilitated peer to peer conference calls, schedules mediations as they are received via court order or direct referral from Child Welfare, co-mediates with mediators on particularly difficult mediations, educates stakeholders, and assists judicial districts in creating their internal processes. All JDMP mediations throughout the state adhere to the facilitative model. The Program Administrator ensures fidelity to program design and process across the state by observing and co-mediating mediations.

CIP received a VOCA grant to fund the mediation portion of the program, and a grant from the Children's Justice Act Task Force for the trainings, videos, and protocol and brochure development. CIP funded the administration and evaluation of the Program.

The original and refined mediation protocols, forms, and surveys (Appendix1) used for the mediation pilot projects were further improved for the JDMP. The JDMP Administrator trained the professional stakeholders throughout the state on the Program's protocols and their unique roles prior to and during the mediation. The attorney training conducted in the 8th JD was videotaped (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKAwJrLEcQS_j4eAfcq7zqQ) for future use.

A mediation training video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaD4M-EaNk>) was developed fully explaining dependency mediation as was a JDMP brochure (Appendix 2) explaining the mediation process and expected outcomes to the parents. The intent was for the judge to note time, date, and location of the mediation on the brochure at the time the court ordered mediation. However, in some of the smaller jurisdictions child welfare has taken an active role in advocating for mediation when a case gets “stuck” by contacting the CIP Coordinator directly. The brochure has become an educational tool for stakeholders, as well.

Mediators participate on monthly mediator trainings via facilitated peer to peer conference calls with the JDMP administrator and CIP Coordinator to discuss program improvements, new issues, and difficult cases. An additional monthly call is held with the lead judge and other judicial leaders in the 8th JD discussing particular implementation issues that arise in this larger jurisdiction where calendaring, for example, became an issue simply because so many courts were ordering mediations into a limited number of slots each week.

Between July 1, 2016 and June 9, 2017, 77 mediations have been conducted statewide with 84.4% coming to full or partial agreement. Feedback from the confidential survey’s collected at the end of each mediation session continues to be very positive often referring to the open and relaxed environment mediation offers. Stakeholders across the state are actively supportive of the mediation process as evidenced by the following:

Child welfare supervisor’s and manager’s comments,

“This program is very helpful. It saves time and resources.”

“Mediation provides a forum for the voice of the family to be heard in a non-threatening venue. It allows for the possibility of compromise, understanding, and communication, for the more important conversation.”

Child welfare caseworkers feel that mediation is a:

“Good process to discuss the case without court involvement and lots of room for open discussion”

“Neutral setting – all open to discussion.”

Parents’ attorneys offer the following about the JDMP:

“First time the parties have had a calm discussion about the child”

“Please keep this going!”

“It is an extreme understatement to say that JDMP has been successful. In reality, it has been the single most effective tool for effective communication between parents and the Division of Child and Family Services”

“Mediation takes the case from a complicated adversarial system and fosters an environment of cooperation, communication, and understanding. These elements, which

are too often lacking from the remainder of the process, provide an opportunity for parents to gain strength and see that they can have meaningful input”

“At time mediation fosters motivation in the parents to complete a case plan and in other circumstances it provides a platform for a resolution in the case that no party thought possible”

“JDMP is a value to the dependency process that cannot be quantified”

District attorneys and deputy attorneys general also find mediation a valuable tool:

“Dependency mediation provides a less intimidating, more empowering setting for parents so they can fully express their feelings and concerns and be heard. So often, the “issue” that has the case “stuck” is the result of misinterpretation of something or hurt feelings somewhere along the way. The formal court hearing cannot fully address those issues and while the child welfare agency attempts to allow parents to express themselves during team meetings, there is often a sense of distrust of the agency by the parents. Once the parent is able to express their frustration or concern in a less-defensive setting, feel truly heard and have their feelings validated by an independent mediator, we can work through the issue and move the case forward. This has been true at all stages of the process, from shortly after placement of a child into protective custody to negotiating a post-adoption contact agreement. Mediation has been able to resolve issues relating to adjudication, placement of a child, visitation, and permanency”

“We have seen tremendous success sitting down with parents during mediation and mutually formulating a plan to keep the kids safe. Mediation allows for less adversarial, more effective communication to take place which results in better buy-in by the parents and quicker permanency for the child”

”Mediation opens the door to allow communication that would not otherwise take place and mirrors the very essence of what the dependency process should entail – all parties working together to accomplish what is in the best interests of the child.”

Parents are equally as appreciative of JDMP:

“Thank you for making me feel more comforted”

“Walking out with more hope now than the whole 2 years for this case. This is a great way for parents to feel safe and able to let everyone know how you feel and where you stand”

“The chance to be heard was very helpful”

“The mediator helped me understand”

”Everyone listened to each other with respect and everything was explained clearly”

“Found some common ground”

Children's attorneys would like to see the Program expanded:

"CAP attorneys have been very pleased with mediation and would like to see it expanded to the other contested proceedings. The process is a genteel and respectful alternative to the winner-take-all mentality of litigation. Can't say enough about the caliber and professionalism of our mediators."

The judiciary is equally as supportive of the Program:

"The utilization of Dependency Mediation is the one single adjustment in the way cases are handled in our area that has resulted in the most effective change to reduce the traumatic effects that the removal of a child has on a family"

"Our district has taken advantage of this valuable asset and while each did not resolve the matter, in each case it did turn down the tension of the case such that there was a remarkable change in the tenor of future hearings and the effects of the parents and parties. I strongly endorse the use of mediation in dependency cases"

"Mediation has had a very positive impact on our child dependency cases. It has empowered parents, children, and families at all stages of the case"

A Court Family Program Services Director offers:

"Mediation has not only resulted in mutual agreement for resolution in 85% of the cases we have mediated, but the process has provided parents and stakeholders a voice at the table which has not always been the case. I find the process just as valuable as the result."

Another VOCA grant has been awarded to fund the second year of the Program's mediations. Because the 2nd JD will join the JDMP and other courts are expanding use of the Program, CIP will be applying for another VOCA grant to fund this expansion of services. With the addition of another JD to the Program and the departure of three mediators, more highly skilled mediators are needed. Another 40- hour dependency mediation training will be required in the upcoming year. To continually improve the Program, the mediators are in the process of being assessed and will be taking an 8-hour advanced course on implementing the domestic violence protocol taught by the Program Administrator.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project?

As part of the CIP continual quality improvement efforts and to ensure fidelity of implementation, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) was contracted to design the stakeholder surveys and conduct process and satisfaction assessments for the JDMP. NCJFCJ is also conducting an impact assessment of the 2nd JD's program because it has been in place long enough for cases to have closed.

During the piloting of dependency mediation in Nevada, NCJFCJ was contracted to conduct assessments of the 2nd, 5th, and 8th JD's mediation programs. NCJFCJ also conducted an initial impact assessment of the 2nd JD's program because it had been in place long enough for cases to have closed.

The NCJFCJ's key findings from their process and satisfaction assessment of the mediation program in the 2nd JD indicate that there is a general perception that mediation is successful. Stakeholders agreed that mediation lessened their workload in preparation and hearings, and is a good alternative to court. The majority of the mediations (78%) resulted in agreement, and non-professional participants felt heard, respected, and treated fairly. Mediated cases had fewer default orders in the 2nd JD. Key findings from the 2nd JD's impact assessment indicate that mediated cases are more likely to result in reunification of the children with their families when compared to non-mediated cases. Among mediated cases that had closed, 88% resulted in reunification. Among the non-mediated closed cases, only 50% resulted in reunification. Findings show that fathers who participated in mediation were more engaged and were present at more hearings compared to fathers who did not participate in mediation. Fathers who participated in mediation attended 72% of all hearings, while those who did not participate in mediation only attended 50% of their hearings.

As with the 2nd JD process evaluation, the JDMP process evaluation primarily focuses on data obtained from exit surveys completed by participants (e.g., mothers, fathers, children, relatives, foster parents, and others) and professional/system stakeholders (e.g., social workers, deputy district attorneys, attorneys for parents, attorneys for children, and others) at the completion of their mediation sessions.¹ The surveys received from each district court were aggregated to present process evaluation findings for the statewide mediation program as a whole. In addition to satisfaction indicators drawn from these surveys, preliminary data were also collected from JDMP case data sheets to provide some initial indicators of statewide program performance and outcomes.

Although mediation is available to be used at any point in a case, the initial analyses conducted for this report showed that most cases used the JDMP at the Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) stage of a case. The predominance of TPR cases in the statewide program is largely a reflection of mediation cases in Clark County which has employed all or most of its mediation sessions in TPR matters.

The statewide process evaluation involved analyses of 113 participant surveys and 267 professional stakeholder surveys that were completed during the study period (July 2016 through April 2017) to determine satisfaction levels and to prepare initial suggestions for continued

¹ In some jurisdictions, assistant attorneys general may represent the state in dependency or TPR matters.

mediation program improvements. These survey figures represent the total numbers of surveys completed by statewide program participants and stakeholders during this 10-month time frame.

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Process Evaluation: Key Findings

1. A substantial majority of non-professional program participants (85%) and dependency system stakeholders (98%) expressed overall satisfaction with the statewide mediation program;
2. In this sample, a majority of participants (75%) and stakeholders (72%) indicated that their cases reached full or partial agreements during mediation (the overall agreement rate for the total population July 1, 2016 through June 9, 2017 is **84.4%**). Without mediation, contested issues may have delayed reunification of children with their families and/or delayed other permanency options for children;
3. The results of the surveys administered at the end of the mediations indicate that 95% of the participants felt that they were treated with respect and were able to be part of finding answers to the problems discussed. Additionally, 99% believed that they had an opportunity to voice their opinions. All (100%) of the participants felt that the mediator treated everyone fairly and explained the process clearly. Stakeholders felt that the mediations were conducted fairly (99%), they were treated with respect (99%), they were heard (96%), and had an opportunity to voice their opinions (99%).
4. Participants who expressed satisfaction with mediation (on some questions) reached full or partial agreements more frequently than those who expressed less satisfaction (this finding was shown to be statistically significant for all satisfaction survey questions);
5. No statistically significant differences between the stage in the case when mediation was held and stakeholder satisfaction with mediation were found. This indicates that stakeholders were generally satisfied with mediation regardless of the type of legal action or case stage;
6. Nearly half of the mediations resulted in vacated hearings.

Additionally, the program's praises are being sung by the judiciary as exemplified in the 2nd JD's final mediation program report for 2014, reflecting on the Dependency Mediation Program in the 2nd Judicial District, Judge Egan Walker observes:

“In cases where the dependency process results in termination of parental rights, mediation is likely one of the few humane processes which we can offer. In the great majority of cases which remain, mediation is reaping benefits through earlier participation of parents and the tantalizing possibility that mediation will be a significant tool with which to accelerate the safe and effective reunification of families. The Dependency Mediation Program is a great example of how a modest investment of dollars early can reap untold rewards in positive outcomes for the children later.”

The dependency mediation pilot program in the 8th JD launched in early 2013 and only had completed 13 mediations at the time the assessment began. Consequently, this assessment conducted by the NCJFCJ only included process and satisfaction evaluations as it was too early to be able to assess the program's impact. As in the 2nd JD, there is a general perception in the 8th JD that mediation is successful and that parties feel heard, respected, and treated fairly during the process. The majority (92%) of the mediations have resulted in agreement. Most stakeholders feel that mediation is successful in increasing cooperation among parties and in engaging parents.

The NCJFCJ also completed a process evaluation of dependency mediation in the 5th JD. The results of that process evaluation demonstrate that the dependency mediation program in the 5th JD has had a successful start. Although only 5 mediations have been held, all five have resolved with agreements. There is a general perception from all parties that mediation is a helpful tool in moving their case forward toward permanency for the child.

The data used to assess reduction in time to permanency and TPR are court timeliness and child welfare data from UNITY and Chapin Hall. The most recent CFSR data profile provided on June 23, 2015 indicates that Exits to Adoption in less than 24 months are trending positively. The fact that all the statistical measures are trending in the directions of improvement since 2010 or 2011 suggests that a systemic change is taking place in Nevada. Thirty percent (30%) of the exits to adoption are taking place in less than 24 months as compared to only 14.6% in 2010. While overall exits to adoption are taking 29 months compared to 36.3 months in 2010. (See chart below in Hearing Quality section).

What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?

Nevada would like to collaborate with other CIPs interested in piloting the dependency mediation modeled in Nevada to determine the effectiveness of such a program in other jurisdictions. For example, a second, 40-hour dependency mediation training is being planned and Wyoming has expressed interest in sending people to be trained in Nevada, other CIPs are welcome. After several states have piloted JDMP, CBCC assistance in assessing a more global effectiveness would be appreciated.

At the Nevada level, as the program continues to expand CBCC guidance on additional, appropriate data to gather and how to gather beyond exit surveys, and how to best analyze these data would be helpful. It would also be helpful to receive guidance on analyzing administrative data to determine if correlational improvements may be occurring.

It would also be helpful to have regular review of JDMP processes to ensure that fidelity to the model is being adhered to. Guidance on how to conduct informative, multi-disciplinary focus

groups would also be useful. As Child Welfare is conducting their CFSR focus groups, perhaps CIP could piggy-back on them.

Hearing Quality Project:

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCILS

Provide a concise description of the joint project selected in your jurisdiction.

In response to the PIP from the 2nd round CFSR, the courts were asked to develop a workgroup to address the need to reduce barriers to adoption and TPR. Rather than create one large workgroup, CIP asked each judicial district to create a platform/forum for ongoing identification of strengths and opportunities as they pertain to child welfare outcomes. As a result each judicial district created a Community Improvement Council (CIC) of local stakeholders to identify barriers to timely permanency, adoption, and TPR and develop and implement solutions to these barriers in its locale.

The courts and their CICs are regularly informed of their data metrics and how to interpret the data and evidence-based best practices that have demonstrated improvement in specific areas. The members of each CIC each agree on the areas in need of improvement and, using expert advice and guidance, select the interventions that best fit their local circumstances and needs.

By providing the courts and their CICs data to help them identify areas needing improvement and information about evidence-based and best practices, with CIP support and guidance, the courts have made systemic changes to improve timeliness and hearing quality. Because each judicial district is unique, the specific local activities and interventions for that district have been built on a foundation of empirical data and consensus among the key stakeholders and constituency of that district.

Approximate date that the project began:

October 2010

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?

Implemented and continually improving.

How was the need for this project identified?

The Community Improvement Councils (CICs) were created after the Nevada Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the resultant Program Improvement Plan (PIP) identified that Nevada needed to improve its time to permanency particularly in the areas of adoption and termination of parental rights (TPR). The PIP outlined several Systemic Factors to be addressed during the PIP implementation period. Specifically, Primary Strategy (3) “Improve the

Timeliness and Appropriateness of Permanency Planning across the Life of the Case” and goal #1 under that strategy “Reduce the number of children in out of home care for 18 months or longer and reduce barrier to adoption and TPR.” The creation of CICs helped address this area of needed improvement.

In October 2010, Justice Nancy Saitta, Chair of the CIP Select Committee, requested that each lead district court dependency judge create a workgroup or Community Improvement Council (CIC) of local stakeholders to identify barriers to timely permanency, adoption, and TPR and develop and implement solutions to these barriers (Appendix 3).

The expectation was that time to permanency and TPR would decrease with state-level support of the CICs concerted efforts to systemically improve court processing of abuse and neglect cases (Nevada Revised Statutes 432B cases) by implementing evidence-based best practices and continually assessing and improving their execution.

What is the theory of change for the project?

The theory is that by providing the judiciary and their CICs data to help them identify areas needing improvement and information about evidence-based and best practices, the judiciary and stakeholders will have increased knowledge of what constitutes a quality hearing, and judges will have a better understanding of what constitutes reasonable efforts which will lead to an increase in depth of information brought to court by all parties because stakeholders will better understand the information needed by the court. The data and training provided will lead to increased identification of barriers and creation of action steps to improve outcomes. This will, in turn, lead to long term outcomes such as improved time to permanency and overall timeliness of cases.

Because each judicial district is unique, the specific local activities and interventions for that district were built on a foundation of empirical data and consensus among the key stakeholders and constituency of that district. Implementation of these action plans will result in the immediate short and long term outcomes as defined by CICs.

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it?

The courts and their CICs were informed of their data metrics and how to interpret the data, and evidence-based best practices that had demonstrated improvement in specific areas. The CICs agreed on the areas in need of improvement within their own systems and, using expert advice and guidance, selected the interventions that best fit their local circumstances and needs.

What has been done to implement the project?

Following receipt of Justice Saitta’s letter (October 2010) requesting the formation of a CIC in each judicial district, every lead district court judge in the state created a CIC under the guidance

and with the support of Nevada CIP. The two new Judicial Districts, 10 and 11, have also formed CICs and have been meeting regularly, created and are implementing action plans.

CIP produces quarterly and annual data packets containing court timeliness, child welfare, and trend metrics (Appendix 4). The timeliness data metrics distributed to the CICs quarterly allow for comparison over time as well as comparison among judicial districts. The court performance measures quarterly report generated by the SACWIS (State Automated Child Welfare Information System) was modified to include a comparison of the median days to permanency per year for each judicial district and the proportion of children for whom the first permanency hearing falls within the mandatory requirements. This enables the courts to quickly assess their progress in improving timeliness. This year, it became apparent that some old case data were continuing to skew the impact of recent court case processing improvements. The report now contains columns of information looking back only 2 years, as well. That is what we are calling “modified”. A committee is continuing to look at this report to ensure its accuracy.

Data are used by the CICs to assess the impact of interventions on areas targeted for improvement in their action plans. The CICs utilize the quarterly and annual data packets, and information on targeted evidence-based and best practices provided at the annual CIC Summit to create annual logic models designed to improve some aspect of court functioning identified at the local level as in need of improvement (Appendix 5).

These data are also used to guide CIP’s discussions with the judiciary and their CICs so local stakeholders can work to improve timeliness and resolve systemic problems. For example, many courts were not allowing children to be present in the courtroom. Several CICs included developing protocols to allow input from children at the hearings when appropriate. CIP attends most local CIC meetings (Appendix 6), reaching out to each CIC to help them identify evidence-based and best practices that may be applicable in their jurisdictions, technical assistance to move forward on planning their implementation, and other brainstorming support. The Coordinator is also able to note similar areas of difficulty or success across the State to address. CIP writes and distributes a quarterly newsletter to all CIC members updating on action plan and program implementation and CQI status throughout the state (Appendix 7).

CIP has contracted with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) to assist the CICs with data interpretation and analysis. As a result, all 11 local CICs are working on improving court hearing processes and quality, and have been doing so since 2011.

Initially each judicial district developed an action plan to identify barriers to permanency, timely adoptions, and termination of parental rights; and solutions to resolve these barriers in their districts. With help from the NCJFCJ, CIP conducts targeted annual convenings of stakeholder teams from each of the judicial districts. During the last three annual Summits, judicial roundtables (Appendix 8) have been facilitated by Nevada Supreme Court Justice Nancy Saitta and a judicial facilitator during which the judicial officers share and discuss their issues of

concern. This year Judge Schumacher, retired from the 2nd JD, joined Justice Saitta to facilitate a lively discussion around the new ICWA regulations, reasonable efforts findings, and best practices being implemented in Nevada.

During the annual CIC Summits each of the judicial district's CICs are provided with their local timeliness performance measures from UNITY (Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth, the Nevada SACWIS) and child welfare information from the Chapin Hall web tool. Guidance is provided by NCJFCJ to help the CICs begin assessing how their systems' timeliness measures compare to federal mandates and to the State as a whole. Training the judges and key stakeholders on performance measurement, helping them to think about their goals, and how and what to measure has been CIP's strategy to advance a CQI mindset throughout the State. NCJFCJ was contracted to develop and present "A Guide to Integrating Continuous Quality Improvement into the Work of the Community Improvement Councils" at the 2015 CIC Summit (Appendix 9). This Guide offers practical suggestions for steps to fully integrate CQI into planning and action within the CIC and is being used by the CICs as they strategize on how to improve hearing quality. During the 2016 CIC Summit, they were provided a primer on how to access the Chapin Hall web-tool and interpret the available data.

Using their local data to inform the process, the CICs each created two action plans (around timeliness and child safety decision-making) during the CIC Summits in September 2012 and 2013. The 2014 and 2015 Annual CIC Summits focused on timeliness to permanency and the principles of quality hearings and specific evidence-based strategies to improve hearing quality, and concluded with development of action plans to improve court timeliness and hearing quality. The 2016 CIC Summit focused on producing the best outcomes for children and their families.

To ensure fidelity of implementation, the CICs have been guided by CIP as they developed and grew. The integrated and ongoing collection and provision of information (data that are available and covering an extensive range of measures and potential evidence-based strategies for improvement), combined with efforts to address challenges as they arise has a solid foundation in Nevada's CICs is the focus of Nevada CIP. As a matter of fact, the CICs have proven to be so effective that CIP used the CIC action plans upon which to build CIP's Strategic and Funding Plan and updates.

To ensure that all parties' due process rights are protected, most of the CICs have included access to high quality legal representation for children, parents, and the child welfare agency in their action plans. Nearly all are appointing parents' counsel and most were appointing legal representation to children. The recently passed Nevada Senate Bill 305 requires that all children be appointed legal counsel. Child welfare reports that in 16 of the 17 Nevada counties, the District Attorney represents the agency. The CICs have made a concerted effort in this area. In the rural judicial districts, for the most part, the Attorney General's Office represents the Agency during TPRs because until the recent passage of Nevada Senate Bill 432 TPRs were not part of the dependency process.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project?

The CICs are asked to report on implementation status and processing changes annually. Most also review progress during their local CIC meetings. During the year, the CIP Coordinator participates in these CIC meetings to monitor implementation, help interpret quarterly data reports to assess impact, and guide implementation changes that may be necessary. In the past, Nevada CIP has been able to contract with NCJFCJ to provide technical assistance related to CQI of current statewide and local court improvement projects. NCJFCJ also conducts satisfaction, process, and impact evaluations on the best practices implemented by the courts. Recommendations for program improvement are, then, implemented. The Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) is helping CIP develop an additional means to assess CIC implementation of the action plans to compliment CIP observation and the CICs verbal report out at the CIC Summit.

The data used to assess reduction in time to permanency and TPR are court timeliness and child welfare data from UNITY and Chapin Hall. The most recent data profile provided on November 4, 2016 indicates that Exits to Adoption in less than 24 months continues to trend positively reflecting that improvement has occurred in timeliness of adoptions. A full 32% of those exiting to adoption are in less than 24 months. The national median is 26.8%, and the 75th percentile is 36.6%. The data also indicate that children are now exiting to adoption in 28.0 months. The national median is 32.4 months and the 25th percentile is 27.3 months (see chart below).

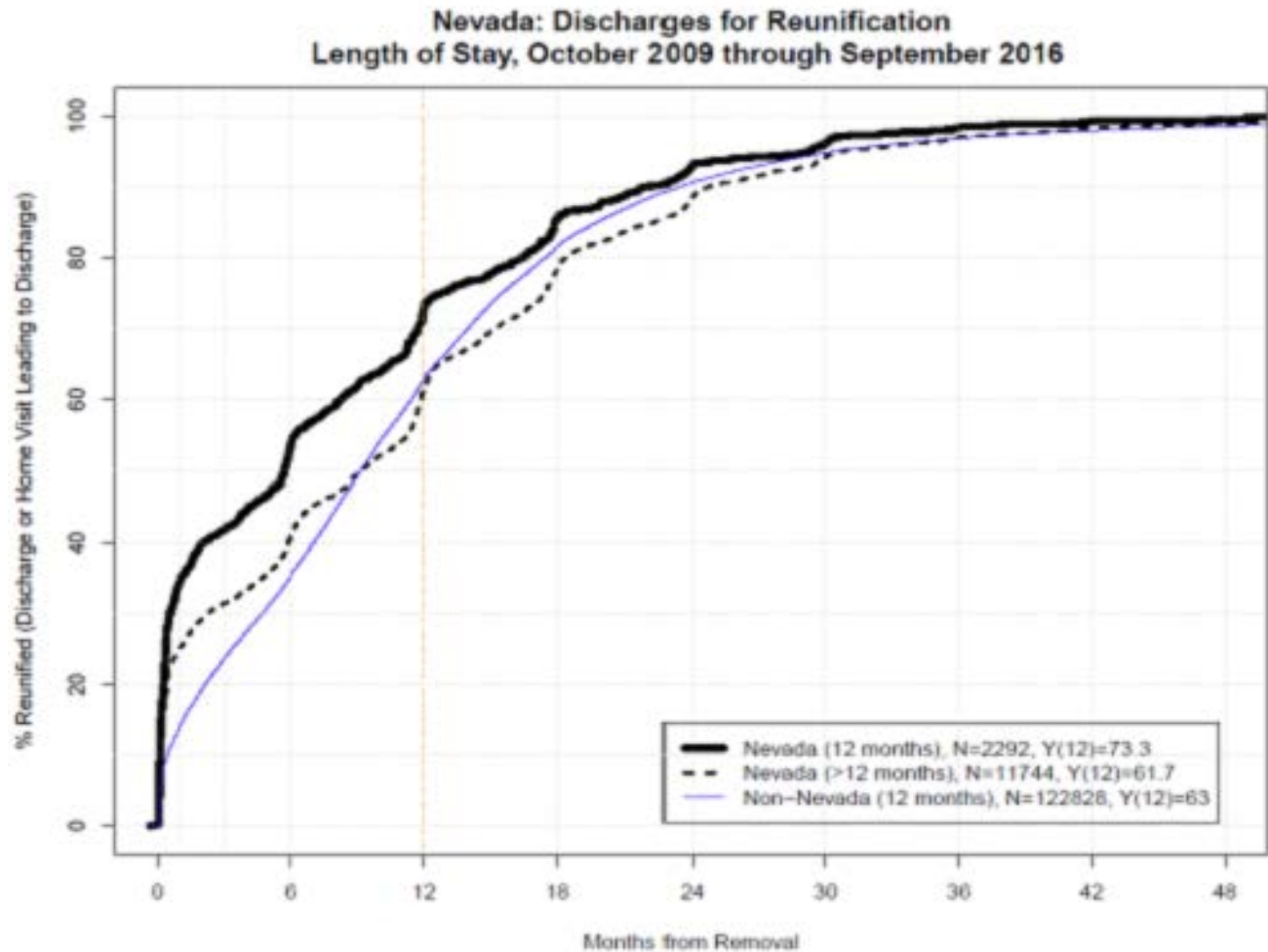
TIMELINESS OF ADOPTIONS DISCHARGED FROM FOSTER CARE	FY 2010	FY 2011	SFY 2012	SFY 2013	SFY 2014	SFY 2015	SFY 2016
Exits to Adoption in less than 24 Months (national median 26.8%, 75th percentile = 36.6%)	14.6%	18.1%	25.0%	27.8%	30.0%	34.5%	32.0%
Exits to Adoption, median length of stay(national median 32.4 months, 25th percentile = 27.3 months)	Median= 36.3 months	Median= 35.4 months	Median= 30.7 months	Median= 29.0 months	Median= 29.0 months	Median= 28.0 months	Median= 28.0 months

Source: Nevada CFSP-SFY 2015-2019, page 54, 6/23/2015 Data Profile; for SFYs 2015 and 2016 data from Report CFS732, provided by DCFS Data Team on 11/03/2016

The fact that all the statistical measures are trending in the directions of improvement since 2010 or 2011 suggests that a systemic change is taking place in Nevada. Thirty percent (32%) of the exits to adoption are taking place in less than 24 months as compared to only 14.6% in 2010. Exits to adoption are taking 28 months in SFY 2016 compared to 36.3 months in 2010. The proportion of permanency hearings held within 12 months of removal (NRS 432B.590) has increased from 67% in CY 2012 to 80% in CY 2016. The time to permanent placement has decreased 134 days or 16% between 2011 and 2016 (from 848 median days to 714 median days), and the time to TPR has decreased 146 days or 20% (Appendix 10).

Proportion of Permanency Hearings Meeting Statutory Timeliness Requirements	CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014	CY 2015	CY 2016
Percent of Permanency Hearings Held within 365 days	67%	70%	75.4%	77%	80%

As the CICs identify additional areas of improvement (e.g., hearing quality, impact of dependency mediation) additional and different data will need to be collected and provided.

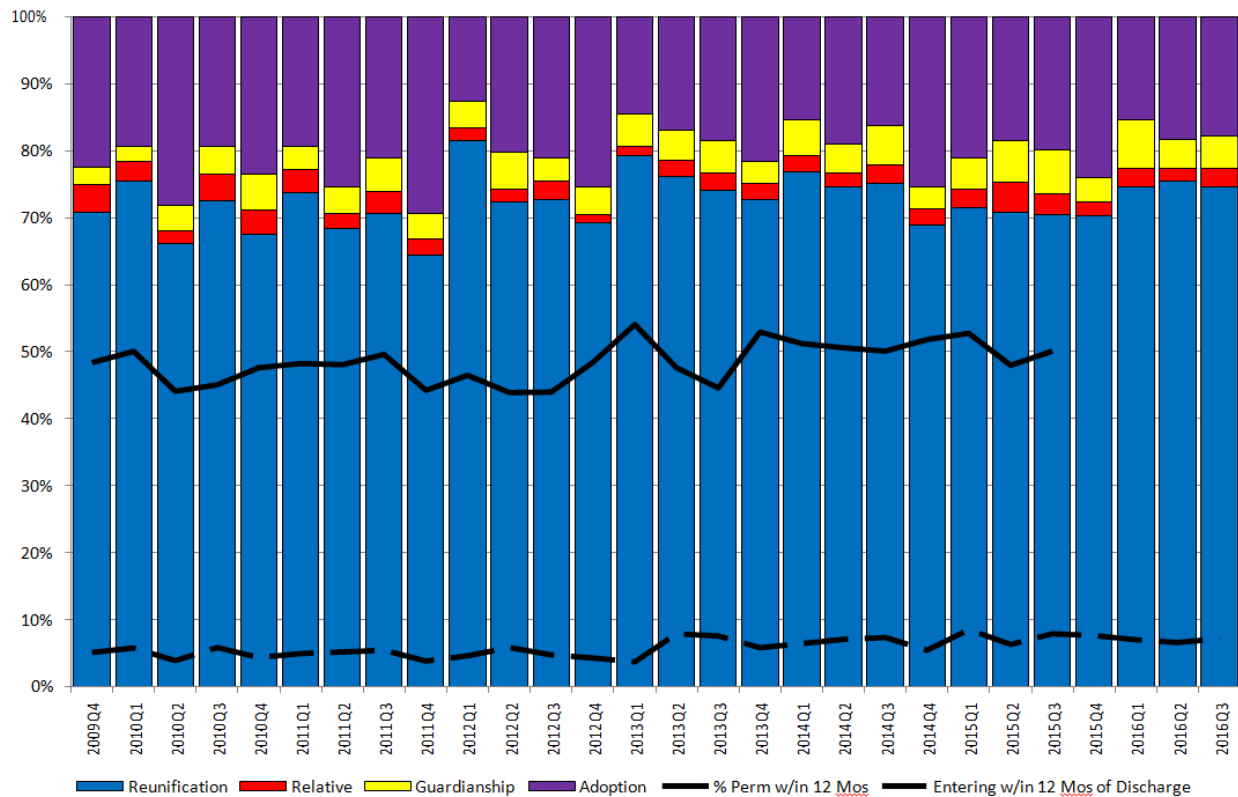


Using AFCARS data, the graphs above and below demonstrate Nevada’s commitment to reunification of children with their families during 2009 through September 2016. It appears that over 50% of those children are reunified within 6 months of removal, and over 40% are reunified within 3 months. The fact that some children return home so quickly raises the possibility they may be able to remain in their homes with additional support. Further analysis by year may, however, reveal that the new child safety practice model implemented by the child welfare agencies, in recent years, has had an impact on ensuring that only children in immediate danger

are removed from their homes; thereby, reducing the large proportion of children being immediately reunified early in the removal year.

The chart on the next page outlines the dynamics of discharge to permanency by permanency type over the same time period, confirming that reunification rates in Nevada fluctuate between 70% and 75% while the national median is around 50%. Relative placements have remained relatively consistent while adoptions vary between 15% and 25% of the discharges to permanency and guardianships continue between 5% and 10% of the total discharges.

Nevada Permanency Discharge Dynamics
By Discharge Type, FFY 2009-2016



What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or Children’s Bureau to help move the project forward?

Provide assistance analyzing and presenting administrative data to demonstrate trends similar to what Christopher Church does would be helpful.

Assistance developing and analyzing CIC action plans to help them move forward on improving hearing quality.

Guidance on CIC Summit agendas to include most useful and effective data elements regarding hearing quality.

II. Trainings, Projects, and Activities For questions 1-9, provide a *concise* description of work completed or underway to date in FY 2017 (October 2016-June 2017) in the below topical subcategories.

For question 1, focus on significant training events or initiatives held or developed in FY 2017 and answer the corresponding questions.

1. Trainings

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>How did you evaluate this training?</i>
Data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	Identification of areas in need of improvement and development of action plan to improve timeliness, permanency, and hearing quality for upcoming year	Action plans and survey
Hearing quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	Identification of specific strategies and best practices to improve court processing and development of action plan to improve hearing quality for upcoming year	Action plans and training evaluation
Improving timeliness/ permanency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	Development of action plan to improve timeliness, permanency, and hearing quality for upcoming year	Action plans and training evaluation
Quality legal representation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Children’s and parents’ attorneys and deputy district attorneys in 432B (child abuse and neglect) cases	Improve attorney understanding of NRS432B and federal acts relating to child abuse and neglect	Successful completion of on-line training which includes testing.

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>How did you evaluate this training?</i>
Engagement & participation of parties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	Development of action plan to improve timeliness, permanency, and hearing quality for upcoming year	Action plans and training evaluation
Well-being	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
ICWA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers conducting 432B hearings	Update judicial officers on their responsibilities under the new ICWA Regulations	Training evaluation
Sex Trafficking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Statewide Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	To educate members about the basics of child trafficking	Development of subcommittee charters
Other:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ child welfare	Improve understanding of mediation as implemented throughout the state	Surveys
Other:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Advanced Mediation	Improve JDMP mediators' skills	Surveys

On average, with ordinary funding levels, how many training events do you hold per year?

One to two training events are held each year with additional webinars and on-line trainings available. The attorneys' on-line dependency training was launched in February 2017.

Additional webinars are planned on such topics as: ICWA Regulations, Developmental Science and Child Welfare: Moving Toward a More Child-Centered Court Improvement Model, Outcomes of Process and Impact Evaluations of Dependency Mediation, Judicial Overview of Dependency Mediation, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: A Judge's Role, Hearing Quality/Reasonable Efforts.

A mediators' training was conducted to build a mediation panel of trained and qualified dependency mediators for the joint Child Welfare/CIP project: Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program. Twenty people, nominated by district court judges across the state, completed the 40-hour dependency mediation course.

The Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada provides CLE attorney training on a wide variety of relevant topics for all attorneys throughout the state.

What is your best prediction for the number of attorneys and judges that attend trainings annually? 390 attorneys and judges have been trained by our various trainings annually. CIP has trained at least that many CASAs, child welfare workers and administrators, court administrators, and other community stakeholders, as well.

- 2. Data Projects.** Data projects include any work with administrative data sets (e.g., AFCARS, SACWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity? Yes No (skip to #3)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>Court Event Notification: The purpose of this project is to ensure that all parties in a case are properly and consistently notified of hearings. In October 2016, the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) completed implementation of a NIEM-based web service to consume new, updated and cancelled hearing information directly from the 8th Judicial District Family Court Case Management System. This information automatically updates the “Hearing Screen” of the Nevada SACWIS system, UNITY. Child Welfare Case Workers, supervisors and attorneys assigned to the case are now able to view both historical and upcoming hearing information from within the SACWIS that is updated by the Court Case Management System. The 8th Judicial District Family Court is in the final stages of implementing software to transmit new and updated case hearing information and planning to implement by the end of 2017. A recent test detected errors which are being addressed by the 8th JD and DCFS IT teams and Clark County Department of Family Services.</p>	<p>Agency Data Sharing Efforts</p>	<p>Implementation</p>
<p>Centralized Case Index (CCI): The purpose of this project is to provide the judiciary with aggregate data reports into which they may drill down to obtain case specific information, helping them manage their caseloads and improve timely processing of dependency cases.</p> <p>The pilot project utilized manual imports of child welfare and court data and was successfully completed in 2015.</p> <p>In September 2016, the AOC CIP Program completed software development and implemented a web service to receive case information through an encrypted transmission from the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and the 2nd Judicial District Family Court. The system is in production and ready to</p>	<p>Data dashboards</p>	<p>Implementation</p>

<p>automatically receive and consume information. Both the DCFS and the 2nd Judicial District are currently undergoing integration testing to confirm all record information is received by the CCI.</p> <p>In early 2016 the CIP partnered with the 2nd Judicial District to leverage their in-house capability for developing sophisticated ColdFusion reports. The ColdFusion dashboard has been installed on the CCI server and the AOC and Court are currently working to develop production-level timeliness reports.</p> <p>In the meantime, two other case management systems' data have been added to the CCI, juvenile data for crossover youth and education data for foster youth. Additionally, the 10th Judicial District was added to the pilot project allowing the project to include both urban and rural districts.</p>		
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(a) Do you have data reports that you consistently view? Yes No

(b) How are these reports used to support your work?

These data reports are reviewed by the Coordinator and distributed to the CICs who use them to assess the impact of interventions on areas targeted for improvement in their action plans. The CICs utilize the quarterly and annual data packets, and information on targeted evidence-based and best practices provided at the annual CIC Summit (Appendix 6) to create logic models designed to improve some aspect of court functioning identified at the local level as in need of improvement.

These data reports are also used to guide CIP's discussions with the judiciary and their CICs so local stakeholders can work to improve timeliness and resolve systemic problems. CIP attends most local CIC meetings (Appendix 7), reaching out to each CIC to help them identify evidence-based and best practices that may be applicable in their jurisdictions, technical assistance to move forward on planning their implementation, and other brainstorming support. The Coordinator is also able to note similar areas of difficulty or success across the State to address.

3. Hearing Quality. Hearing quality projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of dependency hearings, including court observation/assessment projects, process improvements, specialty/pilot court projects, projects related to court orders or title IV-E determinations, mediation, or appeals.

Do you have a hearing quality project/activity? Yes No (skip to #4)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>Each of the 11 judicial districts has created Community Improvement Councils which meet regularly to implement their annual action plans developed at the annual CIC Summit.</p> <p>These action plans focus on improving the quality of their court hearings. Each judicial district focuses on different aspects of the process for improvement dependent upon where their challenges appear. The courts are in the process of implementing the changes they believe will best improve their hearings.</p> <p>The State CIP is focusing on encouraging judges to: engage parties present by explaining the hearing process and asking if they understand, include children in the hearings, address ICWA, discuss child's safety and why child cannot return home today, and emphasize well-being in all hearings, review permanency and concurrent plans more frequently possibly by utilizing case plan summaries as a tool.</p> <p>With assistance from CBCC. CIP will work with the CICs on assessing the impact of their systems changes.</p>	<p>Process Improvements</p>	<p>Evaluation/Assessment</p>

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>Through a partnership between the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services and CIP the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program was launched in August 2016. The overarching goal of the mediation program is to reduce the time to permanency for children. The mediation program also aims to understand and resolve legal and non-legal issues, provide opportunities for parties to speak for themselves and hear others, and build relationships. In mediation, parties are able to meet in a neutral setting to address case issues and identify available options with the help of an impartial third party. Previous research in Nevada and in other jurisdictions throughout the country has shown that mediation can enhance case processing (i.e., improve timeliness of court events), increase key participant (i.e., parents, children, relatives, and foster parents) and system stakeholder (i.e., prosecutors, parents' and children's attorneys and advocates, social workers, and others) engagement in the case process, and improve juvenile dependency case outcomes in a non-adversarial manner (i.e., reunification, timeliness of permanency).</p>	Mediation	Evaluation/Assessment

- 4. Improving Timeliness of Hearings or Permanency Outcomes.** Timeliness and permanency projects include any activities or projects meant to improve the timeliness of case processing or achievement of timely permanency. This could include general timeliness; focus on continuances or appeals, working on permanency goals other than APPLA, or focus on APPLA and older youth.

Do you have a Timeliness or permanency project/activity? Yes No (skip to #5)

All the projects CIP undertakes, the Community Improvement Councils, the Statewide Mediation Program, and the data exchange projects, are designed to improve hearing timeliness and permanency outcomes.

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Integration of all CIP efforts and programs	General/ASFA	Evaluation/Assessment

- 5. Quality of Legal Representation.** Quality of legal representation projects may include any activities/efforts related to improvement of representation for parents, youth, or the agency. This might include assessments or analyzing current practice, implementing new practice models, working with law school clinics, or other activities in this area.

Do you have a quality legal representation project/activity? Yes No (skip to #6)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Implementation of SB 305. This new bill allows a county to increase its recording fee from \$3 up to \$6 to assist with funding for attorneys for youth in foster care. In counties where there is legal aid the money will go to legal aid.	New Practice Models	Implementation
On-line Attorney Training Project is designed to educate attorneys practicing in 432B cases about state and federal law and ethical considerations. It will also be used to inform child welfare workers. The training has been developed and completed. It will be uploaded to the AOC's Judicial Education Website in January 2017.	Other	Evaluation/Assessment
Assessment of Statewide Perceptions of Parents' Attorneys: CBCC staff assisted the CIP to develop an evaluation plan to examine dependency court practices by districts in the areas of perceptions of system stakeholders, communication, and mediation. Part of these efforts included a survey to help determine the current state of practice and what trainings or resources may be needed to support or enhance current practices. In the first section, participants are asked to indicate in what judicial district they work and their role within the child welfare court system (based on their answer to this question, participants were given the appropriate questions). The next section addressed perceptions of stakeholder communication and practice. The last section addressed mediation, asking participants if they participate in mediation, how frequently, and their level of agreement with a specific statement which ranges on a 5-point scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Because of the small number of respondents, CBCC staff is helping redo this effort.	Assessment	Evaluation/Assessment

6. Engagement & Participation of Parties. Engagement and participation of parties includes any efforts centered around youth, parent, foster family, or caregiver engagement, as well as projects related to notice to relatives, limited English proficiency, or other efforts to increase presence and engagement at the hearing.

Do you have an engagement or participation of parties project/activity? Yes No

7. **Well-Being.** Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, psychotropic medication, LGBTQ youth, trauma, racial disproportionality/disparity, immigration, or other well-being related topics. Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being? Yes No (skip to #8)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>The Nevada Education, Child Welfare and the Courts Collaborative (Nevada’s Department of Education (NDOE), Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS), Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS)) chaired by CIP has the mission to improve school placement stability and continuity of instruction, specifically reducing the number of school moves and ensuring that if a move is necessary that the transition is eased by making certain that the child’s records are readily available to the new school and that the new school is aware that the child is in foster care.</p> <p>This requires information be shared among the child welfare agency, the school district, and the court. To that end the Collaborative has written a bill draft to incorporate the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements into the Nevada Revised Statutes which removes awaiting foster care from the definition of homelessness, includes definitions of foster care and school of origin, and places shared responsibility on the Local Education Agencies and Child Welfare Offices for providing transportation to the school of origin for students in foster care. The NDE is in the process of aligning state educational policies with the provisions of ESSA, and will be providing guidance and training to school districts and child welfare liaisons. All of our school districts and child welfare agencies have identified foster care points of contact.</p> <p>This Collaborative is responsible for the recently passed bill that modifies the Nevada Revised Statutes to include the provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act within a Nevada specific format. It is also the impetus behind a pilot project to allow allowing child welfare to enter foster child information directly into the school district’s case management system, thereby ensuring that foster children are identified quickly by the school district and afforded appropriate services.</p>	Education	Implementation

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>This same Collaborative helped design, wrote a grant to fund and supported the Washoe County Department of Social Services and Washoe County School District educational mentoring program, <i>Achievements Unlocked</i>. The program has been in place for two years, providing educational advocacy and tutoring to foster youth in high school who are unlikely to graduate.</p> <p>The program was set up with a control group to allow for a neutral third party assessment. It was found that at the beginning of the first semester of the first year, only 39% of the <i>Achievements Unlocked</i> cohort were on track to graduate compared to 59% of the control group. By the end of the second semester of the first year, 62% of the program cohort was on track to graduate; they had taken more courses and more difficult courses than the control group who was still at 59% on track to graduate. By the end of the second school year, 75% of the <i>Achievements Unlocked</i> cohort is graduating! (follow link: County program helping foster kids already showing results) (Appendix 11).</p>	Education	Evaluation/Assessment

8. **ICWA.** ICWA projects could include any efforts to enhance state and tribal collaboration, state and tribal court agreements, data collection and analysis of ICWA compliance, or ICWA notice projects. Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA? Yes No (skip to #9)
9. **Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (PSTFSA).** PSTFSA projects could include any work around domestic child sex trafficking, the reasonable and prudent parent standard, a focus on runaway youth, focus on normalcy, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement the act into practice. Do you have any projects/activities focused on PSTSFA? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Working with Governor’s Office developed a statewide coalition to prevent CSEC	Sex Trafficking	Implementation
Through TA from the Center for Coordinated Assistance to States developed work plan for CSEC Coalition (Appendix 12)	Sex Trafficking	Implementation
Creating a statewide data collecting and sharing process	Data collection/assessment/analysis	Selecting Solution

III. CIP Collaboration in Child Welfare Program Planning and Improvement Efforts

Please describe how the CIP has been involved with the state's CFSP due June 30, 2017.

Nevada CIP has been actively involved in the CFSP and APSR for many years. The CIP Coordinator attended the Federal briefing in Seattle, Washington on the upcoming Child and Family Services Review as an invited member of the Nevada Team. With this enhanced understanding of the systemic factors and what has replaced the composites, and the use of the newly established portal; CIP has been able to help the courts and CICs understanding of the 2018 CFSR process in Nevada.

CIP is an active and charter member of the Statewide Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC) which meets monthly to discuss all that is relevant to both the CFSR and the CFSP. The SQIC's purpose is to promote positive outcomes for Nevada's children through continuous oversight and analysis of state and federally identified performance measures and data relevant to continuous quality improvement.

CIP is also part of the team reviewing all the CFSR Case Review reports from the jurisdictions. CIP participates in on-going review of the resultant data and discussion concerning how improvement can be made in those items leading up to Nevada's Round 3 CFSR in 2018. The CIP Coordinator was trained to assist with quality improvement case file reviews in Nevada, and has been certified to conduct case file reviews on the CFSR On-Line Monitoring System. CIP participated in the Rural Region Reviews in April 2015 and 2016 and will again in August 2017.

The 11 judicially convened Community Improvement Councils (CICs) will be involved in either focus groups or surveys relating to continuous monitoring of the systemic factors. As a matter of fact, the CICs have initiated supporting several of the outcomes and systemic factors as a result of their action planning around timeliness, child safety, and hearing quality. All the courts have focused on implementing child safety decision making (Safety Outcome 2, Item 3). Most courts are asking about placement with relatives and maintaining relationships, if there has not been placement, with siblings (Permanency Outcome 2, Items 7, 8, and 10). As result of the 2015 and 2016 CIC Summits training on enhancing hearing quality, the courts are making inquiries concerning appropriate permanency goals (Permanency Outcome 1, Item 5).

Regarding the Case Review System systemic factor Item 22, a column for the proportion of permanency hearings meeting the mandatory time requirement has been added to the Court Performance Measure report sent to the courts quarterly. A review of court timeliness data shows that for all children who were in foster care between 2012 and 2016, the median days to permanency hearing were within the 12 month requirement. The proportion of permanency hearings conducted timely improved from 67% in 2012 to 80% in 2016. Additionally, time to permanency and termination of parental rights has been trending downward (16% and 20% decrease, respectively) since 2011 and the proportion of permanency hearings meeting statutory requirement upward (23.2% increase).

In terms of Item 23 (Termination of Parental Rights), CIP has been informing the courts quarterly of their timeliness using the same Court Performance Measure report and during the annual CIC Summit annual and trend data are presented for the courts to inform development of their annual court improvement action plans. A review of these data reveals that since 2011 through 2016 the time to TPR has been reduced by 20% statewide from 764 to 610 median days. Several of the CICs are digging into their data to better understand the underlying factors driving the trends.

Data regarding Item 21 (Periodic Reviews) is being added to the quarterly court performance measures report to ensure that the courts focus their attention on this important measure, as well.

Several courts have included in their CIC action plans activities to assist with Item 35 (Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention). The 4th Judicial District (JD) celebrated National Adoption

Month by engaging the entire community of Elko to highlight the need for adoptive and foster homes. With DCFS, the 5th and 7th JDs successfully pulled the communities together to recruit additional foster families, especially in remote areas. The 6th JD signed an MOU with DCFS to train court staff to recruit, train, and support foster and adoptive families. The 7th JD included in their quality hearing action plan increasing court involvement in foster care recruitment. The 8th JD's judges participate in foster family trainings. The 10th JD charged each of its CIC members to approach at least one suitable family about fostering children and the judge plans to contact each of those families.

Please describe how the CIP was or will be involved in the most recent/upcoming title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review in your state.

CIP was invited to join the closing conference for the IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review during which it was noted that two of the areas needing improvement were directly related to court errors. One was a single error involving prematurely closing the case before the child actually left foster care. The second was more ongoing and is being addressed during each monthly CIC meeting in which the CIP Coordinator is actively involved.

Please describe how the CIP is or was involved in preparing and completing round 3 of the CFSR and PIP, if required, in your state.

Nevada's Round 3 CFSR is not until the year 2018 and the PIP will follow after the 2018 review. However, CIP involvement has been ongoing in preparation for this review.

CIP is a charter team member of the DCFS Statewide Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC). The SQIC's purpose is to promote positive outcomes for Nevada's children through continuous oversight and analysis of state and federally identified performance measures and data relevant to continuous quality improvement.

As an active member of the SQIC which meets monthly to discuss all things related to NCANDS, AFCARS, NYTD Data and ongoing CFSR/APSR/CFSP activities, CIP provides a standing report on relevant court measure data. Focus groups with CIP were conducted for the 2016 APRS and CIP collaborated and participated in focus groups related to the CFSR Systemic Factors, specifically those related to the Systemic Factors of "Case Review System" or Items 20-24. It is planned that CIP has participated in focus groups and surveys in 2017.

The Nevada court system and CIP partners with child welfare on a variety of fronts as the need arises. The CICs all include their child welfare partners in developing and implementing their action plans to address local issues. CIP experiences no barriers to CFSR participation, as a matter of fact, DCFS actively solicits CIP input.

Additionally, DCFS in collaboration with CIP is presently joining meetings with the CICs in efforts to continue to educate them on the up-coming 2018 CFSR and collect input on the APSR Systemic Factors.

Are there any strategies or processes in place in your state that you feel are particularly effective in supporting joint child welfare program planning and improvement?

Yes, the Statewide Quality Improvement Committee, CIP Select Committee, CIC Meetings, and the annual CIC Summit are all venues at which the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program are actively discussed, third party evaluations shared, and suggestions for data offered. The surveys administered at the conclusion of the mediations provide helpful information concerning fidelity of the implementation of the mediation model (see description above in Section 1). The process and outcome evaluations guide continuous improvement of the Program's quality. During three of the last CIC Summits, mediation was a presentation topic.

Does the state child welfare agency currently offer professional partner training to judges, attorneys, and court personnel as part of its title IV-E Training Plan?

This is not something that is not being offered in our state's Title IV-E Training Plan.

If yes, please provide a brief description of what is provided and how.

If no, have you met with child welfare agency leadership to discuss and explore utilizing professional partner training for judges, attorneys and court personnel?

No. We were not aware of this possibility.

Which category or categories of activity best describe current CIP data efforts with the child welfare agency?

- Contributing data Receiving data Jointly using data
- Collaborative meetings Collaborative systems change project(s)
- Other: _____

III. CQI Current Capacity Assessment

1. Has your ability to integrate CQI into practice changed this year? If yes, what do you attribute the increase in ability to?

Yes, the data reports received from UNITY have been scrutinized for accuracy and consistency. DCFS is about to implement CognOS and these reports will be generated from there. It is important to ensure that the formulas for these reports are fully defined before moving to CognOS. Additionally, not knowing if our data grant funding would be available to help us contract for CQI technical assistance, severely impeded CQI integration into the work of the CICs (Appendix 13).

2. Which of the following CBCC Events/Services have you/your staff engaged in in the 2017 Fiscal Year?

- Annual CIP Meeting CQI Consult (*Hearing quality*)
- Constituency Group – ICWA Constituency Group – Anti-Trafficking
- Constituency Group – New Directors Constituency Group – APPLA/Older Youth
- CIP All Call – *What % of All Calls does your CIP participate in? 100%*

3. Do you have any of the following resources to help you integrate CQI into practice?

- CIP staff with CQI (e.g., data, evaluation) expertise Consultants with CQI expertise
- a University partnership Contracts with external agencies to assist with CQI efforts
- Other resources: _____

3. Describe the largest challenges your CIP faces with implementing CQI into your work.

CIP is heavily reliant on our ability to contract with NCJICJ for help with CQI efforts. The lack of data funding for the majority of the year severely curtailed our abilities, especially since there are only two CIP staff.

Access to good clean data as CIP relies upon the Child Welfare Agency's SACWIS. Better understanding how to access, analyze, and utilize administrative data.

4. *Is there a topic or practice area that you would find useful from the Capacity Building Center for Courts? Be as specific as possible (e.g., data analysis, how to evaluate trainings, more information on research about quality legal representation, how to facilitate group meetings, etc.)*

Yes, analysis of data, particularly administrative data, as Christopher Church explained during 2016 CIP Annual Meeting. Also help working with the CICs on understanding and using their data.

Revamp of legal representation survey conducted a year ago.

Guidance on how to conduct focus groups and analysis and utilize their input.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

Definitions of Evidence

Evidence-based practice – evidence-based practices are practice that have been empirically tested in a rigorous way (involving random assignment to groups), have demonstrated effectiveness related to specific outcomes, have been replicated in practice at least one, and have findings published in peer reviewed journal articles.

Empirically-supported- less rigorous than evidence-based practices are empirically-supported practices. To be empirically supported, a program must have been evaluated in some way and have demonstrated some relationship to a positive outcome. This may not meet the rigor of evidence-base, but still has some support for effectiveness.

Best-practices – best practices are often those widely accepted in the field as good practice. They may or may not have empirical support as to effectiveness, but are often derived from teams of experts in the field.

Definitions for Work Stages

Identifying and Assessing Needs – This phase is the earliest phase in the process, where you are identifying a need to be addressed. The assessing needs phase includes identifying the need, determining if there is available data demonstrating that this a problem, forming teams to address the issue.

Develop theory of change—this phase focuses on the theorizing the causes of a problem. In this phase you would identify what you think might be causing the problem and develop a “theory of change”. The theory of change is essentially how you think your activities (or intervention) will improve outcomes.

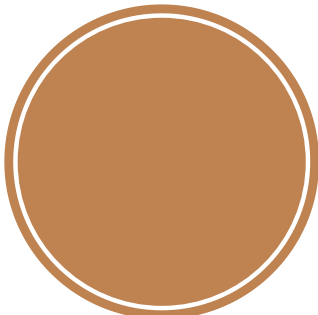
Develop/select solution—this phase includes developing or selecting a solution. In this phase, you might be exploring potential best-practices or evidence-based practices that you may want to implement as a solution to the identified need. You might also be developing a specific training, program, or practice that you want to implement.

Implementation – the implementation phase of work is when an intervention is being piloted or tested. This includes adapting programs or practices to meet your needs, and developing implementation supports.

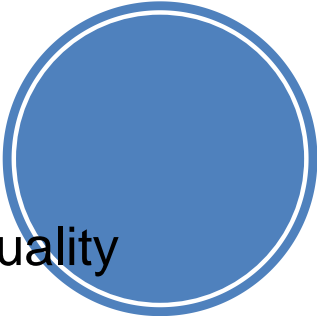
Evaluation/assessment – the evaluation and assessment phase includes any efforts to collect data about the fidelity (process measures: was it implemented as planned?) or effectiveness (outcome measures: is the intervention making a difference?) of the project. The evaluation assessment phase also includes post-evaluation efforts to apply findings, such as making changes to the program/practice and using the data to inform next steps.



Appendix



Well-Being



Quality



Safety



Stability



Permanency



Appendix 1

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Protocols, Forms, and Surveys



STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

1. Authority

Nevada Revised Statute Code Section 3.225 states, in pertinent part:
Family court to encourage resolution of certain disputes through nonadversarial methods; cooperation to provide support services.

1. The family court shall, wherever practicable and appropriate, encourage the resolution of disputes before the court through nonadversarial methods or other alternatives to traditional methods of resolution of disputes.

2. Purpose

This document sets forth protocols for the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program.

3. Definition

"Juvenile Dependency Mediation" is a confidential process conducted by specially trained, neutral third-party mediators who have no decision-making power. Dependency mediation provides a non-adversarial setting in which a mediator assists the parties in reaching a fully informed and universally acceptable resolution that focuses on the child's safety and best interest and the safety of all family members. Dependency mediation is concerned with any and all issues related to child protection.

4. Actions Eligible For Mediation

Active pre and post-adjudication child abuse and neglect cases from all Child Protection calendars are eligible for mediation. Termination of parental rights cases are also eligible for mediation. The mediation program focuses on whether or not Court jurisdiction is appropriate, petition language, services for children and parents, visitation, placement options, educational issues, reunification plans, permanency plans, dismissal orders, termination of parental rights, post-adoption contact, and any issues that are barriers to permanency.

At the discretion of the court mediation sessions for cases may be set: (1) All petition cases in which parents have entered a denial; (2) All contested permanency plan hearings; (3) All contested placement or visitation hearings in underlying dependency cases; and (4) All cases set for a contested Termination of Parental Rights trial.

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In addition, when the Court determines that an issue is contested, or otherwise appropriate for mediation, the Court may order the case to mediation. Attorneys, social workers, CASA workers, parents and any other individual involved in the case may request that the matter be referred to mediation. The Court, however, retains authority to grant or deny the request.

5. Scheduling Mediation Appointments

If the request for mediation/order to attend mediation takes place at a Court hearing, the mediation appointment will be scheduled at the hearing. The mediation referral order will be completed and provided to the parties and the Statewide Dependency Mediation Program Administrator will receive a copy of the referral order and an email notice of the referral.

If there is not an upcoming hearing scheduled, the parties will contact the court clerk to request that a mediation appointment be scheduled. Once the mediation appointment has been scheduled, the referral order form will be completed by the clerk, submitted to the Court for judicial signature, and filed with copies distributed to the parties. The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Administrator will receive a copy of the referral order as well as an email notice of the referral.

In addition to the referral order, the court clerk will also transmit to the mediator: (1) a list of expected participants and their contact information (from the court clerk); (2) the petition or TPR petition; (3) the last case report filed; (4) the last court order; and (5) any other reports the Program Administrator requests as well as any issues related to domestic violence.

If a party requests mediation and another party objects to the mediation referral, a motion must be filed in the case and an order sought for the mediation. After the appropriate motion practice and if an order referring the matter for mediation is issued, setting of the session will proceed as outlined in this protocol.

To ensure compliance with ASFA and Nevada law, termination of parental rights cases that cannot be scheduled for mediation prior to the termination of parental rights trial will not be referred for mediation. The judge presiding over the termination of parental rights matter has the discretion to order the case to mediation at any time.

Once a mediation is scheduled, the Program Administrator will contact the parties to obtain all the documents described in Section 9(a)(i) of this protocol.

6. Who May Participate in Mediation

Participants in Mediation:

The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program shall utilize a model of mediation that includes, at the mediator's discretion, the active participation of parents, guardians, social workers, foster parents, prospective adoptive parents and CASA

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

workers. Also actively involved are parents' attorneys, agency attorneys, and children's attorneys. Additional participants may be included (e.g., counselor, psychiatrist) or support persons (e.g., in domestic violence cases, a domestic violence support person) at the mediator's discretion.

Once the matter is ordered to mediation by the Court, attendance at mediation is mandatory. Failure to attend mediation by the mandated participants will be reported to the Court and may result in Court-ordered sanctions.

Child Participation in Mediation:

Children may be included in some or all of the mediation process on a case-by case basis. Among the factors considered are the child's age, developmental level, maturity, emotional well-being, desire to participate, as well as the nature of the abuse/neglect, and the nature of the disputed issue, in other words, whether the disputed issue has direct relevance to the child (e.g., removal or return, placement, visitation). The mediator will make a determination about the child's participation in mediation in consultation with the child's attorney, CASA, social worker and other relevant parties. The child's safety and well-being are always at the forefront of the decision about whether, and how, to include the child in the mediation process.

When children do participate in mediation, they will receive an age appropriate orientation to the mediation process. Among the issues discussed will be any options available to the child for his/her participation in the mediation; what is going to happen in the mediation process; the role of the mediator; what realistic goals the child may expect from the mediation and the limits on his/her ability to control the outcome; any limitations to the confidentiality of the process; the child's right to be accompanied throughout the mediation process by his/her attorney and/or other support persons; and, the ability to take a break and/or discontinue participating in the mediation process.

7. Domestic Violence Protocol

Research indicates that domestic violence in the form of adult-to-adult violence is frequently present in child abuse cases. The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program will operate in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Family Violence Department as included in *Effective Intervention In Domestic Violence & Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines For" Policy and Practice; Recommendation 48.*¹

¹ Mediators are trained thoroughly in the dynamics of domestic and family violence, including child maltreatment, as well as trained in the dynamics of substance abuse, basic psychology and family systems theory, the developmental needs of children, the workings of the local child protection and juvenile court systems, local domestic violence services, and other local community resources,

The mediation program provides specialized procedures designed to protect victims of domestic violence from intimidation alleged perpetrators and to correct power imbalances created by the violence. With interventions, including the performance of a domestic violence screening, the offering of individual- as opposed to joint-sessions

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It is the responsibility of all regular participants in mediation to inform the mediator whether adult-to-adult violence is an issue in any dependency/termination of parental rights case and to inform the Court if this issue is present in any case referred for mediation. It is then the responsibility of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program, in particular, its mediators, once notified of the existence of allegations of domestic violence in a given case, to ensure that mediation is conducted in an appropriate manner as described below.

This protocol holds that the issue of the violence itself will never be mediated (i.e., domestic violence including child and/or partner abuse is never justified), though conditions designed to preclude violence may be appropriate for discussion. Additionally, the cessation of violence shall not be predicated on the behavior of the victim of violence.

Additionally, it is recognized that psychological and/or physical intimidation may affect the balance of power between the parties. It may also affect the ability of a party to participate in her/his own best interest or the best interest of the children in the Court process. Measures included herein are designed to help rectify that imbalance of power during the course of mediation. Domestic violence is understood to be a behavior, or set of primarily learned behaviors, arising from multiple sources, which may follow different patterns in different families, rather than a disease process or syndrome with a single underlying cause. Domestic violence occurs where one partner in an intimate relationship controls or attempts to control the other through force, intimidation, subjugation and/or the threat of violence.

The procedures for cases involving domestic violence referred to the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation shall be as follows:

The Court, at the time of the scheduling of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation session, shall inform the program coordinator that the case includes elements of domestic violence, in addition to child abuse; The Court shall also note this information on the referral order.

for the victim and alleged perpetrator so that they never have direct contact with each other, and permitting the victim to have an advocate in attendance throughout the process;

The mediation process also provides for the participation of victim and child advocates, the child protection agency, other interested family members and individuals, as well as involved attorneys and GALs or CASAs, to reinforce further the balance of power and ensure that the rights of the participants are protected in the search for a resolution that focuses upon the safety and best interest of the child and the safety of all family members;

Mediators are vigilant when involved in discussions concerning the factual basis of the abuse of the child or victim-parent in order to prevent victim blaming and/or collusion with the batterer's de-minimization or discounting of the significance of the violence or abuse (p.101)

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Prior to commencing the mediation, the mediator will review the court file and, when available, any pertinent reports describing the domestic violence, and/or any existing domestic violence protective orders. This document review will be the first step in a domestic violence screening further discussed below.

If domestic violence has been identified and both parties will be present, prior to actually involving the family members in the mediation process, the mediator(s), shall perform a domestic violence screening using the protocol attached as Attachment A. The screening will be for the purpose of:

- a. Assessing the ability of the victim parent to fully and safely participate and reach a non-coerced settlement in that particular case;
- b. Clarifying the history and dynamics of the domestic violence issue in order to determine the most appropriate manner in which mediation should proceed consistent with the other provisions of this protocol;
- c. Assisting the parties, family members and attorneys, in formulating an agreement that provides appropriate safeguards for the safety of children and family members.

The mediator(s) will inform identified victims of domestic violence that it is the policy of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program that they have the following options available to them:

- a. The parent who has been the victim of domestic violence has the option of having separate sessions with the mediators, that is, she/he does not have to be in the mediation room at the same time as the perpetrator of the violence.
- b. In the alternative, she/he may elect to be seen jointly in mediation with the family member who perpetrated the violence but only after having been individually interviewed by the mediator, and only if the mediator concurs that a conjoint interview is safe and appropriate.
- c. When the Court has issued a protective order in cases involving domestic violence, a support person will be permitted to accompany a party protected by the order during mediation, whether or not she/he elects to be seen separately or together with the perpetrator. The protected party may also choose to have her/his attorney function as a support person. In the event the victim of the violence selects any other adult to be her/his support person, the function of the support person and causes for exclusion will be as follows:
 - i. It is the function of the support person to provide moral and emotional support for a person alleging she/he is a victim of domestic violence.
 - ii. The person who alleges that she/he is a victim of domestic violence may select any individual to act as a support person. No certification, training, or other special qualification is required for an individual to act as a support person.
 - iii. The support person's role is to assist the person in feeling more confident that she/he will not be injured or threatened during a proceeding when the victim of domestic violence and the other party must be present in close proximity.

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- iv. Except when the support person is the individual's attorney, the support person shall not be present as a legal adviser and shall not give legal advice.
- v. The presence of the support person does not waive the confidentiality of the mediation.
- vi. The mediator has the authority to exclude any support person, other than the individual's attorney, from a mediation proceeding if the presence of a particular support person is disruptive or disrupts the process of the session.

Dependency mediators will be sensitive when involved in discussions concerning the factual basis of child abuse or neglect, or domestic violence, in order to avoid collusion with victim blaming, denial, minimization or discounting of alleged child abuse or violence against any family member.

It is appropriate for dependency mediators to facilitate the process in a manner which encourages the incorporation of appropriate safety and treatment interventions in any settlement.

The mediation location provided by the court should be a safe and secure place for members of the community to discuss the most important issues related to their families, if possible. Persons present in and about the mediation location are expected to conduct themselves in a civil and businesslike manner at all times. With this in mind, the Program has a zero tolerance policy with regard to any expression or threat of violence, disorderly conduct, verbal abuse, or observable intimidation in the mediation. Such behavior may be considered detrimental to the safety and best interest of children and families, will be dealt with accordingly, and will be reported to security personnel and/or the Court, as appropriate.

When during the course of mediation, it appears that there is a clear and immediate danger to an individual or to society; the mediator shall take appropriate action aimed at protecting those in jeopardy.

8. Orientation

There shall be an oral orientation to mediation designed to inform dependency mediation participants about the mediation process in order to facilitate their safe, productive, and informed participation and decision-making by educating them about:

- a. How the mediation process is conducted, who generally participates in the session(s), the range of issues which may be discussed, and what to expect at the conclusion of the mediation;
- b. The mediator's role;
- c. Confidentiality and any limitations on the confidentiality of the process;
- d. If appropriate, the right of a participant who has been a victim of violence perpetrated by another mediation participant, to be accompanied by domestic violence support person and to have sessions with the mediator separate from the perpetrator. Unless otherwise authorized to participate

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this support person may not actively participate in the mediation, except to act as emotional support for the victim.

9. The Mediation Process

The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation process typically involves the following stages:

- a. Pre-Mediation:
 - i. A review of the case related information forwarded to the Program Administrator by the Court, including at a minimum, a list of expected participants and their contact information (from the court clerk), the petition or TPR petition, the last case report filed, the last court order, and any other reports the Program Administrator requests as well as any issues related to domestic violence.
 - ii. Program Administrator selects mediator and forwards case file and a list of participants and contact information.
 - iii. Discussion between the mediator and participants and/or others with knowledge relevant to the mediation.

- b. During the Mediation
 - i. A brief orientation of the parents and other interested participants to the dependency mediation process.
 - ii. A meeting with the attorneys, social worker, and assigned CASA worker/GAL for exchange of the most current case related information, including that related to domestic violence, identification of issues, and problem solving.
 - iii. Meetings and/or caucuses with the family members in various combinations, including for the purpose of differentially assessing the issue of domestic violence as it applies to the mediation process, for an identification and exchange of the most current case related information, identification of issues, and problem solving.
 - iv. Discussion among the parties, social worker, and their attorneys.
 - v. Final group or subgroup meeting(s) for: remaining problem solving; to identify areas of agreement/disagreement; clarification of expectations; answering remaining questions; and if applicable, drafting and reviewing the mediation agreement.
 - vi. The mediator will make concerted reasonable efforts to ensure that any agreement reached in mediation is clearly understood by each participant. Mediation agreements shall be reviewed and approved by all parties and the attorneys participating in said agreement, prior to its submission to the Court. When possible, parties and attorneys will proceed directly to Court to present the mediation agreement on the record (signed by all of the parties) to the judicial officer. Otherwise, the mediation

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

outcome form, and, if applicable, the mediation agreement (signed by all of the parties) is lodged in the court file for review and approval.

c. Post-Mediation

- i. Participants will be asked to complete a voluntary survey geared to their role in the mediation. The surveys are intended to be confidential. The surveys will not be reviewed by the mediators and will be placed directly in an envelope addressed to the Program Administrator.
- ii. Mediators must complete Mediation Report, Case Data Sheet, and In-Kind Form and return to Program Administrator with a copy of the invoice within two weeks of mediation. Invoices will not be approved for payment unless all of these documents have been submitted.
- iii. Once all forms are submitted, the mediator(s) shall destroy any notes made during the mediation process.

10. Use of Interpreters

Whenever possible, dependency mediation will be conducted in the shared language of the participants. When the participants speak different languages, court-certified interpreters will be assigned to translate the mediation session.

11. In Custody Mediation Participants

If possible, the mediation appointment shall be conducted in an appropriate location to accommodate the in-custody mediation participant. Any incarcerated parent shall be telephonically available to attend mediation and the court shall issue any requisite orders.

12. Failure to Appear for Mediation Appointment

Participation in the mediation session is mandatory once a case has been ordered to mediation. The parties and their attorneys are expected to participate in the mediation process.

13. Termination of Mediation Appointment

Each session will end with the consensus of the parties, unless the mediator determines that the session should be terminated prior to such consensus. The mediator shall have the power to suspend or terminate the mediation process if it is determined that the mediation cannot be conducted in a safe or appropriately balanced manner. The mediator shall also suspend or terminate the mediation process if it is determined that any party is unable to participate in an informed manner for any reason, including fear or intimidation.

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14. Mediation Outcome Report and Mediation Agreement

If the agreement cannot be presented in court, a Mediation Court Memo shall be completed by the mediator at the end of each mediation session and submitted to or filed with the Court. If the mediation session was not held, the Memo shall inform the Court why it did not occur whether the appointment was rescheduled, or that the case is inappropriate for mediation. If the mediation session was held, the Mediation Memo shall inform the Court of the parties present at the mediation; whether the parties reached a written or verbal agreement and if it represents a full agreement, a partial agreement, or if there is no agreement; and if an additional mediation appointment has been scheduled.

While parties may have been ordered to participate in mediation and make an effort to resolve certain issues, entering into any agreement is strictly voluntary. The attorneys for the parties have an opportunity to review any written agreement that is reached before it is presented to the Court. When a written agreement is reached and signed by all of the parties, the parties may either present the agreement in court or the mediator shall attach the agreement to the Mediation Memo and both shall become part of the court file. The Court shall ultimately determine the acceptability or unacceptability of all mediation agreements.

15. Confidentiality

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation is a confidential process consistent with Nevada Revised Statute Code Section 48.109.

NRS 48.109 Closure of meeting held to further resolution of dispute;
Exclusion of admission, representation or statement made during mediation proceedings; confidentiality of matter discussed during mediation proceeding.

1. A meeting held to further the resolution of a dispute may be closed at the discretion of the mediator.
2. The proceedings of the mediation session must be regarded as settlement negotiations, and no admission, representation or statement made during the session, not otherwise discoverable or obtainable, is admissible as evidence or subject to discovery.
3. A mediator is not subject to civil process requiring the disclosure of any matter discussed during the mediation proceedings.

Exceptions to Confidentiality:

In the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation program, there are certain circumstances where these protections do not apply and mediation communications may or must be disclosed. Some of the circumstances where mediation communications are **not confidential** are listed below.

- a. Some professionals participating in the mediation may be permitted or required by law to report specific information to certain authorities, such as:
 - i. Information that would **support new allegations of child abuse or neglect**

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- ii. Information about elder abuse and/or dependent adult abuse
- iii. A mediation participant's **threat to harm him/herself or someone else**
- b. Any written settlement agreement
- c. An attorney and client may discuss the details of a mediation with each other in the event that one of them is not present at the mediation.
- d. There may also be other circumstances where information from the mediation may not be confidential (including but not limited to, if a **criminal case is pending or filed at a later date**)
- e. Non-identifying information about this mediation may be made available for Program evaluation

If parties have any questions about confidentiality and the limits of confidentiality, they are advised to consult with their attorney privately before discussing any topic at the mediation.

Discovery:

All statements, whether oral or in a record or verbal or nonverbal, made during a mediation session conducted pursuant to this protocol, including those made in any individual meeting with the mediator, and all such statements made for the purposes of considering, conducting, participating in, initiating, continuing or reconvening a mediation, shall be exempt from discovery and inadmissible as evidence in the child protection case. Evidence or information that is otherwise admissible or subject to discovery does not become inadmissible or protected from discovery solely by reason of its disclosure or use in mediation. Disclosure of mediation communications shall not be compelled in any arbitration, administrative hearing, adjudication, civil action, or non-criminal proceeding in which, pursuant to law, testimony is compelled to be given. The mediators are exempted from participating in discovery proceedings

16. Mediation Records

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program files are kept separate from the court file and no papers generated by the dependency mediation process will be included in the court file, nor shall the judicial officer assigned to the case have access to them, except as follows:

- a. Mediation settlement agreement/stipulation (signed by all of the parties)
- b. Mediation Memo as described in Section 14
- c. Mediation confidentiality and agreement to mediate form

Confidentiality will be protected in the appropriate storage and disposal of records.

17. Accountability and Complaint Process

The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program is accountable to the Court Improvement Program

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The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Administrator will submit a report to the Court Improvement Program no less than four times a year. Included in the report will be a summary of the number and types of cases mediated, the agreement rate, and cumulative information collected from mediation participant surveys.

Informal concerns or complaints regarding the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program may be made at any time by contacting the Court Improvement Program Coordinator at 775-687-9809. Formal complaints about a mediator's performance must be addressed in writing to:

The Court Improvement Program Coordinator
Administrative Office of the Courts
Supreme Court Building
201 S. Carson Street, Suite 250
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4702

The Court Improvement Program Coordinator will respond to the complaint in writing within thirty days of receipt of the complaint.

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

Attachment A

Domestic Violence Screening Protocol

1. What are we trying to find out by screening? We are trying to determine whether a victim is safe or feels safe participating in mediation with the batterer present.

2. How should screening be done? Screening must be initiated by discussion between the mediator, district attorney, child welfare and attorneys of parties in the action. Screening should be done separately with each party so the batterer does not directly influence the answers given by the victim. If screening is done in person, appointments should be on different days to prevent stalking of the victim by the batterer. If screening is done telephonically, the parties should be asked if they are alone prior to questioning.

3. If screening reveals that a victim is in immediate or present danger. A person in danger of battering should be put in touch with the police or a domestic violence shelter. It is helpful to follow up and see if they are safe. A mediator should not be neutral about safety.

4. Where there is a history of domestic violence the process may be modified to provide a safe environment for the victim. Consider the following strategies.

1. The victim should arrive 10 minutes after the abuser and leave 10 minutes earlier than the abuser.
2. Seat the victim closer to the door.
3. Setting additional ground rules for the mediation and conversation between the couple to reduce fear and intimidation. Discuss concerns of parties prior to mediation in development of ground rules (e.g. "what ground rules will make you feel safe?")
4. Allow for an advocate to come to the mediation with the victim or to wait in the waiting room for the victim.
5. Require a court bailiff to be present, if possible.
6. Utilize caucus as a safety valve.
7. Talk to the victim during breaks or between sessions to assess the level of fear.

STRUCTURE FOR SCREENING INTERVIEW OF PARTIES IF NEEDED

- The person conducting screening must be trained in domestic violence.
- Screening must be undertaken before joint sessions are held.

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

- Screening of each party must be conducted separately, preferably in person. When scheduling a screening in person inquire whether a party has any safety concerns about coming to the screening location. Arrangements should be made to respond to the safety concerns of the parties.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SCREENING INTERVIEW

- Observe each party's behavior during the interview.
- Preface screening with reassurance to reduce awkwardness.
- A policy of confidentiality consistent with applicable statutes and court rules should be explained to the parties, as well as the goals & process of mediation.
- Identify each party's ability to negotiate, practices of abuse, coercion and threats by a party. Give victim the opportunity to express concerns about participating in the mediation jointly.
- Participants should be assured that participation in the screening process fulfills the requirement for court ordered mediation.
- Do not make judgments about allegations of abuse. The mediator's role is to determine whether the case is appropriate for mediation with both parties present or at different times, or if the case is appropriate for mediation.

**THE * JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF ***

JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION REFERRAL ORDER

IN THE MATTER OF: CHILD'S NAME _____, <u>Minor Child</u>
--

CASE NUMBER: _____ DEPARTMENT NUMBER: _____
--

THE COURT HEREBY refers the dispute indicated below to Juvenile Dependency Mediation. The Parties to the dispute shall appear at the time and place set and make every effort to resolve the issues related to this case. The Court expects legal counsel for the parties to be present at the Court Ordered mediation.

Disputed issue: _____

This case involves allegations of domestic violence

If this case is scheduled for trial, how much time has been set aside for the trial: _____

MEDIATION DATE: _____ **TIME:** _____

The parties shall report for Juvenile Dependency Mediation at: _____

IT IS SO ORDERED:

DISTRICT JUDGE/COURT MASTER

DATE

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program

List of Parties

(To Be Sent to Program Administrator)

Margaret M. Crowley
Program Administrator
Crowley Mediation, L.L.C.
www.CrowleyMediation.com
775-233-6711

Mother: Email: Phone:	Mother's Attorney: Email: Phone:
Father: Email: Phone:	Father's Attorney: Email: Phone:
Child(if applicable): Email: Phone:	Child's Attorney Email: Phone:
Foster Parent: Email: Phone:	District Attorney: Email: Phone:
CASA: Email: Phone:	Attorney General: Email: Phone:
Other: Email: Phone:	Social Worker: Email: Phone:
Other: Email: Phone:	Social Worker(Supervisor): Email: Phone:



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Confidentiality Statement and Agreement to Mediate

Mediation is a process where parties come together in an attempt to settle a dispute. A trained mediator assists the parties during the mediation. Free and open communication is necessary for a mediation to cover all of the concerns of the participants. Because this is of such great importance, the law considers mediation communications confidential and prohibits their disclosure (NRS 48.109). The mediator and all of the participants are not allowed to disclose to anyone else a communication made in a mediation session. Also, information from a mediation session cannot be used in the court case related to the mediation.

HOWEVER, there are certain circumstances where these protections do not apply and mediation communications may or must be disclosed. Some of the circumstances where mediation communications are not confidential are listed below.

- A. Some professionals participating in the mediation may be permitted or required by law to report specific information to certain authorities, such as:
 1. Information that would support **new allegations of child abuse or neglect**
 2. Information about **elder abuse and/or dependent adult abuse**
 3. A mediation participant's **threat to harm him/herself or someone else**
- B. An attorney and client may discuss the details of a mediation with each other in the event that one of them is not present at the mediation
- C. Any written settlement agreement
- D. There may also be other circumstances where information from the mediation may not be confidential (including but not limited to, if a **criminal case is pending or filed at a later date**)

If you have any questions about confidentiality and the limits of confidentiality, please consult with your attorney privately before discussing any topic at the mediation.

- While parties may have been ordered to participate in mediation and make an effort to resolve certain issues, entering into any agreement is strictly voluntary.
- The only report the mediator will make to the court is one that states who attended the scheduled mediation appointment, whether an agreement was reached, and if so, the terms of the agreement, and whether an additional mediation appointment has been scheduled. The mediator will not make any recommendations to the court as to how the case should be decided.
- The mediator cannot be used as a witness in civil court or other non-criminal legal proceedings (NRS 48.109). Written documents prepared for mediation, during mediation, or as a direct result of mediation, cannot be used as evidence in civil court or other non-criminal legal proceedings.
- The attorneys for the parties have an opportunity to review any written agreement that is reached before it is presented to the court. Once signed by all parties, written settlement agreements will be tendered to the court for review/approval and become part of the court file.

- Non-identifying information about this mediation may be made available for program evaluation.

This agreement binds all mediation participants, including but not limited to, social workers, district attorneys, parents' attorneys, minor's counsel, CASA, therapists, parents and any other persons present at the mediation.

By signing below, I agree that I have read and understand the above and that the mediator has verbally explained this document to me. I further agree to participate in the mediation and keep confidential all communications from the mediation unless I am permitted or required by law to disclose specific information.

Case Number

Child(ren)'s Name(s) & Date(s) of Birth

Date: _____

Print Name:
Relationship to case:

Print Name:
Relationship to case:

Print Name:
Relationship to case:

Print Name:
Relationship to case:

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Relationship to case:

Print Name:
Relationship to case:

05/16/17



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program

TO: The Honorable

FROM: Dependency Mediator

DATE:

SUBJECT:

The parties participated in mediation on ----- to attempt to resolve issues related to this case.
The parties
successfully reached agreement
successfully reached a partial agreement
were unable to reach an agreement

cc:
, Esq.
, Esq.
, DCFS

This memo is lodged in Case No. _____ to apprise the Court of the status of the mediation referral.

08/15/16

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**IN THE * JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF ***

In Re: the Matter as to

***,**

CASE NO. *

minor child.

DEPT. NO. *

_____ /

JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION AGREEMENT

OUTCOME: Full Agreement OR Partial Agreement

MEDIATION DATE:

MEDIATOR: *, Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediator

PARTIES PRESENT:

***, Mother**

***, Attorney for Mother**

***, Father**

***, Attorney for Father**

***, Social Worker**

***, Social Work Supervisor**

***, Deputy District Attorney, Attorney for Agency**

***, Attorney for Name(s) of Child(ren)**

***, CASA**

Pursuant to the mediation held , the parties agree as follows:

Read and Accepted by:

*, Mother

*, Mother's Attorney

*, Father

*, Father's Attorney

*, Social Worker

*, Social Work Supervisor

*, Deputy District Attorney

*, Attorney for Child(ren)

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*, CASA

IT IS ORDERED.

This ____ day of _____, 2016.

MASTER

IT IS ORDERED.

This ____ day of _____, 2016.

DISTRICT JUDGE

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program
Mediation Report

A mediation for the ____ Judicial District was conducted on ____ with ____ acting as the mediator. The child has been in care since birth, for over 13 months, and the DCFS has referred the case to the Attorney General's Office for termination of parental rights. The child has been placed with prospective adoptive parents who are not related to the birth parents. Present at the mediation were: parents and their attorneys, prospective adoptive parents, DCFS, District Attorney's Office and CASA.

The parents came to the mediation ready to consent to the adoption of their child by the prospective adoptive parents. Prospective adoptive parents were willing to offer very generous terms to biological parents so that they can be a part of their child's life. In addition, biological parents have another child and wanted the siblings to have the opportunity to know each other. There were several challenges in the mediation, including trying to craft a plan that would endure for the next 17 years as well as negotiating a name change for the child. The parties were able to come to agreement and the parents signed a consent to adopt.

Submitted by: ____

08/15/16



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program PARTICIPANT SURVEY

You recently participated in juvenile dependency mediation. We are interested in your experience of the juvenile dependency mediation service and any suggestions you may have. Your comments are important to us and will help improve our services.

Was this co-mediated? Yes No

1.) Today's Date: ____ / ____ / ____

2.) What is your relationship to the child?

- Mother
- Father
- Child (Age: _____)
- Other Family Member _____
- Foster Parent _____
- Other _____

3.) The mediator explained the mediation process clearly so I knew what to expect.

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

4.) Did you have a chance to voice your opinions?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

5.) Was an agreement reached?

- Yes, on all issues
- Yes, on some issues
- No

If no, why do you think an agreement could not be reached?

If yes, do you think that the mediation agreement will work?

6.) Do you think the other people in mediation really listened to what you had to say?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

7.) Did you feel ignored or unimportant during the mediation?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

8.) Were you treated with respect?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

9.) Were you able to be a part of finding answers to the problems discussed?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

10.) Did the mediator treat everyone fairly?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

11.) What did you find most helpful?

12.) What did you find least helpful?

13.) Other comments or suggestions:



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

You recently participated in juvenile dependency mediation on behalf of your client or agency. We are interested in your experience of the juvenile dependency mediation service and any suggestions you may have. Your comments are important to us and will help improve our services.

Was this co-mediated? Yes No

1.) Today's Date: ____ / ____ / ____

2.) What is your role in this case?

- Mother's Attorney
- Father's Attorney
- Child's Attorney
- District Attorney/Attorney General
- Social Worker
- CASA
- Other _____

3.) What legal action is pending in this case?

- Adjudicatory/Evidentiary Hearing
- Disposition Hearing
- 6 Month Review Hearing
- 12 Month Review Hearing
- Permanency Planning Hearing
- Termination of Parental Rights
- Other _____

4.) Did your session result in an agreement?

- Yes, All Issues
- Yes, Some Issues
- No

If no, why do you think an agreement could not be reached?

If yes, how does the mediated agreement compare w/ court orders?

5.) Did you (or your client) have a chance to voice your opinions?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

6.) Do you think the other people in mediation really listened to what you (or your client) had to say?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

7.) Were you treated with respect?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

8.) Was your mediation session conducted fairly?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

9.) What did you find most helpful about the mediation session?

10.) What did you find least helpful?

11.) Other comments or suggestions:

09/13/16

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts

Mediator's Name: _____ APPOINTMENT DATE: _____

Case Preparation Time: _____ APPOINTMENT TIME: _____



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Case Data

Unity Number _____ Judicial District _____ Case Number _____ Dept. # _____

Previous Mediation? ___ Yes ___ No

Children's Name(s) & Date(s) of Birth _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Gender Identity: _____

Children's Name(s) & Date(s) of Birth _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Gender Identity: _____

Siblings? ___ Yes ___ No

How many are a Party to this case? _____ How many are Not? _____

Mediation: ___ Ordered by Court ___ Requested by party _____ Other _____

FOCUS OF MEDIATION:

___ Jurisdiction	___ petition language	___ services for children & parents
___ visitation	___ placement	___ education issues
___ reunification plans	___ permanency plans	___ dismissal orders
___ TPR	___ post-adoption contact	___ post-guardianship contact
___ other _____		

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: _____

Next Court Date: _____

Mediator's Use Only **START TIME:** _____ **END TIME:** _____

Did the mediation result in the Court vacating a hearing? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, which hearing? _____

Settlement Conference _____ Trial/Evidentiary Hearing # of days _____

OUTCOME: _____ AGREEMENT
 _____ PARTIAL AGREEMENT
 _____ NO AGREEMENT REACHED
 _____ PARTIES FAILED TO SHOW
 _____ OTHER

Written / Verbal (circle)
Written / Verbal (circle)

Type of Victimizations:

_____ Child Physical Abuse or Neglect
 _____ Child Sexual Abuse/Assault
 _____ Human Trafficking: Sex

Special Classifications of Individuals:

	<u>Child</u>	<u>Parent</u>
_____ Deaf/Hard of Hearing	_____	_____
_____ Homeless	_____	_____
_____ Immigrants/Refugees/Asylum Seekers	_____	_____
_____ LGBTQ	_____	_____
_____ Victims with Disabilities: Cognitive/ Physical /Mental	_____	_____
_____ Victims with Limited English Proficiency	_____	_____
_____ Other	_____	_____

Number of surveys distributed _____

Number of surveys completed _____

FOLLOW-UP

2ND MEDIATION SCHEDULED:

_____ YES _____ NO DATE: _____ TIME: _____

POST-MEDIATION INFORMATION:

JDMP CHECKLIST

Documents to complete for Program ASAP:

- In-Kind Match Information Sheet
- Register as vendor

Before Mediation

- Prepare Confidentiality Statement and Agreement to Mediate
- Prepare draft agreement if applicable
- Obtain UNITY # for social worker to put on Case Data sheet
- Envelope for surveys and Confidentiality Statement addressed to:

Margaret Crowley
Crowley Mediation, LLC
121 Washington Street
Reno, NV 89503

During Mediation

- Have parties sign Confidentiality Statement
- Participant Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

After Mediation

- Memo/Agreement to Court if applicable
- Case Data sheet
- Mediator's Report
- In-Kind Reporting Form

Documents that go to Margaret

- Confidentiality Agreement, original
- Surveys, originals
- Case Data Sheet
- Mediator's Report
- In-Kind Reporting Form (I will forward to Robbie Taft)

Billing

- Prepare Invoice
- Email invoice to JudicialBranchAcct@nvcourts.nv.gov; copy rtaft@nvcourts.nv.gov
- Make sure your email includes "The invoice attached is the only invoice provided and a hard copy will not be mailed."



Appendix 2

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Brochure



What is Juvenile Dependency Mediation?

Dependency Mediation Program is an informal and confidential process in which the parents, social workers, attorneys, and other people in a case meet with an impartial person (the mediator).

The mediator helps the parties explore ways to resolve differences and make a plan that everybody agrees is safe and best for the child, as well as safe for all of the involved adults.

Mediation is an opportunity for you to help decide what is best for your family. The mediator does not make decisions for the people in mediation and will not make any recommendations to the court.

You can consult with your attorney at any time.

Be sure to ask as many questions as necessary so that you understand what is expected of you and what you can expect from your social worker and the Court.

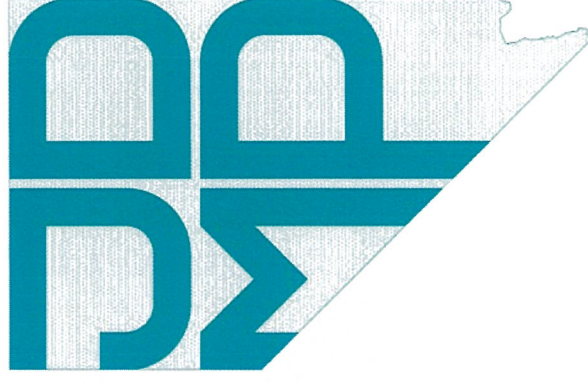
Your Mediation Appointment has been scheduled for:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Please plan on arriving 10 minutes before the appointment time.



What You Should Know About: Juvenile Dependency Mediation

Who Participates in Mediation?

Mediation usually includes the parents, social workers, attorneys, CASA, as well as other people involved in the case.

Children may also participate in one form or another if they are of an appropriate age, if it is likely to be helpful, and if the child's attorney agrees.

Mediation Procedure

At the beginning of the appointment, the mediator will meet with you to answer questions and explain the mediation process. The mediator will then speak with the attorneys, social workers, and others present to discuss the case and identify legal issues.

At some point during the process, it is likely that all of the participants will meet together in the same room. Throughout the process, the mediator will meet with various groups of people to help them share their ideas and problem solve. The goal is for everybody to come up with a plan that is safe and best for the child, as well as safe for the family members.

If the parties come to some agreement, the mediator will write this down and have everyone sign it. Agreements become court orders when signed by the Judicial Officer. In the alternative, the agreement may be placed on the court record by the Judicial Officer. Even if you have reached a mediated agreement, you will still attend your next court hearing. If there is no agreement, the case moves on to the previously scheduled court date for the Judicial Officer's decision.

Confidentiality & Exceptions

Confidentiality in Dependency Mediation means that no one can tell the Juvenile Dependency Court Judge or Master what was said in mediation, except to report who attended and the areas of agreement. It also means that people in the mediation should not talk to anyone outside of the mediation about what was said, unless everyone agrees that this should happen. Notes taken in the mediation session will be collected by the mediator.

The following things are NOT confidential, and require that the proper authorities be informed:

- The agreement reached in mediation that goes to the Judicial Officer for signature;
 - If the mediator reasonably suspects a new act of abuse or neglect (child or elder) has happened;
 - If anyone threatens to harm self or others.
- There may be other circumstances where information may not be confidential (including if a criminal case is pending, or filed at a later date.) Consult with your attorney prior to participating in mediation if there is a related criminal matter or investigation in process.

Who are the Mediators?

All of the JDMP mediators are formally trained in dependency mediation. They come from different professions and have an understanding of the Nevada child welfare system, the dynamics of conflict, and cultural considerations. Their job is to facilitate conversation in a safe, informal environment, empowering participants to find satisfactory solutions.

Issues Discussed in Mediation

Some of the issues talked about in mediation are:

- Wording of Allegations (petition language)
- Reunification Plans
- Placement Options
- Custody and Visitation Plans
- Expectations
- Services for children and parents, such as:
 - » individual and/or family counseling
 - » drug testing
 - » substance abuse treatment
 - » parenting and/or domestic violence classes

Throughout the mediation session, the focus will be on what the child's needs are, what parents will do, and what social services can do.

Preparing for the Appointment

To prepare for the mediation appointment you can talk with your attorney about the issues you would like to bring up, think about what is best for your child, and be open to considering different ideas.





Appendix 3

Justice Saitta's Letter Requiring Formation of Community Improvement Councils

SUPREME COURT OF NEVADA
NANCY M. SAITTA, JUSTICE
201 SOUTH CARSON STREET
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701-4702
(775) 684-1530



October 27, 2010

The Honorable T. Arthur Ritchie, Jr.
Judge, Eighth Judicial District Family Court
200 Lewis Avenue
Las Vegas NV 89155

Dear Chief Judge Ritchie, Jr.:

cut

In response to a federal review of Nevada's child welfare system, the courts have been asked to identify barriers to permanency, timely adoption, and termination of parental rights. Work groups or "community improvement councils" (CIC) have proven to be very effective in other states. Because you are directly involved in the system, know what your local issues are and how best to resolve them, I would like you to convene and have one of the family court judges chair a CIC in your judicial district. These Councils should be composed of key local stakeholders and other system partners such as district attorneys, private attorneys, child welfare agency staff, CASAs, GALs, and other interested parties.

The goal of these CICs is to consider the current functioning and efficiency of the permanency timeframes by identifying and assessing the challenges and possible solutions specific to your jurisdiction. To accomplish this goal your CIC will meet two or three times over the next four months. Ideally, all the CICs should share their experiences and lessons learned.

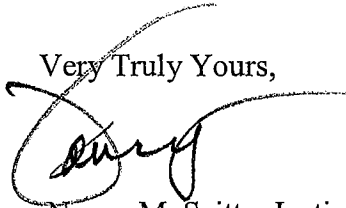
You will not be alone in this endeavor. The Court Improvement Program will provide you with information and staff support. CIP has some limited resources available to assist you with such things as facilitation of your Council, invitations to community members, or research data.

In the next day or two, you will receive a letter from Kathie Malzahn-Bass, CIP Coordinator, with more specific information on the Community Improvement Council process. Kathie plans to attend as many initial CIC meetings as possible. Please consider this letter as my "introduction" of Kathie. As the CIP coordinator, Kathie can assist you and identify opportunities during your council meetings where CIP might offer assistance.

I am counting on you to make your CIC a success. I know how busy you are, and I sincerely appreciate the time and effort you will give to this project. I believe that the court plays an important part in ensuring the system works for everyone.

Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at nsaitta@nvcourts.nv.gov or 775.684.1530.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nancy', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Nancy M. Saitta, Justice

rt

cc: Chief Justice Parraguirre
Judge Togliatti
Judge Sanchez
Judge Steel
K. Malzahn-Bass



Appendix 4

Court Performance Measures and Statewide Data Summary

Modified CFS775 Report Permanency Timeliness (new court names, no future hearings, under 18, etc. Ad-Hoc)

Court	Nbr of Children	Median Days to 1 st Permanency Hearing	Percent 1 st Hearing within 365 days from Removal Date	Median Days to 1 st Permanency Hearing 2-year look back from end PUR	Median Days from 1 st to 2 nd Permanency Hearing	Percent 2 nd Hearing within 365 days from 1 st Hearing	Median Days from 2 nd to 3 rd Permanency Hearing	Percent 3 rd Hearing within 365 days from 2 nd Hearing	Median Days from 3 rd to 4 th Permanency Hearing	Percent 4 th Hearing within 365 days from 3 rd Hearing	Median Days from 4 th to 5 th Permanency Hearing	Percent 5 th Hearing within 365 days from 4 th Hearing	Median Days for all Subsequent Hearings	Percent Hearing within 365 days from remaining Hearing	Median Days since last valid Permanency hearing from End of Report Date	Nbr of Parents with Termination	Median Days to Terminate Parental Rights	Nbr of Parents with Relinquishment	Median Days to Relinquishment
TOTAL	3,558	353	80	359	182	97	182	97	182	97	182	97	182	97	129	2009	610	1054	638
1ST/CARSON	63	352	91	352	172	80	169	84	209	60	63	100	70	100	135	21	672	13	451
1ST/STOREY	1	362	100	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0	0
2ND/WASHOE	781	354	95	354	140	95	182	91	182	91	182	83	182	88	171	326	677	296	693
3RD/LYON	45	356	70	352	175	75	182	80	105	92	189	100	168	89	152	20	502	25	446
4TH/ELKO	56	361	68	360	294	85	357	80	63	100	56	100	77	100	191	20	691	29	798
5TH/ESMERALDA	1	411	0	411	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0	0
5TH/NYE	42	374	40	371	231	93	182	96	182	100	182	100	182	100	257	29	678	25	697
6TH/HUMBOLDT	21	336	59	346	91	100	91	100	91	100	91	80	91	95	145	4	940	0	0
7TH/EUREKA	1	364	100	NA	567	100	70	100	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0	0
7TH/LINCOLN	1	371	0	NA	0	100	NA	100	NA	100	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0	0
7TH/WHITE PINE	8	384	38	394	42	100	364	100	224	100	182	100	NA	NA	NA	3	723	1	856
8TH/CLARK	2451	355	77	355	182	99	182	100	182	100	182	100	182	99	116	1577	597	601	627
9TH/DOUGLAS	22	355	73	355	175	80	350	100	385	40	189	100	NA	NA	281	10	627	16	582
10TH/CHURCHILL	45	361	84	362	182	97	182	100	84	100	154	71	357	89	137	21	639	33	632
11TH/LANDER	2	379	33	355	455	40	273	100	100	100	176	100	NA	NA	281	2	1081	6	1081
11TH/MINERAL	11	371	36	371	119	89	301	100	273	71	301	60	242	83	144	6	884	7	779
11TH/PERSHING	9	381	44	381	175	100	129	100	126	100	220	100	140	100	157	0	0	2	864

NEVADA/STATEWIDE (Jurisdiction weighted averages)

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	715	3.3	672,453	939
AGED OUT	23	12.7	36,963	1705
CUSTODIANSHIP	1	4	1,216	1,216
DEATH OF CHILD	2	4	505	252
EMANCIPATION	1	4	816	816
GRDNSHPNONREL	10	2.3	6,220	628
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	79	2.86	52,506	563
RTNTOCARETAKER	424	2.94	252,394	616
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	294	2.83	166,083	555
RTNTOOTHRRELT	7	2.33	4,187	479
RUNAWAY	3	3	2,352	822
TRANSFROTHAGNCY	2	7	2,852	1426

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for STATEWIDE – CY 2016

Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	606
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	726
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	1,059
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	708
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	824
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	848
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	729
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	675
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	688
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	644
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	714

1ST/CARSON

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	15	1.53	15,740	924
AGED OUT	1	11	1,307	1,307
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	2	8.5	1,757	879
RTNTOCARETAKER	2	2	650	325
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	3	2.6	1,161	871

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 1 st JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	871
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	325
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	1,588
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	924
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,190
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	790
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	730
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	557
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	715
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	578
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	871

2ND/WASHOE

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	126	1.8	129,285	960
AGED OUT	7	15.14	15,020	2,534
GRDNSHPNONREL	1	2	911	911
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	11	1.6	7,375	638
RTNTOCARETAKER	126	2.64	70,585	526
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	33	2.24	20,641	540
RUNAWAY	1	5	937	937

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 2 nd JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	546
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	754
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	941
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	848
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	818
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	712
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	659
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	658
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	681
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	713

3RD/LYON

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	13	2.29	13,446	939
AGED OUT	1	27	2,353	2,353
DEATH OF CHILD	1	2	47	47
GRDNSHPNONREL	1	1	563	563
RTINTOCARETAKER	7	1.29	5,522	920
RTINTOOTHPRNT	1	1	609	609

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 3rd JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	920
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	461
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	1,499
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	1,461
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,128
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	1,029
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	761
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	719
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	503
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	920

4TH/ELKO

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	19	2.87	20,833	868
DEATH OF CHILD	1	1	458	458
RTNTOCARETAKER	1	3	724	724
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	12	2.27	4,922	412

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 4th JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	349
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	506
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	1,172
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	727
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,270
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	685
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	522
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	618
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	753
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	448
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	620

5TH/NYE

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	18	1.79	24,267	1,200
AGED OUT	2	10.5	4,206	2,103
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	2	1	1,130	565
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	5	2.8	2,349	484

5TH/ESMERALDA

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	0	0	0	0
AGED OUT	0	0	0	0
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	0	0	0	0
PC TO CUSTODY	0	0	0	0
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	0	0	0	0

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 5 th JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	1,054
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	816
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	1,133
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	1,268
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,573
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	562
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	732
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	557
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	674
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	916
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	1,018

6TH/HUMBOLDT

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	1	1	549	549
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	6	3	6,524	704

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 6th JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	-
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	3,513
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	1,254
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	450
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,068
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,564
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	581
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	966
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	810
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	929
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	704

7TH/LINCOLN

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
EMANCIPATION	1	1	816	816

7TH/WHITE PINE

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	1	2	1,423	1,423
RTNTOCARETAKER	1	2	605	605
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	5	2.6	3,102	660

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 7th JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	605
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	1,120
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	660
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	660
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	995
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	540
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	356
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	1,206
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	948
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	417
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	660

8TH/CLARK

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	497	2.39	440,656	830
AGED OUT	9	15.55	9,120	1,115
CUSTODIANSHIP	1	4	1,216	1,216
GRDNSHPNONREL	8	2.38	4,746	573
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	63	2.90	41,794	548
RTNTOCARETAKER	275	4.32	166,841	542
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	215	3.71	117,759	523
RTNTOOTHRRELT	7	3	4,187	479
RUNAWAY	2	6.5	1,415	708
TRANSFROTHAGNCY	2	4.5	2,852	1,426

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 8th JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	594
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	724
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	831
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	636
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	793
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	869
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	735
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	679
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	691
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	641
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	663

9TH/DOUGLAS

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	6	3	3,544	1,220
RTNTOCARETAKER	3	2	1,632	628

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 9 th JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	628
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	1,415
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	1,415
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	1,220
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	241
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	478
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	418
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	399
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	537
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	482
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	916

10TH/CHURCHILL

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	13	2.42	13,305	899
AGED OUT	2	4.5	4073	2,237
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	1	1	450	450
RTNTOCARETAKER	7	1.57	4055	605
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	8	1.75	794	515

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 10th JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	613
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	605
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	531
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	563
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	726
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	699
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	601
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	650
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	831
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	504
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	533

11TH/LANDER

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	3	4.33	3,664	1,205
RTNTOOTHRPNT	2	2	794	397

11TH/MINERAL

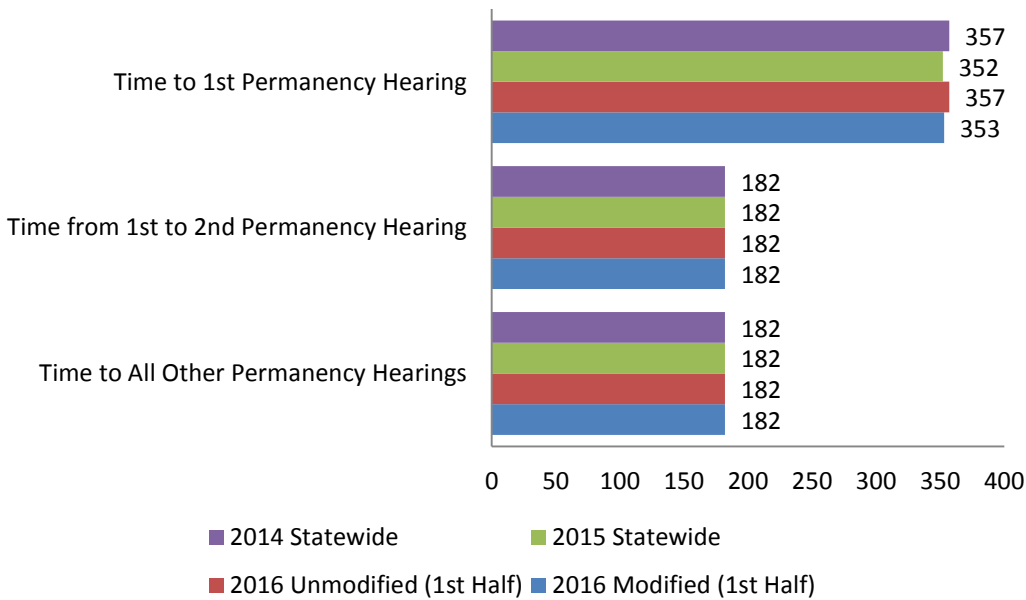
End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	2	1	1,442	721

11TH/PERSHING

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	1	3.00	943	943
AGED OUT	1	6	484	484
RTNTOCARETAKER	2	2	1,780	890
RTNTOOTHRPNT	3	1	3,102	570

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 11th JD – CY 2016		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2016	-
Median Days to Permanency	2 nd Quarter 2016	890
Median Days to Permanency	3 rd Quarter 2016	1,254
Median Days to Permanency	4 th Quarter 2016	570
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,225
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,589
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	1,382
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	577
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	1,252
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	931
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	484

Statewide Timeliness Measures 2014, 2015 & 2016 (1st Half)

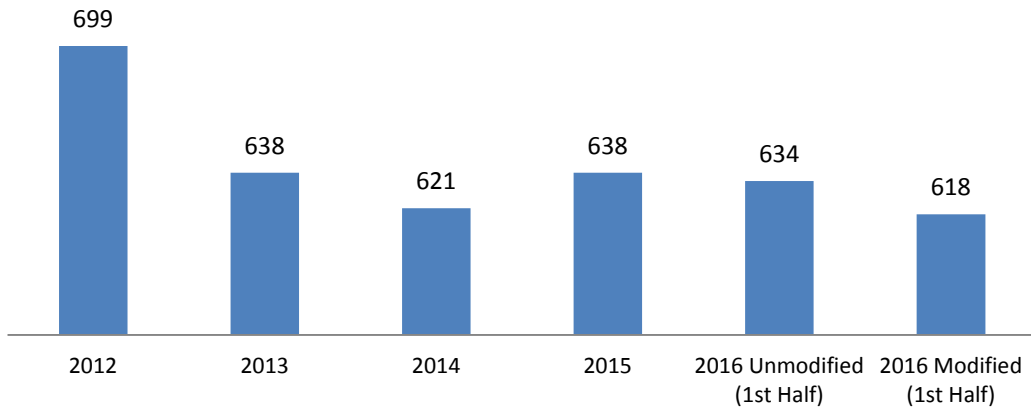


82% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days in 2016

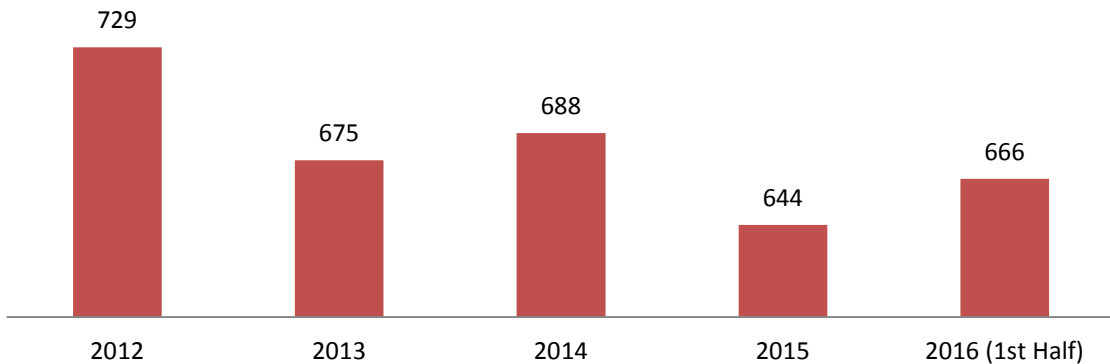
77% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days in 2015

Trends

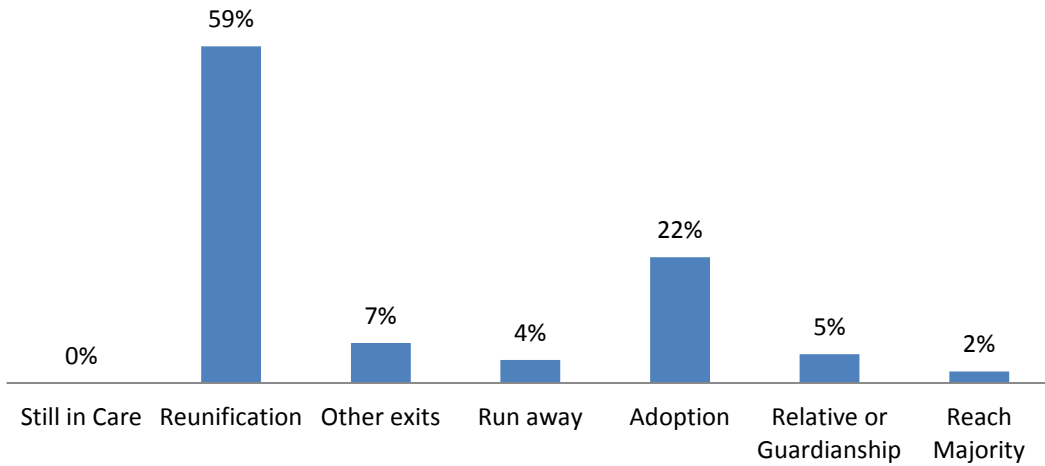
Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2012 - 2016 (1st Half)



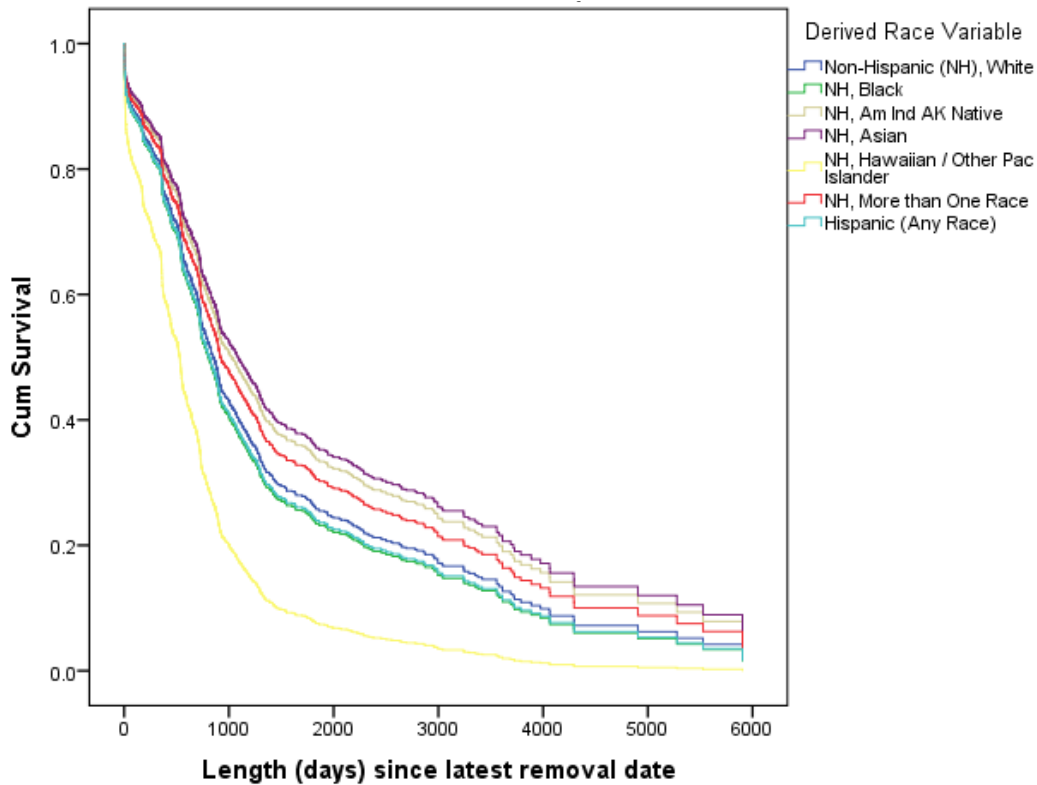
Time to Permanency 2012 - 2016 (1st Half)



Outcomes for Children Who Exited Foster Care in 2015



29% of youth who entered care in 2014 were still in care at the end of 2015.



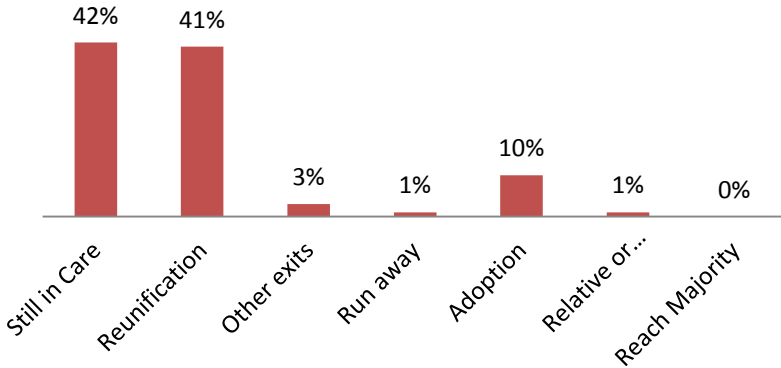
Placement Stability, For New Entries for 2012 -2015, % of Placement Moves

	No movement	One movement	2 to 3 movements	4 to 10 movements	More than 10 movements
Statewide 2012	38%	33%	22%	15%	1%
Statewide 2013	34%	35%	23%	8%	0%
Statewide 2014	30%	31%	27%	11%	1%
Statewide 2015	31%	32%	27%	20%	0%

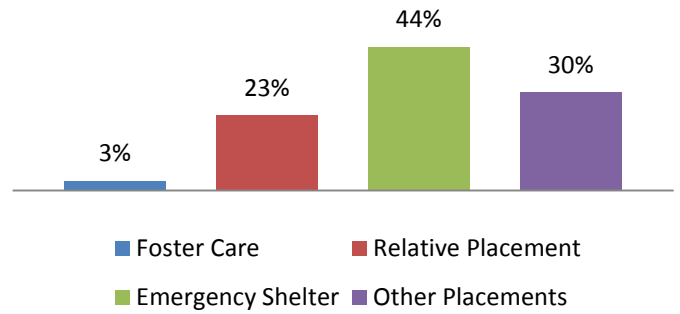
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old (2013 – 2015)

Outcomes for Children (0 - 3 yo) Who Entered Foster Care (2013 - 2015)



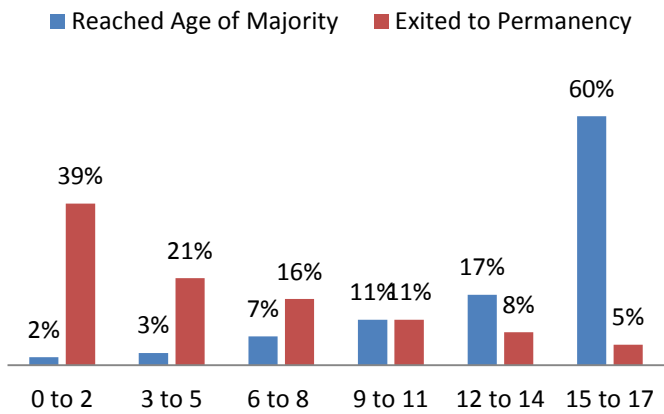
First Placement Type for Children (0-3yo) Who Entered Foster Care (2013 - 2015)



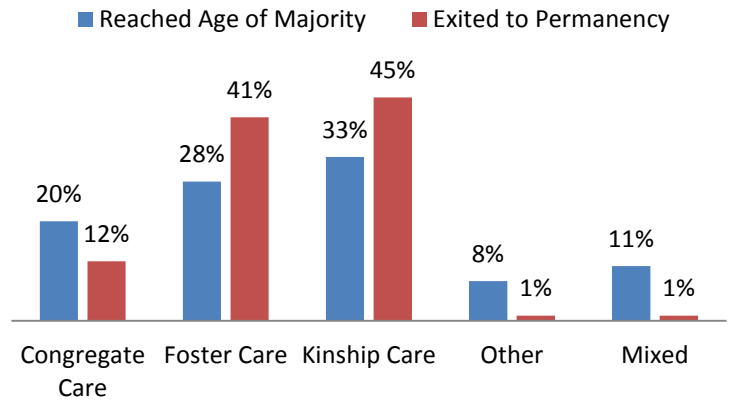
For 2014-2015 exits of youth who were 0 to 3 when they entered, **34%** were adopted & **59%** were reunified.

Youth Reaching the Age of Majority Compared to Youth Achieving Permanency

Age at First Placement



Predominant Placement Type



41% of youth who reached the age of majority were reentering foster care while **21%** of youth who exited to permanency were reentries.

6% of youth exit to runaway (4%) or reaching majority (2%).



Appendix 5

Community Improvement
Councils' 2017 Action Plans

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for all stakeholders on state and federal statutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training one time per month for all stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to NCJFCJ and ask for training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: All Stakeholders • Status: • Next Steps: Set dates to meet for training Create Survey Forms • Estimated Completion Date: 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirroring DCFS reports and orders with the eventual goal of providing orders immediately after court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop model orders • DCFS provide a factual basis for all recommendations • DCFS include new ICWA requirements in reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disperse Supreme Court Orders • Obtain sample orders from Washoe & Clark Counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: All Stakeholders • Status: • Next Steps: Obtain sample orders • Estimated Completion Date: October of 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework for children's Participation in court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address at monthly w/ stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Resource guidelines • Obtain information from the council and/or NCJFCJ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Court; DCFS; CASA; Parent/child Attorneys; AG • Status: • Next Steps: Obtain information from NCJFCJ • Estimated Completion Date: 9 months

Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Case Plan Summary to parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCDSS to evaluate incorporation into CPSA • Discuss CPSAs at each hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to develop a form (AZ form as guide) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge Walker • Status: In Progress • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 9/30/17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address TPR Timelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court will direct filing of TPR on <date> & a mediation date • Find & distribute TPR backlog list to Model Court stakeholders in next 90 days • Distribute TPR Petition Template to social workers & initiate Pilot program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine timeframe for due date of TPR Petition & mediation & inform as “policy” at Model Court in next 90 days • Secure agreement with Social Services Director • Determine if Pilot program works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Court, DA, Social Services, CIC • Status: In Progress • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 9/30/17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find ways to more effectively allocate resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model Court meeting to role play scenarios to demonstrate petition negotiation effectiveness • Determine caps on WCDSS administrative hearing times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule time on Model Court agenda in next 60 days • WCDSS/DA to create mou for admin hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge, CIC • Status: In Progress • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 9/30/17

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decrease time to first permanency hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The court will regularly set Permanency Hearings sooner than 12 months ● Stakeholders will regularly request Permanency and Review Hearings sooner than 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Schedule time on Model Court agenda in next 60 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: CIC ● Status: In Progress ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date: 9/30/17
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Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

- Plan will be rolled out at next Model Court
- Parties will submit a stipulation & order for dismissal at time permanency is achieved (rather than waiting for next court hearing)
- WCDSS social workers will inform DA office of case closure by letter. WCDSS staff will be trained on this practice in next 30 days.

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE	OUTCOME
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get parents attorneys more involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight focus on how first 60 days is most crucial • Change court schedule to accommodate parent's attorneys to explore case with parents • Case plan parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to better schedule case plan meetings / have PD attend CIC - to encourage participation in case plan process • Trny? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: CIC • Status: In progress • Next Steps: P.D. to attend next CIC by special invite • Estimated Completion Date: On going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Plan participation by attorney • Measure Reunifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing foster parent participations • More Foster homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption Day – advertise in local newspaper – maybe • Community business support for adoption day 2017 • Foster care recruiter could put table with pamphlets regarding foster care at adoption day event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: CIC • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 11/2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit Foster Families ?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding – sustainability to maintain program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent ordinance for child advocate & CASA – will help somewhat • There are funds in court fund for appointing attorneys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: CIC • Status: Community • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortening TPR time to hasten adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPR / take from AG maybe do in house through DA or child advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline burden on DCFS to prep TPR packet • Kandee will provide info packet sample to DA & child advocate for TPR • On the next case Court will try to do TPR in house rather than AG to see how it goes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge • Status: Immediately • Next Steps: Appoint private counsel / DA upon findings of TPR / adoption • Estimated Completion Date: Next TPR / adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to permanency decreased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info brochures for parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steve Rye and Kandee will work on brochures for parents to understand what is happening with the process 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Steve and Kandee • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation – get animosity cases to mediation asap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure time to reunite and greater participation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 	

Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating creating our own Children's Cabinet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite Reno's Children's Cabinet to speak at our February CIC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Judge Porter Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aware grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Teri Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing tables in restroom at court house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Andy Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding Adjudicatory hearing more timely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set hearings at 72 hour hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Andy Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: CIC Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parenting time calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Brandi Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address Trauma Audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive report back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Andy • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CASA public partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address County Commissioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Alana • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create removal warrant procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tirzan to do presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Brandi • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Order for attorney practice rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge Porter • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly CFT's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Brandi • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate on Safe Haven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Brandi / all team • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLE for parents attorneys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Kristin • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:

Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KinGAP / Guardianship Implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement program • Talk to 2nd JD? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info provided to qualifying relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason • Status: Implemented • Next Steps: NA • Estimated Completion Date: NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation Audit • Parenting time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child brought to parent #1 • Parent to child #2 • Tracking system on attendance • Log in court report • Develop written plan with parent • Talk to 11th JD? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason • Status: Pending • Next Steps: Develop with staff and CIC team • Estimated Completion Date: 90 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate accounting of court hearings in DCFS data base regarding outcomes for children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Permanency hearings ➤ Runaways ➤ Other Exits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review UNITY for cases that did not meet times regarding hearings (frames) • Select several cases that have had two or more years being open to ensure and determine accurate court hearing attendance / UNITY input / coding correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael / Lisa • Status: Pending • Next Steps: UNITY & case review, coding determination • Estimated Completion Date: 90 days

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CIC Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mental health ▪ Attorney education ▪ CASA role in courtroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Table attendance ▪ Create mission statement ▪ Review PD contracts to determine their requirements and follow up with them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monthly tracking and reporting and monthly CIC meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: Team ● Status: Pending ● Next Steps: Follow up ● Estimated Completion Date: 90 days
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Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement ADR options where appropriate (i.e. Pretrial conferences and mediation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attorneys request prehearing conferences at 72 hour hearings Request to mediate after petition filed by attorneys / court Educate stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain data resources to show if ADR options are productive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Attorneys for DCFS and child Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date: 30 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve timeliness to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set adjudicatory hearings at 72 hours hearings At adjudicatory set all future hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data re current tools to assist Data re our current timeliness and how that compares to other similarly sized jurisdictions (use to advocate for change) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Court / Attorneys Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date: 30 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide better clarity to parents re: conditions for return and action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create template that will flow from action steps at CFT and be attached to Court report and order Discussion at hearing from Judge on conditions to return 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other jurisdiction or national template for action – items for parent Data on what in-depth discussions include that are successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Child Attorney, DA, and Brook Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date: 60 days

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase involvement of parties in hearing process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely notice and consistent notice • Make CIC committed to discussing children involvement that works for our jurisdiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore technology that might assist with involvement of children who are placed far away • Explore best practices (as recommended by NCJFCJ) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Court and CIC • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 6 months
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Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase amount of foster care homes in Judicial District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue community events / speaking engagements, open houses in White Pine, Lincoln and Eureka Counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: DCFS / CIC Members • Status: Ongoing • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve timelines to permanency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court schedule all hearings for next year at disposition hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Court • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: September 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve parents understanding of court process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective listening by the court • Continue to craft timeline of case • Mentor mom program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calendars • Additional court hearings as needed • Resources / funds / trainings for programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: CIC Team • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: September 2017

Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

**EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE	HOW TO MEASURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue increase of CASA volunteers/staff Phase 2-500 / Goal-1000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion with funding source Additional staff Designated recruiter? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Court /CASA Status: Continuing Next Steps: Funding Estimated Completion Date: Phase 2 -2017 / Goal-? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> More children will be represented by CASA Will show increase in # of attendees at orientation & training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependency Mediation Implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent referrals to mediation Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Judges Status: Ongoing Next Steps: Policy for consistent removal Estimated Completion Date: 2017 	Resolution buy in
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child's school of origin identified at PPH Info in findings under ESSA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of case workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: DFS Status: Starting Next Steps: Training Estimated Completion Date: 2017 	See school of origin in reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judicial SIPS Fidelity reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation Id performance measures Tracking / outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: DFS Status: Starting Next Steps: Determine measures implement Estimated Completion Date: 2017 	See those reviews

Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

**NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling of Calendar (more time for hearings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum number of cases per time block • Change 9th JD court rules of law/motion calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ↓*Who / process for changing the court rules • Emergencies outside of time frame? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change pre-petition process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earlier appointment of counsel • Email 72 hr. letter with contact information →→→→ • Settlement scheduled 30 minutes before hearing "early conferences" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get court clerks on board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept letter • Appoint counsel • Schedule meeting • Distribute to all • Designated 72 hr. hearing times • Use statutory time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create team / less adversarial hearing setting ↑ parent participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore round table • Judge off the bench • Emailing the order / simplify case plan check box "to do" list • Conditions of return discussed at disposition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JAVS set up in jury room? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:

Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Measurements

- Length of open case
- Number of reunifications
- Time kids returned home / does this effect outcomes
- When an attorney gets assigned



Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Court will ask 3 questions at each hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Barrier to child going home (safety issues) ➢ What are the reasonable efforts DCFS provided since last review ➢ What needs to occur to meet permanency plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DCFS will be prepared to answer each question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: Court and Child Welfare ● Status: ● Next Steps: Judge will start to ask questions mid-October ● Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sustain our action plan – review and modify on an annual basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue quarterly meetings ● Bring actual plan to each quarterly ● Continue monthly meetings at 11:30-1pm (lunch provided by court) ● Access data from Chapin Hall ie. Webinar, phone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: All ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand initial calendar to 24 months and include description of each hearing for parent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Creating at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 cases per month ● 8 mo. (interim) ● 11 mo. permanency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PD draft new template ● Family Program Director to inform Court and Administrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: Court / PD ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Court will appoint attorneys to perspective adoptive parents when case is going to mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Court to do order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: Court ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DCFS will start attaching visitation / family time calendar to court reports ● DCFS will start gathering caretaker reports for the court report and attach or document why not attached or court will ask why not attached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social worker to start calendar 11/2016 ● Social worker to start doing caretaker report at hearing in October 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Court will ask at 72 / disposition and permanency of any relatives or kin ● Judge to appoint attorney to youth with permanency case plan of APPLA or when youth is 17 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Worker will be prepared to respond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: Court and Case Worker ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date: November 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Court will order paternity tests at initial phases of case by establishing court ordered paternity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Case worker will ask paternity questions at onset ● PD will ask paternity questions at onset ● Get conclusively presumed finding from court <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verification of paternity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consult with DAG re: paternity and filing TPR on unknown fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: All parties ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing start 11/2016 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: 20px;"> ↓ Decrease length of time to permanency </div>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-petition mediation with DCFS, PD and parents ● Mediation will be required at 8 mo. Hearing if current plan is not achievable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:

Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

Action Plan
Deliver Best Outcomes

ELEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL



September 30, 2016

Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2016 Summit

Topic: Implement strategies to deliver best outcomes for children and families

DELIVERING BEST OUTCOMES			
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER BEST OUTCOMES	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement from the Tribe (in all 3 counties) in our quarterly/annual meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite them to attend and include representatives on each of our county CIC meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Group Status: Starting in Pershing Next Steps: Invite to LA & MI Oct. meeting Estimated Completion Date: October-November 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Super-CIC meeting annually (all 3 counties) *Possible training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up first meeting in January *Rotating location across 3 counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lander 2017 Mineral 2018 Pershing 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Group Status: Next Steps: Decide location and schedule Estimated Completion Date: January 2016 / ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with our monthly short hearings in each county * Attorney for the child not required every month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil calendar was created Use the schedule created to set the next hearing in court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Group Status: Currently being carried out Next Steps: Continue Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Now that our county CICs are established in each county, be diligent about our quarterly meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Schedule is set, make sure notifications are done to members ahead of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: Group ● Status: ● Next Steps: Continue doing ● Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing
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Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District:

*Measuring days to permanency



Appendix 6

Examples of Judicial Districts' Community Improvement Councils' Agendas

Community Improvement Council Meeting

Thursday, January 5, 2017, 12:00pm

District Court – Dept. I

MEETING AGENDA

A. INTRODUCTIONS:

B. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discuss and approve 2017 CIC Action Plan (Attached)

A. Court calendar scheduling

B. Pre-petition process

C. Environmental changes

2. Working with families and substance abuse

C. SCHEUDLE NEXT MEETING: (April 6, 2017, 12pm?)

D. ADJOURN:

COURT IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL MEETING
SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

APRIL 5, 2017

9:30AM

- Introductions
- Foster Parent Recruitment/Retention
 - Update on Recruitment Efforts
 - Foster parents homes
- PCFA/PCPA Implementation
- Improvement of timelines for court hearings
- Improvement of parents understanding of court process
- Community Relationship Updates
 - Question RE Parent Custody Cases
- Other Questions/Concerns
- Next Meetings

Sixth Judicial District
Community Improvement Council (CIC) Agenda
May 18, 2017
Courtroom 12:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Minutes from April 2017 Meeting
4. Update on funding sources for CIC and CIP Program (Kathy Malzahn-Bass)
5. Discussion regarding options for providing clarity to parents on conditions for return of child/ren. (Betsey Crumrine)
6. Identify topics for upcoming meetings

June 15	Increasing Involvement of Parties in Hearing Process/Warrant Process?
July 20	UCCJEA
August 17	Independent Living Program by DCFS
September 21	Review Goals/ICPC Process by DCFS
October 19	TBD
November 16	TBD
December 21	TBD
7. New Business
8. Old Business
9. Comments
10. Next Meeting Date – June 15, 2017
11. Adjournment

MODEL COURT MEETING AGENDA

June 19, 2017

I. Legislative update (Judge Walker):

II. TPR Abeyances (Judge Walker): We have at least one case that is languishing because the parents are awaiting criminal trial in California and the case has been active since September 9, 2015.

III. Adding Chief Alternate PD to JUVAB Cases (Alicia Lerud):

IV. Relevant documentation that should be provided at PC (Irene Hart):

The Enhanced Resource Guide states that, “Agency staff should be expected to submit a written, factual description of the circumstances surrounding the removal of the child. The agency should also be required to submit a sworn affidavit of the reasonable or active efforts made to prevent removal and foster care placement. The report and affidavit should be provided to the other parties and their attorneys as early as possible in advance of the hearing. Advance submission of the report is needed to give the parents an opportunity to offer a defense or to propose alternatives to foster placement.” (pg 117 of the Enhanced Resource Guidelines)

V. The storage of belongings for children in foster care (Stephanie Cook):

Specifically, how/when/where and for how long items are stored. As well as what protections are in place to ensure that clients’ belongings don’t go missing.

VI. Court reports being sent to children (Stephanie Cook):

VII. Proposed Changes to Case Plan Report (Jeanne Marsh):

Next Model Court Meeting: Monday, July 24, 2017, 12:00 p.m. in Courtroom 2

**FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL**

June 21, 2017
2:00 p.m.
DCFS Conference Room
1780 E. Basin Ave., #2
Pahrump, NV 89060

The Fifth Judicial District's Community Improvement Council emphasizes and supports children's right to protection. Together in partnership with families, community providers, the court, and other governmental agencies, we can support and assist Nevada's children and families in reaching their full potential. 5th JD CIC recognizes that Nevada's families are our future and children, and families have the ability to thrive. Children and families are best served when they are actively listened to and are invited to participate in the decision-making process. We support full implementation of the family centered approach, by engaging families, offering individualized services, and building upon each family's strengths. We are committed to develop and implement data-driven, evidence-based, and an outcome-focused model that advances meaningful and ongoing collaboration, in order to achieve safety, permanency, and the well-being.

- AOC Announcements – Kathie Malzahn-Bass
- From the Bench – District and Justice Court Judges
- DCFS – Michael
- CASA – Dorothy
- Court – Louise
- Announcements/Events
 - a. Nevada Child Abuse Prevention & Safety Conference (June 8, 2017) Did anyone go?
- CIC Summit Action Plan
 - a. Review Timeliness Data
- Follow up:
 - a. Update on Unity Audit-Michael
 - b. Add new online training to PD contracts – Tim
 - c. Mission Statement - Michael
 - d. Alicia Summer's Replacement? - Kathie
 - e. Review visitation issues in Tonopah with Judge Klapper
 - f. Invite Michelle Sandoval and Emily Smith to CIC
- Testimony 101 Training - Shannon
- Legislative Updates – Shannon
- Removal Warrants Update – Shannon
- Mediation Update
- Children's Commission
- Future agenda items
- Schedule next meeting: July 19, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.

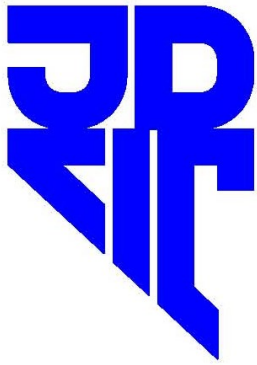
NOTES:

CIC MEETING
June 27, 2017
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Courtroom 2
(Lunch Included)

AGENDA

1. Independent Living Training – Rhonda Felix and IL Director
2. Minutes from 3-21-17 Meeting to be Approved – Judge Stockard
3. CASA Update – Shana Clark, Project Manager
4. Family Law Resolution Program – Judge Stockard/DeVere Karlson
5. AOC – CIC Updates – Kathy Malzahn-Bass
6. Permanency Cases – Judge Stockard
7. Foster Care/Adoption Update – Kelli Weishaupt
8. Recent Legislative Changes Impacting Juvenile Cases – Judge Stockard
9. Future Agenda Items:
10. Upcoming Meeting Dates:
 - CIC Summit (9/27 to 9/29/17 in Reno)
 - December 19, 2017 (11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.)

Examples of Community Improvement Councils Quarterly Newsletters



Court Improvement Program

Community Improvement Councils News April-December 2016

Issue 11

January 2017

Save the Date
2017 Community Improvement Council Summit
September 27-28, 2017

Inside this issue:

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation	2
CIP Funding Dilemma	2
New ICWA Rule Effective 12/12/16	3
Fact Sheet for Families	3
AFCARS Final Rule Effective 01/13/17	3
Judicial Districts' CIC Contact Information	4

Many of the 2016 Summits attendees expressed concern that the CICs would struggle to maintain their successes without the annual training and action planning afforded by the Summit. The CIP Training grant has funded the CIC Summits in the past; alternative means to offer this statewide opportunity are being developed to allow us to hold the

2017 CIC Summit. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges has offered to provide the training. Others have offered to either self-fund or help fund travel and lodging. Please plan to attend the 2017 CIC Summit on September 27-28, 2017.

On-Line Attorney Dependency Training is Open for Business

Several years ago, now retired, Judge William Rogers of the 3rd JD asked CIP's help educating the attorneys appearing in his court about neglect and abuse federal law and Nevada statutes. The resulting on-line training is being released January 23, 2017 on the Nevada Supreme Court Distance Education website. This course is intended to improve legal representation of parents and children in dependency cases and is open to all judges handling neglect and abuse cases and the attorneys appearing in these courts. The five course modules will be delivered entire-

ly online through the Supreme Court's Distance Education Learning Portal. Course contents include: Federal and State Law in Nevada Child Protection Proceedings; The Adoption and Safe Families Act; Permanency Options; Roles and Responsibilities of Attorneys; Topics in Child Welfare Proceedings; and Key Child Safety Decision Making Concepts. Participants may enroll by contacting CIP. They are expected to view all course presentations and materials, and take the quizzes to earn 7 CLEs which include .5 hours for ethics.

**For More
Information
Contact:
Kathie
Malzahn-Bass**

The Future is Safer for Nevada's Children

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Is Flourishing

Through a partnership among CIP, DCFS and the 2nd Judicial District's dependency mediation program, the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program launched in August 2016. Since August, 26 mediations have been conducted throughout the state with 19 or 73% resulting in agreement. To date mediations have been held in the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Judicial Districts. The 2nd JD regularly holds dependency mediations

outside the statewide funding, but follows the same protocols and processes.

The first statewide juvenile dependency mediation was held at the request of the child welfare agency. The case involved a difficult termination of parental rights, fraught with family drama concerning who would be the final adoptive home for this baby. Through the mediation process it was agreed that placing

the child with the only family she knew was in the best interests of the child. An open adoption was achieved, and there was an unexpected bonus. One of the families had become a licensed foster home in hopes of adopting the child. After the mediation, that family decided to keep its license to both foster and adopt children. The ecstatic child welfare manager gushed,

CIP Funding Dilemma

The Court Improvement Program has been funded since 1993, through a Basic Grant to each state Supreme Court. Several years later, two more funding streams were added, the Data and Training CIP Grants. Each of the three grants has been funded for a total of \$30 million for at least the last ten years. Nevada CIP has received \$392,000 annually.

Due to a scoring error by an analyst in the Congressional Budget Office, the Data and Training grants, \$20 of the \$30 million, were cut in the FFY2017 appropriations bills. This was a mistake which cannot be simply undone because of sequestration. Full reauthorization was not attached to the latest continuing resolution and CIP was not reauthorized at its current \$30 million in any other bill before Congress adjourned for the holidays.

Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) has said that he will introduce a reauthorization bill for the CIP grants now that the 115th Congress has convened on January 3, 2017. He tried to introduce a bill prior to the holiday recess, but his proposed offset came from adoption assistance funding. The adoption community aggressively objected to that offset. He will be looking for a different offset for the new bill.

In the meantime, Nevada CIP has pulled together a working group of other CIPs across the country to work with organizations that are able to advocate on our behalf: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, American Bar Association, and National Center for State Courts (NCSC). NCSC has asked that CIPs document the negative consequences of not getting the

grants reauthorized in this Congress (e.g., reforms and projects that have to be halted, staff hours reduced, people laid off, etc.). We are fortunate that both Robbie and Kathie will continue to have jobs, but many of the programs that have been funded by CIP will have to be cut unless alternative resources are found.

Justice Saitta will be getting in touch with members of the CIP Action Committee to contact the Nevada Congressional delegation about the value CIP has been to their judicial districts and to encourage them to support reauthorization of all three CIP grants. If you would like to join Justice Saitta in this endeavor, please let CIP know.

New ICWA Rule Went Into Effect December 12, 2016

The new Bureau of Indian Affairs Federal Indian Children (ICWA) Regulations went into effect on December 12, 2016 and are located at 25 CFR 23. These regulations do not change the statutory language, but they do include some new definitions, new required findings to be made on the record, and new explanations of the intent of the law. The Interior Department advises that the goal is to clarify and better articulate the requirements of the federal law so that state courts can implement it more consistently.

One of the new regulations family courts will have to follow requires family court judges ask whether a child is Native American as part of all foster care and adoption proceedings.

Highlights of the updated regulations include:

- Clear guidance on “active efforts” that state courts and agencies must employ to provide services and programs designed to prevent removal and encourage reunification
- Clarification of notice and time frames to improve compliance and expedite the process
- A requirement that state courts and agencies inquire whether ICWA applies in every child custody proceeding
- Procedures governing emergency removal of Indian children
- Clarification that the “existing Indian family doctrine” is not an exception to ICWA’s application and only the tribe has the power to determine a child’s membership status

Copy and paste link to 2016 Guidelines for ICWA implementation:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/.../indian-child-welfare-act-proceedings>

New Fact Sheet to Help Families Better Understand Child Welfare and the Court Processes

Below is a link to a new fact sheet developed by the Child Welfare Information Gateway for families involved in dependency court. This is not Nevada specific, but is reflective of applicable federal laws and a document upon which courts may build. Please copy and paste link into your browser.

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/cwandcourts.pdf>

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System Final Rule Effective January 13, 2017

The Social Security Act (the Act) requires that the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) regulate a national data collection system that provides comprehensive demographic and case-specific information on children who are in foster care and adopted. This final rule replaces existing Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) regulations and the appendices to

require title IV-E agencies to collect and report data to ACF on children in out-of-home care, and who exit out-of-home care to adoption or legal guardianship, children in out-of-home care who are covered under the Indian Child Welfare Act, and children who are covered by a title IV-E adoption or guardianship assistance agreement.

The revised AFCARS regulations, the

first in 23 years: (1) Incorporate statutory requirements enacted since 1993; (2) implement the statutory mandate to assess penalties for noncompliant data submissions; (3) enhance the type and quality of information title IV-E agencies report to ACF; and (4) incorporate data elements related to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) for the first time.

Copy and paste link to Federal Register for AFCARS final rule: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/14/2016-29366/adoption-and-foster-care-analysis-and-reporting-system>

Nevada Supreme Court
 Administrative Office of the Courts
 Court Improvement Program
 201 S. Carson street, Suite 250

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In 2010, each of the State's ten judicial districts created a Community Improvement Council (CIC) that focused on identifying barriers to timely permanent placement of children at risk. July 2015, the 11th JD was created. The CICs have been meeting regularly in their communities and at annual Summits where they have learned to interpret data specific to their districts, while creating strategies to reduce the amount of time that it takes to move cases involving children at risk through the court process. The overriding focus, in addition to the safety of the child, is to create an environment where the best decisions are made for each child.

**CIP Working for the Protection &
 Permanency of Dependent Children
 Visit Our Web Site**

[http://nevadajudiciary.us/index.php/
 courtimprovementprogram](http://nevadajudiciary.us/index.php/courtimprovementprogram)

For Judicial Districts' CIC Information Contact:

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5th JD	Tim Sutton tsutton@co.nye.nv.us
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9th JD	Brenda Hoelzen bhoelzen@douglas.nv.gov
10th JD	Sue Sevon ssevon@churchhillcourts.org
11th JD	MacKenzie Hodges mhodes@11thjudicialdistrictcourt



Court Improvement Program

Community Improvement Councils News
January-March 2017

Issue 12

April 2017

Save the Date
2017 Community Improvement Council Summit
September 27-29, 2017

Inside this issue:

Improving the Lives of Foster Children 2
Every Student Succeeds Act 2
Unlocking Potential 3
On-Line Training 3
Judicial Districts' CIC Contact Information 4

Plans for the Upcoming CIC Summit

Although the CIP Data and Training Grants have not been funded for FFY 2017, CIP plans to hold the annual CIC Summit in Reno. With assistance from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, CIP conducted a post-Summit survey to ascertain the training needs of the CICs. Forty-four responded with the following results:

- Determining reasonable efforts 57.1%
ICWA Regulations/Guidelines 57.7%
Improving court practice 42.9%
Examples of quality hearings 42.9%
Engaging stakeholders to improve hearing process 42.9%
Trauma and its impact 37.2%

These responses indicate that the CIC community's training interest remains focused on improving the hearing process and court practices.

Agreement Rate for Statewide Mediation: A Resounding 84%

Referrals to the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program (JDMP) burgeoned during the third quarter of the year to 35, 4 of those had parties who did not show. Six mediations were ordered in the first quarter as the program was developing its processes. By the second quarter 20 mediations were ordered with 1 being cancelled because a party did not attend. Of the 31 mediations that were held during the third quarter, 27 of them came to agreement, which is an 87% agreement rate. Year to date, the program has conducted 56 mediations, 47 of which came to agreement resulting in an 84% agreement rate. Sixteen

more mediations have already been scheduled for the final quarter.

Clearly, the use of mediation is increasing and is successful. The 11th Judicial District has scheduled a mediation to be conducted the 4th quarter, leaving only two judicial districts that have yet to hold a dependency mediation.

Feedback from the confidential survey's collected at the end of each mediation session continues to be very positive often referring to the open and relaxed environment mediation offers. Stakeholders across the state are actively supportive of the mediation process as evidenced by this child welfare

supervisor's statement, "This program is very helpful. Saves time and resources."

For More Information
Contact:
Kathie Malzahn-Bass

Measurably Improving the Lives of Foster Children and Youth

Children in foster and kinship care deserve the same resources and opportunities for success as young people being raised by biological parents. Tragically, foster youth receive on average less than 50% of what the USDA reports the average American family spends on raising their children.

iFoster is a national non-profit that bridges the gap between youth in the child welfare system and the external corporations, foundations and government agencies who have the resources to help them succeed. iFoster has built the largest and most inclusive online community of young people, caregivers, and organizations in child welfare with over 40,000 members in all 50 states. On behalf of the community, iFoster negotiates and collaborates with hundreds of partners who can provide the resources, supports and opportunities that foster youth need to become successful adults.

Since its launch 5 years ago, iFoster has provided over \$50 Million of resources to its members for free or at deeply discounted prices. Resources range from ways to stretch dollars to cover daily living expenses such as grocery coupons and discounts on utilities and phone bills; to health services often not covered by Medicaid such as free eye exams and glasses, braces at 10% of cost, and free mental health therapy; to free tutoring and programs to help students who are multiple grade levels behind; to laptops with free Microsoft productivity software and free smartphones for in college and college-bound foster youth, to scholarships and permanent, living-wage job opportunities for transition-age foster youth. With over 500 resources from partners as diverse as Costco and the FCC, iFoster sources the resources the community needs most to help turn surviving into thriving for our young people.

A formative evaluation by Edgewood Research Group as part of a Children's Bureau demonstration project, showed that foster and kinship families who used the iFoster resource portal showed measureable decreases in family needs, improved caregiver well-being, improved child well-being and child permanency.

Using iFoster is fast and free. Eligible transition-age youth (16-14), caregivers (foster, kin, legal guardian, adoptive), and child welfare serving organizations can sign up for free at www.ifoster.org or call iFoster for more information at 1-855-936-7837. The online resource portal is akin to using Amazon and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If members need help finding resources or run into problems getting a product or service once they've found it, the iFoster team can help them M-F from 8:30am to 5:30pm. If organizations would like more information or to schedule a workshop for their staff or clients, please call the iFoster team at 1-855-936-7837.

The Every Student Succeeds Act Interpreted into the Nevada Revised Statutes

When the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law in 2015, all states were expected to implement the federal law by De-

cember 2016, except for Nevada and Delaware. They had been proactive in the past, inserting McKinney-Vento language into state law to ensure that foster children were provided with appropriate educational services. An extension to December 10, 2017 was granted to both states to make appropriate changes in state law reflective of the mandates in ESSA.

The Statewide Collaborative on Education, Child Welfare, and the Courts began working immediately with the ABA Center on Children

and the Law to put forth an appropriate bill draft request. AB491 passed out of the Nevada State Assembly as amended and approved by the Assembly Committee on Education on April 14, 2017. It will next be heard by the Senate Committee on Education where a few more matters will be resolved. The Collaborative will work to help the Department of Education and the three child welfare agencies develop implementation processes across the state.

**For More
Information
Contact:
Kathie
Malzahn-Bass**

Unlocking Potential in Washoe County High Schools

An educational mentoring project developed by the Washoe County Department of Social Services and Washoe County School District is changing the educational trajectory of students in foster care. Matched by the project with educational advocates and tutors, students in foster care who were struggling academically took more courses and earned more credits than a control group of students not in foster care. They also improved their attendance, and most importantly, got on track to graduate. With only 50% of foster youth in the U.S. graduating by age 18, this project is helping Washoe County's foster youth beat the odds.

At the beginning of the first se-

mester in the project, 39% of participants were on track to graduate. By the end of the second semester, that number rose to 62%. Every participant in the program reported feeling supported by their educational advocates. Through the wrap-around support provided by the educational advocates and tutors, students achieved greater school stability.

From a societal perspective, helping to unlock the potential of these youths lessens their dependence on social service programs, and lessens the likelihood of their involvement in the criminal justice system. A recent study commissioned for the White House Council on Community Solutions estimated that

each youth age 16-24 who is not working or in school imposes an immediate **\$51,350** fiscal and social burden, and a **\$700,000** burden over their lifetimes. This project not only reduces long-term societal costs but helps foster youths flourish.



On-Line Attorney Dependency Training

Supported by Judiciary

For
More
Information
or to
Register
Contact:
Robbie Taft

Fourteen attorneys and CASAs from across the state have registered to take the on-line Attorney Dependency Training and two have completed and received their certification. Four of the registrants are deputy district attorneys and one is a public defender. Judges Aberasturi and Schlegelmilch in the 3rd JD have recommended that their CASA volunteers also take the course. Judge Sullivan in the 8th JD reports that he plans to require attorneys appearing in the 8th JD on dependency cases to complete the course.

This curriculum is part of CIP's strategy to improve legal representation in dependency court by ensuring that attorneys have a basic understanding of the foundational federal and state

neglect and abuse laws, as well as standards of practice and ethics.

The course contents include: Federal and State Law in Nevada Child Protection Proceedings; The Adoption and Safe Families Act; Permanency Options; Roles and Responsibilities of Attorneys; Topics in Child Welfare Proceedings; and Key Child Safety Decision Making Concepts. Participants may enroll by contacting CIP. They are expected to view all course presentations and materials, and take the quizzes to earn 7 CLEs which include .5 hours for ethics. The certificate of completion will be available after the student completes the evaluation.

Nevada Supreme Court
 Administrative Office of the Courts
 Court Improvement Program
 201 S. Carson street, Suite 250

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Appendix 8



Community Improvement
Councils Summits Agendas



Nevada Community Improvement Council 2015 Summit

**Hosted by
Nevada Court Improvement Program
&
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges**

**THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO
RENO, NV
OCTOBER 1-2, 2015**

Strategies for Quality Hearings

Thursday, October 1, 2015

8:00 – 8:30 **Registration and Breakfast (provided in the NJC Cafeteria)**

8:30 – 8:45 **Welcome and Opening Remarks (NJC Classroom)**

Mari Kay Bickett, JD

Chief Executive Officer, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

The Honorable Nancy M. Saitta

Associate Justice, Supreme Court of Nevada

The Honorable Katherine Lucero

Superior Court Judge, Santa Clara County, California

8:45 – 9:15 **What's Changed? (NJC Classroom)**

The purpose of this activity is to promote sharing across teams of strategies, practices, activities, and/or accomplishments that have furthered the implementation of best practices allowing the CICs to benefit from one another's experiences and expertise. Each team will designate a spokesperson to share what their CIC has done since the last Summit.

Franz Braun

Site Manager, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

* This conference has been funded by the State Court Improvement Program grant CFDA 93.586 through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. Sec. 438, [42 U.S.C. 629th].

- 9:15 – 10:00** **Promising Practices: Dependency Mediation (NJC Classroom)**
Review of the best practices and ethical issues of dependency mediation through a facilitated panel discussion staffed by stakeholders from the Second Judicial District.
Facilitator – *The Honorable Katherine Lucero*
- Panelists – *The Honorable Deborah Schumacher (Ret.), Jeff Martin, Esq., Kathleen Baker, Esq., Emilie Meyer, Esq., and Margaret Crowley, Esq.*
- 10:00 – 10:15** **Break**
- 10:15 – 10:45** **Timeliness and Measurement Outcomes in Nevada’s Judicial Districts (NJC Classroom)**
Review of data from each of the Judicial Districts on timeliness and related measurable outcomes. Each Judicial District will be provided an annual report.
Alicia Summers, Ph.D.
Program Director, Research and Evaluation
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- 10:45 – 12:00** **Strategies for Quality Hearings (NJC Classroom)**
Participants will learn strategies for implementing the principles of quality hearings. Strategies include how to effectively engage parents and children, and how to elicit information from stakeholders during the hearings on educational well-being, safety decision making, and permanency.
The Honorable Katherine Lucero
- 12:00 – 1:00** **Lunch (provided in the NJC Cafeteria)**
- 1:00 – 2:30** **Hearing Quality – Activity (NJC Classroom)**
Participants will review video of dependency hearings from other jurisdictions and analyze best practices, challenges, and ethical considerations in conducting quality hearings. Worksheets will be provided to participants for this activity. Small group discussions will allow for discussion of the activity.
The Honorable Katherine Lucero
- 2:30 – 3:00** **Hearing Quality (NJC Classroom)**
Review of the activity by way of a large group discussion.
The Honorable Katherine Lucero
- 3:00 – 3:15** **Break**

** This conference has been funded by the State Court Improvement Program grant CFDA 93.586 through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. Sec. 438, [42 U.S.C. 629th].*

3:15 – 4:15

Promising Practices: CIC Capacity Building (NJC Auditorium)

Panelists will discuss how they have increased the capacity and practice of their CIC through agenda development, effective use of subcommittees, scheduling regular meetings, and other tools.

Facilitator – *The Honorable Katherine Lucero*

Panelists – *The Honorable Egan Walker, Thomas Stockard, and Nathan Tod Young*

4:15 – 4:30

Wrap-up of First Day (NJC Auditorium)

The Honorable Katherine Lucero

Franz Braun

** This conference has been funded by the State Court Improvement Program grant CFDA 93.586 through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. Sec. 438, [42 U.S.C. 629th].*

Strategies for Quality Hearings

Friday, October 2, 2015

- 8:00 - 8:25** **Breakfast (provided in the NJC Cafeteria)**
- 8:30 – 9:30** **Nevada Promising Practices: Workshops (NJC Law Library)**
Workshops will focus on specific initiatives and programs from several Judicial Districts. Participants will self-select their first session and move to their second session after 25 minutes, attending a total of two sessions. The topic of each workshop will be introduced by the moderator(s) and followed by group discussion.
- Attorney Standards***
The Honorable Nancy Porter
4th Judicial District Court
- Education and Child Well Being***
Jeanne Marsh
Division Director, Washoe County Department of Social Services
- Trauma-informed Best Practices in Dependency Court***
Lorie Sicafuse, Ph.D.
Research Associate, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- Children in Court***
The Honorable Frank Sullivan
8th Judicial District Court
- Subsidized Guardianships***
Amber Howell
Director, Washoe County Department of Social Services
- Jill Marano*
Deputy Administrator, Nevada Division of Child and Family Services
- 9:30 – 9:45** **Nevada Promising Practice - Team Time (NJC Classroom)**
The Judicial District teams meet to discuss information from the workshops and plan how they can integrate this information into their CIC goals and action plans.
- 9:45 – 10:00** **Break**

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10:00 – 10:30

Continuous Quality Improvement (NJC Classroom)

A “do-it-yourself” CQI tool will be introduced and explained as a means of measuring progress among the CICs.

Alicia Summers, Ph.D.

Program Director, Research and Evaluation

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Lorie Sicafuse, Ph.D.

Research Associate, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

10:30 – 11:45

Action Planning (NJC Cafeteria)

Each Judicial District will meet to plan their goals and next steps based on information gathered during the Summit. NCJFCJ staff will be available to assist all of the Judicial Districts in understanding how measurable outcomes can be an integral part of the action planning process.

11:45 – 12:00

Evaluations, Next Steps, and Closing Remarks (NJC Cafeteria)

The Honorable Nancy M. Saitta

The Honorable Katherine Lucero

Franz Braun

Site Manager, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

12:00

Adjourn Summit

Have a safe trip home!

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Nevada Community Improvement Council 2014 Summit

Hosted by
Nevada Court Improvement Program
&
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL COLLEGE, BUILDING MS 358
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO
RENO, NV
OCTOBER 2-3, 2014

Principles of Quality Hearings

Thursday: October 2, 2014

Noon – 1:00 **Registration & Lunch**

1:00 – 1:15 **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
Mari Kay Bickett, JD
Chief Executive Officer, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Associate Justice
Supreme Court of Nevada

Honorable Stephen Rubin (Ret.)
Judicial Educator/Consultant, Tucson, AZ

1:15 – 2:15 **What's Changed?**
The purpose of this activity is to promote sharing across teams, of strategies, practices, activities and/or accomplishments that have furthered the implementation of best practices allowing the CIC's to benefit from one another's experiences and expertise. Each team will designate a spokesperson to share what their CIC has done since the last summit.
Franz J. Braun, Site Manager, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

2:15 – 3:15 **72 Hour Protective Custody Hearing**
In this session, participants will be introduced to the NCJFCJ Enhanced Guidelines regarding the protective custody hearings. This session will cover major federal and state legislation in the areas of child protection, child welfare and adoption. Ethical considerations related to this hearing will be discussed.
Honorable Stephen Rubin (Ret.)

3:15 – 3:30 **Break**

3:30 – 4:30 **Adjudicatory/Disposition Hearing**
In this session, participants will be introduced to the NCJFCJ Enhanced Guidelines regarding the adjudicatory and disposition hearings. This session will cover major federal and state legislation in the areas of child protection, child welfare and adoption. Ethical considerations related to these hearings will be discussed.
Honorable Stephen Rubin (Ret.)

Principles of Quality Hearings and Enhancing Hearing Practice

Friday: October 3, 2014

8:00—8:30 **Breakfast NJC Cafeteria**

8:30 – 8:45 **What’s On Your Mind?**
Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions and share experiences regarding court practices and identified challenges
Honorable Stephen Rubin (Ret.)

8:45-10:15 **Review and Permanency Hearing**
In this session, participants will be introduced to the NCJFCJ Enhanced Guidelines regarding the review and permanency hearings. This session will cover major federal and state legislation in the areas of child protection, child welfare and adoption. Ethical considerations related to these hearings will be discussed.
Honorable Stephen Rubin (Ret.)

10:15 – 10:30 **Break**

10:30 – 12:00 **Quality Hearings—What Does the Data say?**
Each CIC will receive packets with their quality hearing and timeliness data. Faculty will discuss the statewide findings and outline strategies to move forward.
Alicia Summers, PhD, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Noon – 1:00 **Lunch (provided)**

1:00 – 1:30 **Now what? Facilitated Group Discussion**
Honorable Stephen Rubin (Ret.) and Franz J. Braun

1:30 – 3:15 **Action Planning**
Franz J. Braun and Alicia Summers

3:15 – 3:30 **Break**

3:30 – 4:15 **Action Planning report outs continued**

4:15 – 4:30 **Evaluations, Next Steps, and Closing Remarks**
Justice Nancy M. Saitta, Judge Stephen Rubin (Ret.), and Franz J. Braun

* This conference has been funded by the State Court Improvement Program grant CFDA 93.586) through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. Sec. 438, [42 U.S.C. 629th].

Nevada Community Improvement Council 2016 Summit

Hosted by
Nevada Court Improvement Program
&
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

WHITNEY PEAK HOTEL
RENO, NV
SEPTEMBER 29-30, 2016

Delivering the Best Outcomes for Children and Families

Thursday: September 29, 2016

8:00 – 8:30 a.m. **Registration & Breakfast**

8:30 – 8:45 a.m. **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
Joey Orduna Hastings, JD
Chief Executive Officer, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Ret.
Supreme Court of Nevada

Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.,
Second Judicial District Court, Reno, Nevada

8:45 – 9:45 a.m. **What's Changed?**

The purpose of this activity is to promote sharing across teams. Each CIC will designate a spokesperson to share strategies, practices, activities and/or accomplishments that have furthered the implementation of best practices in their judicial district since the last summit.

Facilitator: Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.

9:45 – 10:15 a.m. **The Critical Elements in Quality Hearings**

Critical elements identified by the group for discussion and action planning support.

Facilitator - Alicia Summers, Ph.D.

10:15 – 10:45 a.m. **Connecting Quality Hearings with Outcomes**

Current and emerging research on which elements of quality hearings impact specific outcomes for children and families.

Alicia Summers, Ph.D.
Program Director, Research and Evaluation,

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National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

- 10:45 – 11:00 a.m. Break**
- 11:00 – 12:00 p.m. What I need from you -?**
Worksheets will be provided to participants for this activity to help them better understand and document what they need from each other to be successful in implementing a key element of quality hearings. The purpose of this activity is to determine what group members need from one another to achieve common goals. CIC Team discussion.
- Facilitator: *Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.*
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. Lunch**
- 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Open Space Activity**
CICs will identify what other jurisdictions are doing well (i.e. mediation, creating a cross over youth docket, etc.) that they would like to know more about or may wish to include in their action plans. CIC Teams discussion.
- Facilitator: *Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.*
- 2:00 – 2:30 p.m. Timeliness and Measurement Outcomes in Nevada’s Judicial Districts**
Review of data from each of the Judicial Districts on timeliness and related measurable outcomes. Each Judicial District will be provided an annual report.
- Alicia Summers, Ph.D.*
Program Director, Research and Evaluation,
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- 2:30 – 2:45 p.m. Break**
- 2:45 – 3:15 p.m. So What, What Now Activity?**
CIC Team discussion based on individual data presented by Dr. Summers. Jurisdictions will look at their own data identifying one piece of data that is important to them, asking themselves “Why is that important? What patterns or conclusions are emerging? What hypotheses can be made?” After making sense of the data, ask, “NOW WHAT? What actions need to be taken?”
- Facilitator – *Jessica Cisneros, NCJFCJ*
- 3:15 – 3:45 p.m. Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Video and Discussion**
Video introduction of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program
- Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.*
- 3:45 – 4:15 p.m. Begin Action Planning**
- 4:15 – 4:20 p.m. Wrap up of First Day**

** This conference has been funded by the State Court Improvement Program grant CFDA 93.586) through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. Sec. 438, [42 U.S.C. 629th].*

Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.

Friday: September 30, 2016

8:00—8:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 – 8:45 a.m. What’s On Your Mind?

Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions about the previous day and share experiences regarding court practices and identified challenges.

Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.

8:45 – 10:00 a.m. Mock Hearing/Based on CANI Fact Pattern

Facilitator: Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.

10:00 – 10:15 a.m. Break

10:15 – 10:45 a.m. Presentation and tutorial on Chapin Hall Data

Alicia Summers, Ph.D.

10:45 – 12:30 p.m. Action Planning and Reporting

Each CIC will finalize its goals and next steps based on information gathered throughout the Summit. NCJFCJ staff will be available to assist all of the JDs in understanding how measurable outcomes can be an integral part of the action planning process.

12:30 – 1:00 p.m. Evaluations, Next Steps, and Closing Remarks

Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Ret.

Honorable Deborah Schumacher, Ret.

Jessica Cisneros

1:00 p.m. Adjourn Summit

Safe Travels!

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Appendix 9

“A Guide to Integrating Continuous Quality Improvement into the Work of the Community Improvement Councils”



A Guide to
**Integrating
Continuous Quality
Improvements**
into the Work of the
**Community
Improvement
Councils**



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG



The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges® (NCJFCJ) headquartered on the University of Nevada campus in Reno since 1969, provides cutting-edge training, wide-ranging technical assistance, and research to help the nation's courts, judges, and staff in their important work. Since its founding in 1937 by a group of judges dedicated to improving the effectiveness of the nation's juvenile courts, the NCJFCJ has pursued a mission to improve courts and systems practice and raise awareness of the core issues that touch the lives of many of our nation's children and families.

For more information about the NCJFCJ or this guide, please contact:

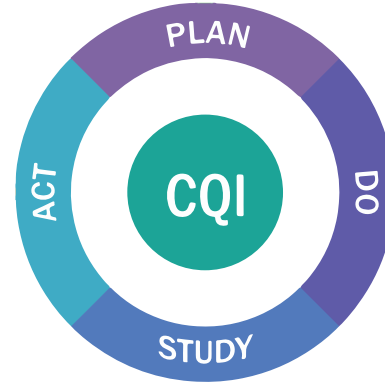
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This guide was made possible with funding from the Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts Court Improvement Program.

INTRODUCTION

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), is an important part of systems change efforts. CQI has been defined as “the complete process of identifying, describing, and analyzing strengths and problems and then testing, implementing, learning from and revising solutions.” Simplified, the model identifies the cyclical steps in a process of systems change—the plan, do, study, act model (illustrated below). It is important to **plan** for systems change, using the most current or most available data that you have. From this, you plan to make a change. Then you **do**, or implement a change. Then, you must assess what you have done (**study**). Assessment does not have to be a complex process, it often requires a simple monitoring of whether the change was implemented as expected and what occurred after that. Following the study phase, you use the information/data that you gathered to set a course of action (**act**). You take an action to either change the program/practice that you implemented to make it better, or you



implement it full scale. Then the process begins anew. It is important as stakeholders who work with some of the nation’s most vulnerable youth to examine practices and programs and make sure that what we are doing has its desired effect and is not harming kids. By integrating CQI into current discussions and planning, it allows for an opportunity to assess any changes in practice and determine if you are moving in the right direction, or if you need to course correct and make adjustments to what you are doing to better serve the needs of the families you serve.


USING *this* GUIDE

This *Guide* offers practical suggestions for steps to fully integrate CQI into planning and action within your Community Improvement Council (CIC). Steps are identified along the way with helpful questions for you to ask yourself about current practice. The *Guide* also offers some concrete suggestions for tools to gather data, and examples of process and outcome measures that may be helpful in studying whether the changes

you have made have had an impact. Included in each step of the process is a CQI Self-Assessment. Self-assessment asks questions to help you think about where you are in the process. If the answer to any of the questions is NO, the next question is *why not?* If you are stuck at a step in the process, technical assistance is available to you to help move you forward toward successful integration of CQI into your systems change efforts.

> STEP 1:

ESTABLISH *a* DEDICATED COLLABORATIVE TEAM



Continuous Quality Improvement is not a one-time activity. It is an ongoing process and often requires stakeholders to adopt a new way of thinking about achieving systems change, which ideally permeates into organizational cultures. Each judicial district in Nevada has established a Community Improvement Council (CIC), a collaborative team comprised of diverse stakeholders who are dedicated to improving system processes and outcomes. This is a critical first step in any CQI endeavor. These teams work to identify system needs and areas for improvement; to coordinate and implement improvement efforts; to assess the effectiveness of improvement efforts; and to determine what changes need to be made to promote continued improvement and success.

Collaborative teams dedicated to improving court practices and outcomes for children and families involved in child abuse and neglect cases tend to be most successful when they:

- Are comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders and agency leaders. Team members could include one or more judicial officers, attorneys (agency attorneys, parents' attorneys, children's attorneys or child advocates such as

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 1)

- Does your judicial district have an established CIC?
- Does the team include all the persons that should be involved?
 - If not, who is missing?
How can they be engaged?
- Does your CIC meet regularly?
- Are meetings productive uses of time?
 - If not, what can be done to improve them? (See suggested agenda on next page)
- Could you use some Technical Assistance on this issue?

Guardians Ad Litem (GALs) and/or Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), social service professionals, and other influential community members. Collaborative teams also may include court staff and administrative personnel, educators or school representatives, treatment providers, data and IT system professionals, members of law enforcement, domestic violence advocates, and juvenile justice professionals. The makeup of your team should reflect the visions and objectives for systems change in your jurisdiction. For example, if you would like to improve outcomes for children and families concurrently involved in both juvenile dependency and delinquency systems, then the collaborative team should include juvenile justice professionals.

- Are motivated by a shared vision for systems

change. Each collaborative team should develop and agree upon an overarching vision and mission statement to guide their improvement efforts. The vision and mission for every team will differ, but should ultimately reflect shared organizational values.

- Communicate and convene on a regular basis. The most successful court improvement teams tend to hold in-person meetings on at least a bi-monthly basis so that they can discuss progress towards current goals and objectives, identify and develop solutions to any problems or obstacles, and share perspectives and new ideas. A basic sample agenda for a Community Improvement Council (CIC) Meeting is provided below.
- Utilize interdisciplinary expertise and connections. It is important to develop a team of diverse stakeholders so that team members can 1) Offer a variety of different

CIC MEETING AGENDA – JULY 8, 2015

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- **Welcome and Announcements**
- **Child Safety Guide Trainings**
 - Participant and presenter feedback
 - Volunteers to coordinate fall trainings
- **Presentation of results from Court User Surveys**
 - Discuss areas for improvement
- **Subcommittee updates**
 - Data subcommittee
 - Policy subcommittee
 - Leadership team
- **Plans for the next month and next steps**
- **Schedule next meeting**
- **Adjourn**

perspectives, experiences, and resources to help guide court improvement efforts; 2) Represent their organization or agency by sharing similar stakeholders' perspectives to help inform CQI processes; and 3) Discuss and coordinate court improvement team efforts with agency stakeholders.

- Clearly communicate and establish roles, responsibilities, and next steps for implementing and analyzing court improvement efforts. Court improvement teams operate most efficiently and effectively when necessary roles are established (e.g., team leaders, organizers, note takers/recorders, etc. and when specific individuals are identified as responsible for any given task related to planning or implementing a court improvement effort.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

- Schedule meetings at least one month in advance
- Draft and distribute agenda 1-2 weeks before each meeting – ask CIC members what needs to be included
- Identify a recorder to take minutes at each meeting and distribute to all CIC members within one week after the meeting
- Identify a facilitator for each meeting who will ensure the CIC stays on topic and that all members have a chance to speak

>> STEP 2:

CREATE, REVIEW, *and* REFINE a STRATEGIC PLAN *through a* CQI LENS

CQI involves analyzing the processes and outcomes of efforts made to achieve identified goals. Therefore, to fully integrate CQI principles into practice, Community Improvement Councils (CICs) must clearly articulate measurable goals and the plans for achieving these goals. This is commonly accomplished by developing a strategic plan or action plan for implementing and tracking change efforts. Although it would be optimal to begin CQI'ing a new program or practice, the reality is that integrating CQI often requires retrofitting this process to something that already exists. For instance, many CICs may have already identified system needs or areas for improvement and are working to address them, and CICs may already have created strategic plans. Whether your CIC is already executing a strategic plan or is beginning to develop one, it is important to view the strategic plan through a CQI lens. Strategic plans guiding the CQI process must, at minimum, include the following components:

- A clearly articulated, measurable goal linked to an identified need or improvement area
- Key steps or actions that must be taken to achieve the goal

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 2)

- Does your action plan have clearly articulated and measurable goals?
- Does your action plan include concrete steps with timelines and persons responsible?
- Do you have a plan to track progress?
- How will you know if your change effects the outcome you want?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

- How you will know if the key steps or actions needed to achieve the goal were implemented as planned
- How you will track progress towards the goal and determine whether the goal was achieved

It is also recommended that strategic plans identify 1) a timeline for program implementation and assessment of processes and outcomes; 2) specific persons or entities responsible for implementing key steps and/or actions; and 3) desired longer-term outcomes linked to achievement of the specified goal. For example, a CIC may set a goal of improving the quality of permanency hearings, and measure progress toward that goal by systematically assessing the breadth and depth of discussion surrounding key topics at permanency hearings. However, although improving the quality of permanency hearings is a measurable goal, it is still unclear *why* improving the quality of permanency hearings is important. Is improved hearing quality expected to increase

parties' satisfaction and acceptance of the case decisions, foster child well-being, or expedite permanency?

A sample strategic plan summarizing CIC activities and expected outcomes of increasing

focus on youth well-being at all juvenile dependency hearings is included in Appendix A. This sample plan will be used as an example throughout the remainder of this guide to help illustrate the CQI process.

>>> STEP 3: IDENTIFY PROCESS *and* OUTCOME MEASURES

Two main types of measures are used to help inform the CQI process.

Process measures document program activities and outputs, such as the number of participants reached by a training or the number of collaborative meetings held and the minutes of those meetings. Documenting and analyzing the processes of change initiatives will help CICs determine the extent to which programming was implemented as intended. In the sample strategic plan (see Appendix A), process measures would be developed from **Column D** (Evidence to be collected to indicate that the action has been implemented as planned). Process measures are important for several reasons. If the programming results in positive outcomes, process measures can help illustrate *how* the programming led to change and which elements of the program were successful. This information can then be used to develop a “road map for success” that can be disseminated and adopted by other CICs to promote broader change. If the

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 3)

- Do you understand how process outcome measures can be used to help guide CIC efforts?
- Do you have a plan to track process measures (e.g., if your change has been implemented as it was supposed to be)?
- Do you have a plan to track outcome measures (e.g., if your change has the desired effect)?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

programming did not lead to the desired change, process measures can be examined to determine if any discrepancies between what was planned and what was actually implemented may have impeded change. CICs refine their strategic plans to address any barriers to program implementation and/or to incorporate alternative actions that may be better suited to achieving their goals.

Outcome measures assess the extent to which programming led to desired changes are needed to answer the question, “Did our efforts make a difference?” The content of **Column E** (Evidence to be collected to indicate that the action has led to change) in the sample strategic plan can


be translated into outcome measures. Outcome measures are essential in tracking progress towards goals and in demonstrating how more immediate impacts of programming are linked to broader impacts in the following months or years. CICs should articulate and measure both short- and long-term outcomes of their change efforts. In the sample strategic plan, *Increased presence of youth at all hearings* represents an anticipated short-term outcome of change efforts, whereas *Increase in positive well-being outcomes for youth involved in dependency cases* represents a long-term outcome.

Measuring processes is sometimes more straightforward and less time-intensive than measuring outcomes, although this still requires time and dedication from CICs. For instance, the CIC working on the sample action plan will need

to collect data on the number and disciplines of participants attending trainings and conduct evaluations of the trainings (i.e. to assess the impacts of the training on participants' knowledge and intentions to apply this knowledge in their work). The CIC team also will need to collect data to determine if there has been an increase in positive well-being outcomes for youth involved in dependency cases. In doing so, the team will first need to identify measures of youth well-being they wish to use. Educational success, increased community involvement, developing positive peer relationships, and abstinence from drugs and alcohol are just some indicators of youth well-being. Next, the CIC team will determine how to collect the data needed for those measures.

>>>> STEP 4:

IDENTIFY WAYS *to* COLLECT (OR FIND EXISTING) DATA



In the next step in the CQI process, the CIC team will identify ways to collect the data needed for the processes and outcomes they wish to track. This should include conversations with all system stakeholders to assess the availability of data elements through various IT systems. The agency and the court will likely have data systems in place and collect some data that would be useful in tracking progress towards CIC goals and

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 4)

- Do you know what data are available to you?
- Do you know what data you need to collect?
- Do you have internal capacity to collect additional data?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

objectives. Further, the agency reports their data to the Adoption and Foster Care Reporting System (AFCARS), which will provide state level data (and sometimes jurisdiction specific data). Local school districts and juvenile justice agencies may also have data systems that include data elements that will help inform CIC efforts.

In Nevada, CICs have access to court timeliness data collected from the child welfare data in the SACWIS, UNITY, and in the SACWIS and UNITY systems, which are distributed to the courts quarterly. These data include the median days to permanency hearings, to termination of parental rights, and to permanency.

CICs also have access to agency data collected by Chapin Hall¹, including data on placement stability, case closure/exit type (i.e., whether a case ended in reunification, TPR/adoption, guardianship, etc.), and case timeliness (i.e., number of days from petition filing to permanency and case closure). This data is provided annually at the CIC annual meeting. Other data can be requested from NCJFCJ, who has access to the Chapin Hall data system. Also, it may be possible for the CICs to designate a person to gain access to Chapin Hall for additional information.

If data are not already available, it will be important to design a plan to collect data. This may include the collection of quantitative or

qualitative data. Quantitative data involves collecting numeric information from various primary sources (e.g., court records or stakeholder surveys) or secondary sources (e.g., school data or agency data). Qualitative data focus on descriptive information rather than numbers and provide a richer, more detailed description. Such data can be collected through parent or stakeholder interviews or focus groups, as well as through open-ended survey questions. The information collected can be used to better understand stakeholders' and users' perceptions about how well the program is working and how to improve programs.

CICs may discover that there are several different sources of data and data collection methods they can use to track processes and outcomes, and choose the source and method that is most efficient and relevant to their goals. If a CIC determines that data required to measure specific processes or outcomes are truly unavailable, the CIC should consider revising the desired process or outcome so that it is measurable.

¹ For more information about Chapin Hall, see:
<http://www.chapinhall.org/partners/CSCWD>

>>>>> STEP 5:

DETERMINE HOW *to* COLLECT OTHER NECESSARY DATA (COLLECTING YOUR OWN DATA)

After CICs determine what data they will need to collect in order to measure processes and outcomes, they should then articulate *how* these data will be collected. For primary data collection (that is, quantitative or qualitative data that CIC members will be requesting or collecting themselves), this should include details about what method should be used (e.g., online surveys, paper surveys, case file review, court observation), who will be responsible for collecting the data, and how data will be combined, stored, and analyzed. CICs, or the CIC data/performance measurement subcommittee groups also will need to determine who is responsible for entering, analyzing, and reporting data; how data will be reported; and if any data sharing agreements or Memorandums of Understanding need to be in place to obtain the data needed to measure performance.

It is recommended that all CICs create a performance measurement plan identifying process and outcome measures to track progress towards their overarching goal(s) and how these data will be collected and analyzed. A comprehensive sample performance measurement plan based on the sample strategic plan (Appendix A) is included in Appendix B. This example measurement plan includes

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 5)

- Are you familiar with different methods to collect your own data (e.g., surveys, case file review, court observation)?
- Do you know which methods would be best-suited to measuring your processes and outcomes?
- Do you have a clear plan for collecting, analyzing, and reporting your data?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

measures and procedures to track all processes and outcomes identified in the sample strategic plan for demonstration purposes (i.e., to provide CIC members with several different examples).

It is important to note that many CIC strategic plans and performance measurement plans may be briefer than the examples provided. Given limitations on time and resources, a CIC may decide to implement two activities aimed at promoting systems change and identify 2-4 process measures and 2-3 outcome measures. The process and outcome measures selected should be directly linked to the programming and/or activities. For example, a CIC may direct their efforts towards implementation of the following **practices** (adapted from Appendix A):

All judicial officers will inquire about youth availability to attend hearings and the judicial officers and clerks will make every effort to schedule hearings so that youth can attend.

The CIC will organize multi-disciplinary trainings on best practices for engaging youth during juvenile dependency hearings and the key topics related to youth permanency and well-being that should be discussed at hearings.

The CIC team then identifies the following **process measures** they will use to determine whether these activities were implemented as planned:

- Frequency with which judicial officers inquire about youth schedules when scheduling the next hearing.
- Frequency with which hearings are scheduled that accommodate youth.
- Number of staff trained and disciplines of staff trained.
- Participants' satisfaction with training and knowledge gained

Next, the CIC team identifies the following two measures to determine if the activities are leading to the anticipated **outcomes**:

Frequency with which youth attend their court hearings.

Breadth and depth of discussion focused on child well-being during hearings.

After the programming has been implemented for some time and data have been collected for the identified process and outcome measures, the CIC may consider exploring more long-term outcomes expected to result from their efforts. For instance, increased attendance of youth at hearings and increased quality of discussion focused on child well-being at these hearings may be in turn expected to improve readiness for living independently among youth who are aging out of care. This outcome can be measured by completing an Independent Living Readiness Checklist for each youth as applicable. Appendix B includes examples of potential data collection sources and methods and measurement plans for each of the measures identified above.


Some CICs may want to begin by implementing a simplified data collection and performance measurement plan. Such a plan should include 1) CIC activities that are being implemented; 2) One or more measures for each activity; and 3) The method that will be used to collect data for the measure. The table on the following pages provides examples of simplified data collection and performance measurement plans using many of the activities that CICs identified in their Action Plans for 2014-2015 (completed at the 2014 Nevada CIC Summit).

PROPOSED CIC ACTIVITIES AND EXAMPLE DATA COLLECTION METHODS		
ACTION	MEASURE(S)	DATA COLLECTION METHOD
Monthly case review meetings with DCFS, PD, DA, and CASA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequency of meetings (date and time) Frequency with which all specified professionals attend 	Identify a recorder and keep minutes for each meeting. Record the date of each meeting and persons present. Save meeting minutes as word or other electronic document.
Improve engagement of parents and during hearings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Parent Engagement Survey <p>NOTE: Please see Appendix C for a sample Parent Engagement Survey.</p>	At the end of each hearing, the Bailiff will ask the parent(s) if they would be willing to take the survey and provide instructions. All completed surveys will be dropped in a locked box in the back of the courtroom
Increase the number of case plans that are filed in a timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of case plans that are filed within the specified timeframe 	All social services staff responsible for filing case plans will record the date each case plan is <i>supposed</i> to be filed by and the date each case is actually filed in a simple Excel template. They will send completed templates for each month to administrators.
Increase focus on child well-being at all hearings as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of well-being topics discussed at each hearing; extent to which each topic is discussed (e.g., brief mention or thorough discussion) 	Designated CIC members or other trained volunteers will randomly observe hearings and collect data using a Court Observation Tool that includes child well-being discussion topics. NOTE: Please see Appendix D for a sample Court Observation Tool.
Expanding and improving petitions and case plans to be rationally related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of correspondence between allegations and presenting problems noted in the petition and case plans 	Examine petitions and case plans side-by-side. For each petition/case plan pair selected, use a table to record the number of instances in which case plan services were <i>not</i> related to petition allegations or presenting problems.
Confirm ICWA status at each hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of hearings during which the judicial officer inquires about ICWA (asks if child has Native American heritage and if ICWA applies) 	CIC members, trained volunteers, or ICWA compliance officers will randomly attend hearings and record whether ICWA status was confirmed using a court observation instrument. NOTE: Please see Appendix E for a sample ICWA Compliance – Court Observation Tool

PROPOSED CIC ACTIVITIES AND EXAMPLE DATA COLLECTION METHODS		
ACTION	MEASURE(S)	DATA COLLECTION METHOD
Invite children to attend court (with prior notification of team members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of hearings that youth attend 	Pull random samples of electronic case files and record whether the child was present for each hearing in the case in an Excel spreadsheet (e.g., Adjudication present? Y/N).
Promote attendance of foster parents at hearings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of hearings for which foster parents are present 	Judicial officers and/or court staff will ensure that foster parents are identified and entered into the court case management system as present. Random samples of hearings can then be selected within the system to determine the extent to which foster parents appear.
Recruitment and retention of quality foster parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of licensed foster care providers in the jurisdiction. 	Social Services will send the CIC quarterly reports (pulled from their case management system) with the present numbers of licensed foster care providers
Recruitment and retention of quality foster parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of licensed foster care providers in the jurisdiction. 	Social Services will send the CIC quarterly reports (pulled from their case management system) with the present numbers of licensed foster care providers
Increase focus on child safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of safety issues addressed during the initial hearing and extent to which these issues were addressed (Per the Child Safety Guide) 	<p>CIC members or trained volunteers will randomly observe initial hearings (i.e., Shelter Care, Preliminary Protective Hearings) and complete a checklist of child safety topics that should be discussed as recommended per the Child Safety Guide.</p> <p>NOTE: Please see Appendix F for a sample Initial Hearing Observation – Child Safety Checklist</p>

>>>>>> STEP 6:

ANALYZE YOUR DATA *and* REACT to YOUR FINDINGS



In developing a performance measurement plan, CICs should specify how the data collected or obtained will be analyzed, the timeframe and/or frequency with which the data will be analyzed (e.g., six months after program implementation and every six months following) and who will be responsible for analyzing the data and reporting the findings to the CIC and other stakeholders. After the findings are shared, the CIC enters in perhaps the most important phase of CQI: reacting to the findings. This is what distinguishes CQI from other methods of tracking processes, progress, and impacts. Rather than simply reporting their findings and moving on, CICs engaged in the CQI process carefully consider the results obtained, identify successes and areas for improvement, and begin

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 6)

- What did the data tell you about your change?
- Was the change implemented like it was supposed to?
- Were there barriers to implementation?
- Can something be done differently to improve implementation?
- Should you continue with the change or stop?
- Were you able to illustrate a positive outcome following the change?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

to develop plans for further improvement. These plans may include maintaining and expanding programs that have led to successes, modifying programming that has fallen short of expectations, and/or implementing new programs and activities that may be more conducive to achieving the desired outcomes.



SEEK TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE *as* NEEDED

The Nevada Court Improvement Program contracts with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) to provide technical assistance related to CQI of current statewide and local projects. The research team at the NCJFCJ is available to assist the CICs in thinking about how to integrate CQI more fully into current practice. Technical assistance can take many forms, depending on the needs of the court. These may include:

- **Identification of performance measures.** In developing an action plan, the CICs often identify practice or program changes they would like to make. The NCJFCJ can help identify performance measures to correspond to those suggested changes. For example, if you want to increase involvement of children, families, and other necessary parties, the NCJFCJ can help you identify multiple ways you might want to measure this to determine if your change is occurring as planned.
- **Assistance with tool development.** Often it might be necessary to develop an instrument to collect all the necessary components you would like to see. For example, an action plan might be to better engage parents in the process. The CIC may want to survey parents about current engagement and barriers to coming to court.

The NCJFCJ can help the CIC develop a user-friendly tool to use in data collection.

- **Answering data questions.** Data can be tricky and always has some limitations. The NCJFCJ can help answer any questions you have about the currently available data, its limitations, and how it can best be used.
- **Analysis of currently available data.** The NCJFCJ could also serve as a data analysis partner. In addition to having access to AFCARS and Chapin Hall data, the NCJFCJ could potentially help with analysis of data the CIC has collected (e.g., analyzing survey responses, doing analysis of data collected in excel, etc.)
- **Brainstorming ideas for data collection.** The NCJFCJ can serve as a thought partner, working with the CIC to consider all potential data sources and ways to efficiently and effectively collect data needed to monitor change and assess outcomes.
- **Assistance with action planning.** The NCJFCJ can also assist in the action planning process, helping to identify process measures, as well as short term and long-term outcomes measures of interest.

Appendix A – Sample Strategic Plan

Goal: Increase focus on child well-being at all hearings in juvenile dependency cases.

A. Description of action to bring about change or improvement	B. Specific entities or persons responsible for the action and timeframe	C. Materials and resources needed for action	D. Evidence to be collected to indicate that the action has been implemented as planned	E. Evidence to be collected to indicate that the action has led to change
<p>Inform all relevant parties (e.g., parents, foster parents, child advocates, youth) that the court encourages youth attendance at hearings and provide one-page information sheets about youth attendance along with the next hearing date to parties</p>	<p>CIT representatives from each agency (Lead Judge, social worker, attorneys) will train other staff on protocol. Youth in Court subcommittee will draft and supply information sheets. Completion date: Oct. 2015</p>	<p>Youth in Court (YIC) protocol and guidelines, information sheets</p>	<p>Parties' awareness of expectations that youth are present in court; number of staff trained; extent of YIC information sharing and distribution.</p>	<p>Increased youth presence at all hearings Increased engagement of youth who are present at hearings</p>
<p>Inquire about youth availability to attend hearings and schedule hearings accordingly</p>	<p>Lead Judge will train judicial officers and court clerks to accommodate youth schedules Completion date: Sept. 2015</p>	<p>Reminder notices, youth schedules.</p>	<p>Extent of inquiries and hearings scheduled that accommodate youth</p>	<p>Increased depth and breadth of discussion focused on child well-being at all hearings</p>
<p>Multi-disciplinary trainings on best practices for engaging youth and key hearing discussion topics</p>	<p>Representatives from the DA, Public Defender, and GAL office will coordinate trainings, to be held in Aug. and Sept. 2015</p>	<p>Training curriculum, presenters, and educational materials</p>	<p>Number and discipline of participants attending training, training evaluations</p>	<p>Increased understanding and perceptions of procedural fairness among youth regarding their case</p>
<p>Monthly multi-disciplinary case reviews, with a focus on promoting child well-being</p>	<p>Social service agency representatives will coordinate meetings, beginning Sept. 2015</p>	<p>Case and child information from each agency; staff participation</p>	<p>Number and frequency of meetings; topics discussed</p>	<p>Increase in positive well-being outcomes for youth involved in dependency cases</p>

Appendix B – Sample Data Collection and Performance Measurement Plan

Process Measures		
Measure	Data collection sources and methods	Measurement plan
Parties' awareness of expectations that youth are present in court	Prior to each hearing, court staff will ask all relevant parties (e.g., child advocates, parents/guardians/foster parents, attorneys, social workers) if they have received verbal and written information encouraging youth presence at hearings.	Designated staff will pose this question to all relevant parties prior to each court hearing and record their responses on a standardized form. Forms will be collected each week by designated court staff and results analyzed on a monthly basis.
Number of staff trained and disciplines of staff trained	All participants who attend trainings will be asked to provide their name and discipline on a sign-in sheet	CIT representatives will collect sign-in sheets and enter participants' names and disciplines into an Excel file.
Participants' satisfaction with training and knowledge gained	Data will be collected using a post-reflective evaluation survey distributed to participants at the end of each training. The survey will ask participants to indicate their satisfaction with the training and to rate their knowledge in the topics covered before and after the training.	CIT representatives will collect evaluation surveys at the end of each training and enter data into an Excel file. CIT representatives can calculate response frequencies and averages using Excel to assess overall satisfaction with the training and to determine the extent of knowledge increase from pre to post training.
Frequency with which YIC information sheets are distributed to all relevant parties	A CIT member will observe of 2-3 hearings per week (including different judicial officers) for the first two months of program implementation to determine whether information sheets are distributed as planned.	The CIT member will record whether the information sheet was distributed to all, some, or none of the relevant parties for each hearing observed and enter this information into an Excel file. These data will be analyzed after three months into the implementation phase to assess fidelity to distribution of the information sheets.
Frequency with which judicial officers inquire about youth schedules when scheduling the next hearing and the frequency with which hearings are scheduled that accommodate youth.	A CIT member will observe of 2-3 hearings per week (including different judicial officers) for the first two months of program implementation to determine whether judicial officers are inquiring about youth schedules and, if so, whether hearings are scheduled to accommodate youth.	The CIT member will record whether the judicial officer did or did not inquire about youth schedules when scheduling the next hearing and whether the hearing was in fact scheduled to accommodate youth. This information will be entered into an Excel file. These data will be analyzed after three months into the implementation phase to determine the extent to which judicial officers are making efforts to accommodate youth schedules.
Frequency of multi-disciplinary case review meetings and discussion of topics focused on child well-being	Social services representative will document meetings and complete a "checklist" of discussion topics, marking all topics discussed related to child well-being (e.g., placement, mental and physical health, visitation, education)	The social services representative will enter data collected at meetings into a shared Excel file. Data will be analyzed on a bi-monthly basis to assess the extent to which meetings are held and child well-being topics are discussed.

Appendix B – Sample Data Collection and Performance Measurement Plan

Outcome Measures		
Measure	Data collection sources and methods	Measurement plan
Youth presence at hearings	Presence of parties at each hearing is already documented in the court case management system.	Court IT staff will randomly select 30 cases closed prior to program implementation and calculate the percentage of hearings for which youth were present for each case. A year after program implementation, IT staff will randomly select 30 cases that opened after program implementation and calculate the percentage of hearings for which youth were present for each case. These pre and post percentages can be compared to assess the extent to which youth presence at hearings have increased as a result of CIT efforts.
Judicial engagement of youth during hearings	Designated CIT members will observe at least 5 juvenile dependency hearings per month for which youth are present beginning now (to establish a baseline) and continuing throughout the following months during and after program implementation. CIT observers will use a standardized court observation instrument to assess the extent and quality of judicial engagement.	Each CIT observer or support staff (e.g., interns, student volunteers) will enter the data collected via the observation instruments into an Excel file. Means (averages) will be calculated for each engagement variable as well as total engagement scores. These will be compared across months to assess improvements in judicial engagement of youth.
Breadth and depth of discussion focused on child well-being during hearings.	Designated CIT members will observe at least 5 juvenile dependency hearings per month for which youth are present beginning now (to establish a baseline) and continuing throughout the following months during and after program implementation. CIT observers will use a standardized court observation instrument to assess the breadth and depth of key discussion topics as set forth in the <i>Resource Guidelines</i> (e.g., placement, education, health, permanent connections, etc.)	Each CIT observer or support staff (e.g., interns, student volunteers) will enter the data collected via the observation instruments into an Excel file. Means will be calculated for each discussion topic variable as well as total "hearing quality" pertaining to child well-being scores. These will be compared across months to assess improvements in the breadth and depth of discussion focused on child well-being.
Youths' perceptions of procedural fairness regarding their court hearings and case.	At the end of hearings, Bailiffs will administer a survey to youth who attended assessing their perceptions related to procedural fairness- e.g., whether they felt the way their case was handled was fair and if the hearing outcome was fair, whether they had the opportunity to be heard, whether the judge listened to their side of the story. This will occur at each hearing beginning immediately and throughout the months during and following program implementation.	CIT volunteers or support staff will enter survey results into an Excel database. Response frequencies and means will be examined and compared over time to determine if there are increases in youth's perceptions of procedural fairness.

Appendix B – Sample Data Collection and Performance Measurement Plan

Outcome Measures		
Measure	Data collection sources and methods	Measurement plan
Educational Benchmarks: Percentage of youth performing at or above grade level at case closure. (well-being measure)	Upon case closure, the Educational Liaison will submit updated academic records to social services and indicate if the student is performing at or above grade level.	An additional field for “academic performance at case closure” will be added to the Agency database with codes to indicate whether youth are performing below, at, or above grade level. These data will be analyzed every six months to determine if youth academic performance has improved.
Dual Involvement: Percentage of children under court jurisdiction who are also involved in the juvenile delinquency system. (well-being measure)	Juvenile Services already tracks dual involvement-youth who have open dependency and delinquency cases. Youth who are dually involved are flagged in their data system. The court case management system tracks the total number of youth under court jurisdiction (in child welfare cases).	Juvenile Services staff will run quarterly reports indicating the number of youth who are dually involved-the percentage of youth with open dependency cases who are dually involved can then be calculated by court IT staff. These data will be analyzed quarterly to assess changes in the extent of dual involvement.
Independent Living Readiness (well-being measure)	Social workers will complete the independent living readiness checklist for all APPLA youth 2-3 months prior to their eighteenth birthday or discharge from care. The checklist includes variables related to education, employment, housing, and independent living skills.	Data from the independent living readiness checklist will be entered into the Agency database. Every six months, the CIT social services representative will request a report on the checklists completed during the six month time period. Checklist scores will be compared over time to detect changes in Independent Living Readiness among APPLA youth.

Appendix C - Parent Engagement Survey

We are interested in your opinion of how you were treated in court today. Your answers to these questions can be used to help improve the court system. Your answers will only be used to measure the court's strengths and weaknesses and will not affect your case in any way. We appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey.

When did your case open? _____ month _____ year

Please indicate your agreement with each statement, using the following scale.

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

The judge treated me with respect	1	2	3	4	5	
The judge listened to me	1	2	3	4	5	
I had a chance to speak	1	2	3	4	5	
The judge spoke directly to me	1	2	3	4	5	
I helped make the decisions for my case.....	1	2	3	4	5	
I agreed with the case plan ordered for me	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
I understood what happened in court today.....	1	2	3	4	5	
I understand what I am supposed to do next.....	1	2	3	4	5	
All of my questions were answered	1	2	3	4	5	
The judge was fair.....	1	2	3	4	5	
I agree with the decisions made in court today	1	2	3	4	5	

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience in court today? _____

Please check your role in the case: Mother Father

Please check your race/ethnicity (mark all that apply):

- White/Caucasian Black/African American Hispanic/Latino
 Asian/Pacific Islander Native American Other: _____

Appendix D – Example Court Observation Tool²

The following is an excerpt from a court observation tool used to assess hearing practice in review hearings. The top portion gathers descriptive data regarding when the hearing was held, who was present, the scheduled start and end time, as well as the child’s current placement. The bottom portion focuses just on what was discussed at the hearing.

Date						
MONTH	DAY	YEAR	Inquiry about parties not present? Who? _____	(N) (Y) (NA)	Site	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)
(J) J			Explanation from agency to locate missing parties? _____	(N) (Y) (NA)	Scheduled Time:	
(F) F					Start Time:	
(M) M	(0) (0) (0) (0)		Parties Present/ Spoke at Hearing		End Time:	
(A) A	(1) (1) (1) (1)		(Y) (S) Judge	(Y) (S) Treatment Provider	Current Placement	
(M) M	(2) (2) (2) (2)		(Y) (S) Child(ren)	(Y) (S) State's Atty	(1) Home	
(J) J	(3) (3) (3) (3)		(Y) (S) Caseworker	(Y) (S) Agency Atty	(2) Relative/Kin	
(J) J	(4) (4) (4) (4)		(Y) (S) Attorney <i>ad litem</i>	(Y) (S) Mother	(3) Pre-Adoptive Home	
(A) A	(5) (5) (5) (5)		(Y) (S) GAL	(Y) (S) Father	(4) Foster Care	
(S) S	(6) (6) (6) (6)		(Y) (S) CASA	(Y) (S) Mother Atty	(5) Group Home	
(O) O	(7) (7) (7) (7)		(Y) (S) Foster Parent	(Y) (S) Father Atty	(6) Treatment Facility	
(N) N	(8) (8) (8) (8)		(Y) (S) Relative Caretaker	(Y) (S) Other: _____	(7) UD	
(D) D	(9) (9) (9) (9)		(Y) (S) Extended Family	(Y) (S) Other: _____		

For each of the discussion items below, use the 0 to 2 scale to identify how much discussion occurred in the hearing. 0 = No discussion, 1=statement only/little discussion, 2=more than a statement/substantive discussion.

Well-Being

Educational needs being met	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Educational placement appropriate	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Physical well-being	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Mental health needs	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Special needs	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Independent Living Plan	(0) (1) (2) (NA)

² More information about this tool and measuring ICWA compliance generally can be found in the Measuring Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: An Assessment Toolkit, Available online at: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/resource-library/publications/measuring-compliance-indi-an-child-welfare-act-assessment-toolkit>

Appendix E – ICWA Compliance Tool²

NCJFCJ ICWA Performance Measurement Court Observation Tool						
Court Case File Number	Type of Hearing	Coder	Tribe(s) of Child		Date	
Judicial Officer	County/Jurisdiction	State	Num of children	# child selected:	M	O
Parties Present at Hearing		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relatives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interpreter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Foster Parent		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mother	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mother's Atty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child's Atty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CASA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Treatment Prov
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Father	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Father's Atty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social worker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State's Atty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Atty for Tribe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:
Was an attorney appointed at this hearing for: the mother? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> the father? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> the child? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>						
ICWA Applicability						
1. Application of ICWA						Yes No
1a. Did the judge inquire about the applicability of ICWA?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Who was asked?						
1b. Has the child's tribe(s) been identified?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1c. Is the child a member, or eligible for membership of a federally recognized tribe?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1d. Did the judge make a finding orally on the record that ICWA does/does not apply?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1e. Does ICWA apply in this case? (even if no finding)						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Jurisdiction						Yes No
2a. Did the judge make a finding <i>on the record</i> that the tribe(s) received formal notice of petition filing?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2b. Is the child a ward of a tribal court?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2c. Is the child domiciled or living on the reservation?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2d. Does the state court have jurisdiction?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
***If this is not the initial hearing, is there indication that this is an ICWA case?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ICWA Compliance						Yes No
3. Findings on the Record & Placement					Finding Made	Notice Given
3a. Did the judge make a finding that the tribe(s) received notice of this hearing?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3b. Did the judge make a finding that the mother received notice of this hearing?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3c. Did the judge make a finding that the father received notice of this hearing?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3d. Did the judge make a finding that the Indian custodian received notice of this hearing?					<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3e. Did the judge order the child in to (or to remain in) out of home placement?					<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3f. Did the judge make a finding that emergency removal was necessary to prevent imminent physical damage or harm to the child?					<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3g. Was there qualified expert witness testimony presented at this hearing?					<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3h. Did the judge make a finding that there was clear and convincing evidence that the child was likely to suffer serious emotional or physical damage if continued in the custody of the parent?					<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3i. Did the judge make a finding of active efforts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> to prevent removal? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> to return the child home?					<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3j. Was there discussion of why child was not placed with relatives?					<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3k. Did the judge make a finding of good cause not to follow the placement preferences? If yes, why?					<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Tribal Intervention						Yes No
4a. Did the tribe petition or move to intervene in the case?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4b. Did the judge grant the tribe's petition or motion to intervene in the case?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4c. Did the tribe have a recommendation to present to the court?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4d. Did the judge allow the tribe to present its recommendation to the court?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4e. Did the judge adopt all <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> adopt some <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or not adopt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the tribe's recommendation?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Transfer to Tribal Court						Yes No
5a. Did a party request a transfer of the case to tribal court at this hearing?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5b. Did the judge make a decision about the transfer to tribal court? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deny <input type="checkbox"/>						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5c. Did the judge make a finding of good cause to deny the request to transfer the case? If yes, why?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Engagement of Tribe						Yes No
6a. Was there discussion of how the tribe has been involved in case planning?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6b. Was there discussion of culturally appropriate services for the family?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6c. Was there discussion of how the tribe has been involved in locating relatives?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Child Placement Order: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New order <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation Is this an adoptive home? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home/Parent		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indian Home		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Treatment Facility		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relative		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Indian Home		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unable to Determine		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Home		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Home				

² More information about this tool and measuring ICWA compliance generally can be found in the *Measuring Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: An Assessment Toolkit*, Available online at: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/resource-library/publications/measuring-compliance-indian-child-welfare-act-assessment-toolkit>

Appendix F --Sample Child Safety Initial Hearing Checklist

Date: _____ Coder: R L Sched. Start Time: _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

PARTIES PRESENT:

- Mother
- Father
- Child(ren)
- Child Advocate A G C
- Foster Parent
- Relative: _____
- Tribal Rep
- Other: _____

ICWA Finding? Yes No

CHILD DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Child Placement H R FC (0 1 2)
- Child education- general N/A (0 1 2)
- Child educational placement N/A (0 1 2)
- Child physical health (0 1 2)
- Child mental health (0 1 2)
- Child other well-being (0 1 2)
- Child safety** (0 1 2)
- Visitation P S (0 1 2)
- Efforts to reunify/prevent removal (0 1 2)

INITIAL HEARING DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Parents' rights (0 1 2)
- Permanency timeframes (0 1 2)
- Review of the petition (0 1 2)
- Paternity (0 1 2)
- Diligent search (0 1 2)
- Relative resource (0 1 2)
- Safety planning** (0 1 2)
- Prevent child from returning home today? (0 1 2)
- Judge ask about Native American heritage? (0 1 2)

ENGAGEMENT:

- Overall Mother engagement N/A (0 1 2)
- Overall Father engagement N/A (0 1 2)
- Overall Child engagement N/A (0 1 2)

SERVICES:

- Mother N/A (0 1 2)
- Father N/A (0 1 2)

SAFETY TOPICS:

- Threats of Danger** (0 1 2)
- Present threats identified? Y N (0 1 2)
- Impeding threats identified? Y N (0 1 2)
- If identified, were threats considered in:**
- Placement? Y N Safety plan? Y N (0 1 2)
- Visitation plan? Y N Service plan? Y N (0 1 2)

Threats of Danger:

- Vulnerability** (0 1 2)
- Vulnerabilities identified? Y N (0 1 2)
- If identified, were threats considered in:**
- Placement? Y N Safety plan? Y N (0 1 2)
- Visitation plan? Y N Service plan? Y N (0 1 2)

Vulnerabilities:

- Protective Capacities** (0 1 2)
- Cognitive capacities identified? Y N (0 1 2)
- Behavioral capacities identified? Y N (0 1 2)
- Emotional capacities identified? Y N (0 1 2)

- If identified, were protective capacities considered in:**
- Placement? Y N Safety plan? Y N (0 1 2)
- Visitation plan? Y N Service plan? Y N (0 1 2)

Protective Capacities:

Note



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Appendix 10

Statewide Timeliness Data and Performance Measurement

Median Days	CY 2011 Baseline Measure Year	CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014	CY 2015	CY 2016	CIP Projects Targeting Measures (if applicable) <i>[If this measure was targeted by an intervention (e.g., efforts made to improve timeliness), please list the project or activity here]</i>
Required Timeliness Measures – median days							
4G. Time to First Permanency Hearing	359	366	359	357	352	353	CICs, Dependency mediation, CASA, attorney training, pro bono programs, and CQI efforts
4H. Time to Termination of Parental Rights Petition	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	CICs, Dependency mediation, CASA, attorney training, pro bono programs, and CQI efforts
4I. Time to Termination of Parental Rights	764	699	599	608	676	610 (-20%)	CICs' focus on eliminating barriers to timely placement in their judicial districts and CQI efforts
4A. Time to Permanent Placement	848	729	675	688	644	714 (-16%)	CICs' focus on eliminating barriers to timely placement in their judicial districts and CQI efforts
Optional Measures – median days							
<i>Time to Reunification</i>						555	CICs, Dependency mediation, CASA, attorney training, pro bono programs, and CQI efforts
<i>Time to Adoption</i>						939	CICs' focus on eliminating barriers to timely placement in their judicial districts and CQI efforts
<i>Time to Rel Guardianship</i>						563	
<i>Time to Emancipation</i>						816	
<i>Time to Subsequent Permanency Hearings</i>	367	199	348	182	182	182	
<i>1B. Percentage of Cases that Re-enter within 1 year</i>	5.1%	5.6%	5.8%	6.4%	5.6%	Not Avail	

“Achievements Unlocked”, a
Program to Improve Educational
Outcomes for Foster Youth

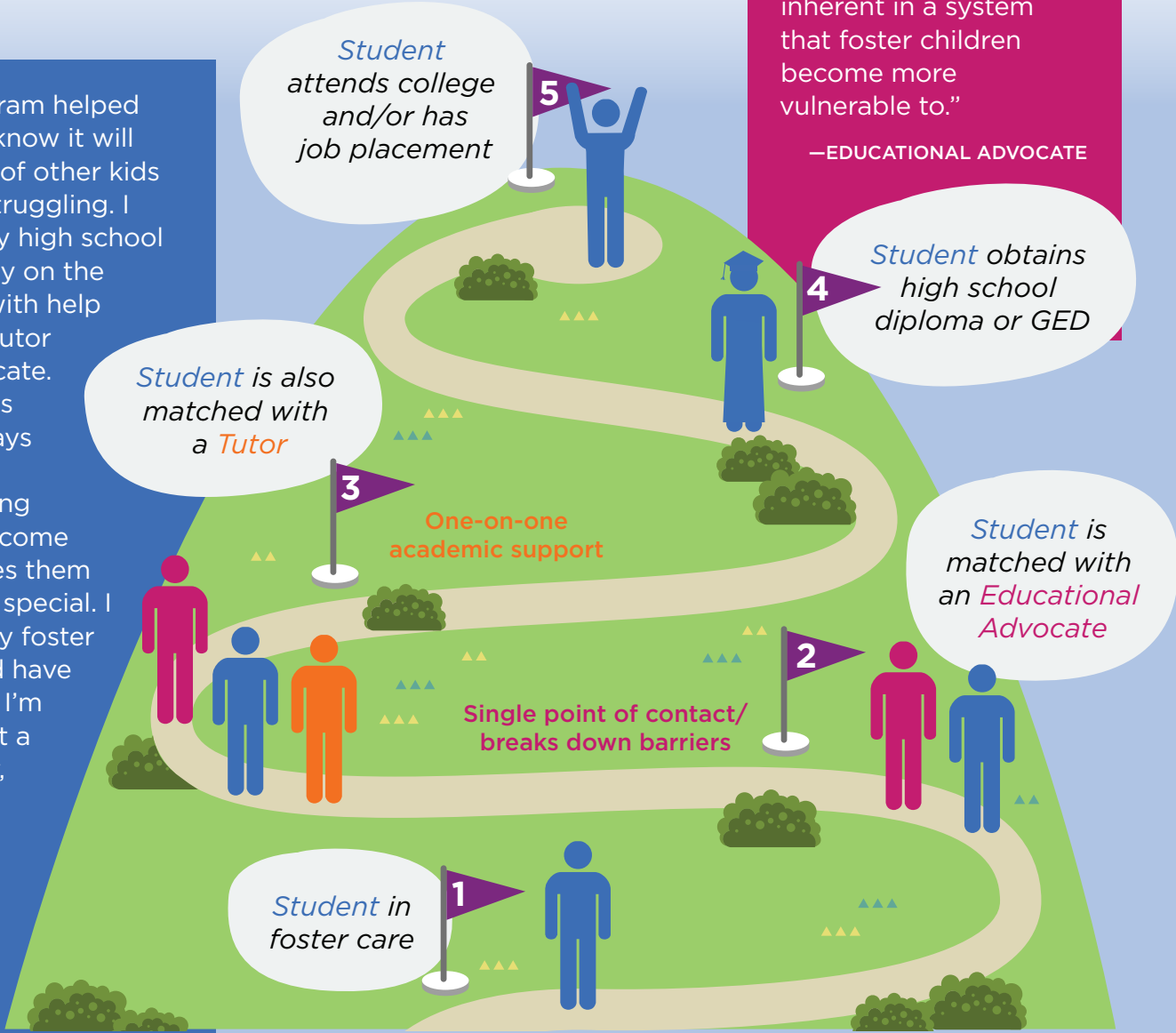
ACHIEVEMENTS UNLOCKED

Achievements Unlocked, developed by the Washoe County Department of Social Services, is changing the educational trajectory of students in foster care. Matched by the project with tutors and educational advocates, students who were struggling academically took on more courses, earned more credits, improved attendance, and most importantly, got on track to graduate. A multi-disciplinary team model providing advocacy, tutoring, mentoring, and case management to high school aged foster youth, the project succeeded in significantly improving the college and career readiness of the 26 students who completed the pilot in the 2015-16 academic year. With education being the most potent tool for moving out of poverty, Achievements Unlocked has the power to change the lives of young people in foster care.

Only 50 percent of the 400,000 children in foster care in the U.S. complete high school by age 18.

“Having an advocate assigned to a foster student immediately sheds light on barriers inherent in a system that foster children become more vulnerable to.”
—EDUCATIONAL ADVOCATE

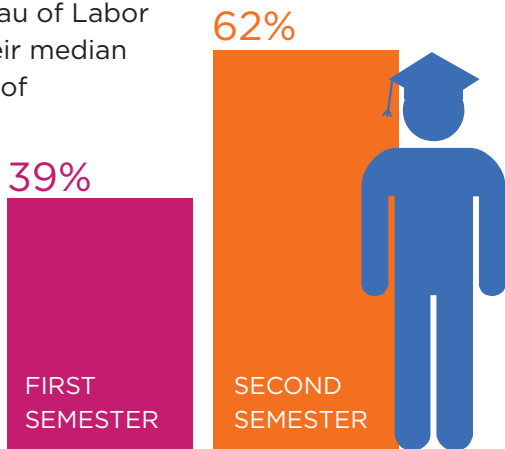
“This program helped me and I know it will help a lot of other kids that are struggling. I passed my high school proficiency on the third try with help from my tutor and advocate. Foster kids don’t always get extra help. Having someone come help makes them feel really special. I think every foster kid should have that. Now I’m working at a pharmacy, and I plan to go to college in the fall.”
—STUDENT



PILOT FUNDED BY
administered by the Whittier Trust

YOUTH ON TRACK TO GRADUATE

High school dropouts are far less likely to find work than their peers who complete high school, and earn significantly lower wages. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, their median annual wage of \$25,636 is about \$10,000 less than that of their peers.



“It’s really nice having someone who will listen to you and not judge you. My advocate talks with me about how to overcome difficulties that stop me from doing my schoolwork and being successful. This program is important so foster youth don’t feel alone in their situation, whatever that is, and that they have someone to talk to and express how they feel and how to overcome what they’ve been through.”



—STUDENT

Marcus* didn’t start school until he was 8 years old. He entered Achievements Unlocked as a 16-year-old freshman, initially telling his educational advocate that he thought he would drop out because he hated the thought of graduating when he was twenty. Working closely with his school counselor, his advocate helped him embark on a three-year graduation plan while his tutor helped him build his math skills. Marcus is now highly motivated, and has no doubt he will graduate next year as a junior and move on to college.

*Student’s name has been changed to protect his privacy.



A GREATER NUMBER OF CREDITS

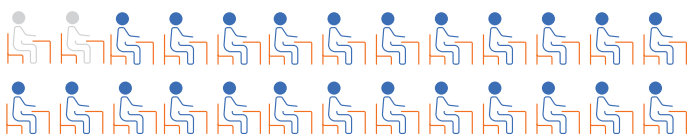
Every participant in the program reported feeling supported by their educational advocates. Through the wraparound support provided by Achievements Unlocked, students took on more courses and earned more credits.



INCREASED SCHOOL STABILITY

1/3 of all students in foster care in the district changed schools during the year yet all but

2 of the 26 students



in the program remained in their schools of origin. Achievements Unlocked invests the student in the school and the school in the student. A student who feels their school is engaged in their success is less likely to engage in behaviors that lead to changes in their school placement.

“Educational mentoring for foster children pays dividends which can’t easily be measured. Statistics consistently demonstrate that foster children, absent interventions like Achievements Unlocked, will fail educationally at alarming rates. Children who have access to Achievements Unlocked, however, succeed at very high rates; I continue to be amazed by their progress and success. I aspire to offer the program to ALL foster children in this district.”



—HONORABLE JUDGE EGAN WALKER, SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT, FAMILY DIVISION, WASHOE COUNTY

New program provides path to graduation for foster kids

Achievements Unlocked provides educational advocate and tutor for high school aged foster children.

Reno, Nevada. June 6, 2017. The Achievements Unlocked program, developed by the Washoe County Department of Social Services, is changing the educational trajectory of students in foster care. Only 50 percent of foster youth in the U.S. graduate by the age of 18. However, 62 percent of students in the Achievements Unlocked Program are on track to graduate this June, which is up from 39 percent in the first semester.

Achievements Unlocked is a multi-disciplinary team model providing advocacy, tutoring, mentoring, and case management to foster care youth at all grade levels. Through the wraparound support provided by the educational advocates, tutors, and social workers, students took on more courses and earned more credits, and achieved greater school stability.

“Achievements Unlocked for foster children pays dividends which can’t easily be measured,” said Honorable Judge Egan Walker, Second Judicial District Court, Family Division, Washoe County. “Statistics consistently demonstrate that foster children, absent interventions like Achievements Unlocked, will fail educationally at alarming rates. Children who have access to Achievements Unlocked however, succeed at very high rates; I continue to be amazed by their progress and success.”

How it works

1. Student in foster care
2. Student is matched with an Educational Advocate
3. Student is also matched with a tutor
4. Students obtains high school diploma or GED
5. Student attends college and/or has job placement

Achievements Unlocked initially received funding from the Walter S. Johnson foundation, and is currently seeking additional funding with the goal of expanding services to all high school aged foster youth in Washoe County.

Media Contact: Washoe County Social Services Community Outreach Coordinator Chris Ciarlo at Cciarlo@washoecounty.us or 775-337-4500. (Interviews with graduates from the program are available)

Program Info Contact: Keri Pruitt, Program Coordinator, Educational Liaison, Washoe County Department of Social Services: 775.328.3914 or kpruitt@washoecounty.us.

Achievements unlocked program partners include:

- Washoe County School District
- Sierra Association of Foster Families
- Supreme Court of Nevada
- Walter S. Johnson Foundation
- National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Media Release
For Immediate Release
www.washoecounty.us

Contact: Chris Ciarlo
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775-337-4500
MA 17-005

About Washoe County Department of Social Services:

Washoe County Social Services believes every person has a right to be served with dignity and respect and should be assisted courteously. Every person has a right to lead a healthy, safe existence, which will promote his/her capacity and opportunity to become a responsible, productive citizen. Adults should be held accountable for their behavior as it affects themselves and their duties to their minor children.

See the Numbers to Know One Sheet (We will hyperlink)
View the Achievements Unlocked Flyer (We will hyperlink)

WASHOE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROJECT

YEAR 1 PROCESS AND OUTCOME EVALUATION REPORT



National Council of Juvenile
and Family Court Judges

Juvenile Law Programs



WASHOE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROJECT

YEAR 1 PROCESS AND OUTCOME EVALUATION REPORT

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National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

March 2017

WASHOE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges® (NCJFCJ) headquartered on the University of Nevada campus in Reno since 1969, provides cutting-edge training, wide-ranging technical assistance, and research to help the nation's courts, judges, and staff in their important work. Since its founding in 1937 by a group of judges dedicated to improving the effectiveness of the nation's juvenile courts, the NCJFCJ has pursued a mission to improve courts and systems practice and raise awareness of the core issues that touch the lives of many of our nation's children and families.

For more information about the NCJFCJ or this report, please contact:

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Washoe County Department of Social Services: College and Career Readiness Project

Year 1 Process and Outcome Evaluation Report

Executive Summary

College and Career Readiness Project Goals & Objectives

CCRP's goal is to improve educational outcomes of children and youth in foster care to prepare them for their future education and career paths. CCRP provides youth in-school and out-of-school services appropriate to their assessed needs. Each student involved in the program is assigned a Washoe County Department of Social Services Social Worker, a Student Tutor, and an Educational Advocate to help assist with academic and vocational barriers, and to help promote plans to achieve future aspirations. The three main objectives of CCRP are:

1. Improve education outcomes for CCRP students compared to non-CCRP youth
2. Improve career and college readiness compared to non-CCRP group
3. Improve case outcomes compared to non-CCRP youth.

Study overview

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) in collaboration with the Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) are conducting an on-going evaluation of the CCRP program. This report covers the first two semesters of CCRP and, as such, findings herein should be considered preliminary. This initial review of the program was done to assess if the program is on track in achieving the above mentioned objectives, and also presents the perspectives and suggestions of the youth and stakeholders involved in the program.

The CCRP Coordinator assigned foster youth into either the CCRP or non-CCRP group and then provided the lists to NCJFCJ researchers. Foster youth were

Selection criteria included two or more of the following risk factors:

- Low criterion referenced test scores unaccountable by major intellectual disability
 - Social/emotional learning issues affecting academic performance
 - Behavioral issues related to school frustration per educators
 - Classroom observation of academic underperformance
 - Social worker observations of educational underperformances
 - Mild Intellectual impairments or learning disability
 - Low GPA
 - Credit deficient
 - Pattern of missed assignments
 - History of school failure
 - School moves or low school stability
 - Truancy
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- Profoundly mentally retarded
 - Moderately to severely autistic
 - On wait list for RTC placement
 - Other cognitive or intellectual disability at a significant standard deviation
 - Current runaway
 - No current risk factors
 - Refusal to participate

selected to participate in the CCRP cohort through eligibility criteria outlined by the CCRP Coordinator (see box above). Additional foster youth were identified by the CCRP Coordinator to serve as the non-CCRP group for the project.

The data for this evaluation were collected via student and stakeholder surveys and through information pulled from the Washoe County School District's 'Infinite Campus' database. The first-year data were analyzed to demonstrate if and what progress the program is making, in its early stages, toward attaining program objectives.

Process Evaluation

Training Survey:

Based on a comparison of pre- and post-training survey responses Tutors and Educational Advocates demonstrated increased knowledge of Adverse Childhood Experiences, their correlation with school performance, and principles of resilience. Participants indicated that the training exceeded their expectations and that they were very confident in their ability to apply the information to practice.

Stakeholder Survey:

Stakeholders worked with 1–5 foster youth each semester. All participants indicated they encourage youth to continue education past high school. In the first semester survey, most Tutors and Educational Advocates indicated that they met with their foster youth frequently (at least once per week) in sessions that lasted an hour on average. Educational Advocates reported collaborating with other agencies. In the second semester survey, most Tutors reported they still met with their youth once per week and reported spending more time with students (2–3 hours). Educational Advocates met with youth once every other week, although they may have communicated with students by other means. In the second semester survey, all (100%) Educational Advocates, Social Workers, and School Counselors reported collaborating with other agencies.

On both semester surveys, there was agreement that "Foster youth need extra services to succeed" and "foster youth are hardworking." In the first semester survey, stakeholders indicated they felt connected to youth and that CCRP exceeded their expectations. In the first

semester survey, 8 in 10 stakeholders indicated the CCRP program met or exceeded their expectations and 4 in 10 said CCRP exceeded their expectations. In the second semester survey, 9 in 10 indicated the CCRP program met or exceeded their expectations and nearly 5 in 10 said CCRP exceeded their expectations.

Youth Survey:

Most youth agreed with school connectedness items, “I go to school because it’s a place where I learn skills that I will use later in life” and “The teachers at my school are interested in me.” In the second semester survey the youth agreed most often with the following school connectedness statements, “When I work hard, my teachers tell me I did a good job” and “I go to school because I’m learning things I will use later in life.”

Most students indicated that they like school and that good grades were important. On both the first semester and post-survey only about 2 in 10 students indicated that they did not like school at all. On average only 1 in 4 students indicated that good grades were not important.

Students stated that they receive the most encouragement to continue education past high school from Tutors and from foster parents. The majority (78.6%) of foster youth were glad they were involved in the program. Roughly 57.1% of non-graduating youth said in the post survey that they would like to be involved in the program again next year.

Year 1 Outcome Results

There was some attrition in both the CCRP and non-CCRP groups. Only CCRP youth who were in the program both the first and second semester were included in the analyses. Thus, for the *Infinite Campus* analysis, the CCRP group includ-

	First Semester		Second Semester	
	Sent	Responded	Sent	Responded
Total stakeholders	61	19	55	26
Tutor	13	11	11	8
Educational Advocate	2	1	2	2
Social Worker	8	2	8	5
School Counselor	18	4	23	6
Foster Parent	20	1	8	2
Judicial Officer	–	–	3	3
CCRP youth	29	17	30	17

ed 26 youth and the non-CCRP group included 28 youth. Specific data elements were not available in the database for every youth so some analyses are based on fewer youth.

Objective 1: Improve education outcomes for CCRP students compared with the non-CCRP group

Grade point average. Grade point averages (unweighted GPAs) for both CCRP students and students in the non-CCRP group remained essentially unchanged across semesters. GPAs were significantly lower for the CCRP group than for the non-CCRP group (12% lower each semester). Nevertheless, it is also important to re-emphasize that these are preliminary findings and that GPA is not the only salient indicator of student school progress or success.

Other measures of school progress. Data were available in the *Infinite Campus* database on several other measures of students’ school progress that although they do not address a specific objective are nevertheless informative.

In the first semester, the CCRP group took significantly more classes and attempted significantly more credits on average than youth in the non-CCRP group. The CCRP students on average attempted one additional course than the non-CCRP group, which translated into

attempting more credits than the non-CCRP group.

Courses, Credits Attempted and Earned, by Semester (2015–2016 School Year)

Number of:	CCRP	Non-CCRP
1st Semester		
Courses taken*	7.0	6.0
(N)	(25)	(25)
Credits attempted*	3.3	3.0
(N)	(25)	(24)
Credits earned	2.5	2.2
(N)	(24)	(27)
2nd Semester		
Courses taken	6.6	6.0
(N)	(24)	(20)
Credits attempted	3.3	3.1
(N)	(24)	(19)
Credits earned	2.3	2.8
(N)	(26)	(27)

* Statistically significant difference.

Data source: Washoe County School District’s *Infinite Campus* database.

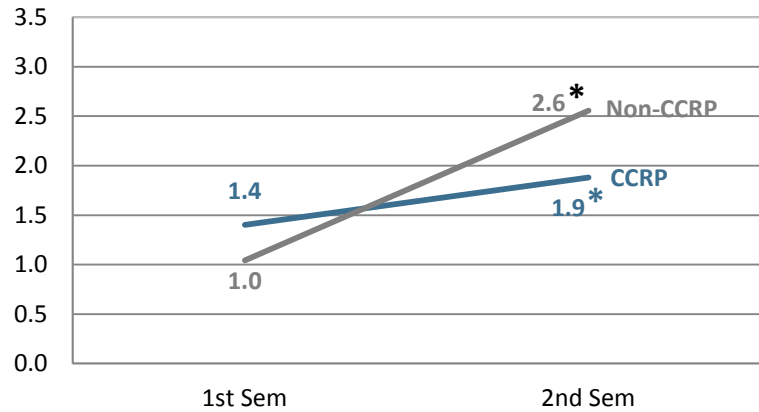
Attendance. Although there is no specific objective or activity that addresses this area, attendance is important to student performance. Absences become a disciplinary issue when a student has three or more absences within one school year without permission by the parent/ guardian or school, so patterns in this area speak to the educational stability of the student. It should be noted that the student may not always have control, due to the unique dynamics affecting the lives of youth in foster care.

CCRP students showed a decline in class **tardiness** from the first to second semester (-26%). Non-CCRP youth, in contrast, increased 135% in average tardies per class. Regarding **excused absences**, the CCRP group reduced their average from 3.5 to 3.3 (-7%). The non-CCRP group's average number of excused absences changed only slightly from 2.7 to 2.6. CCRP students averaged 1.6 **unexcused absences** in both semesters. The non-CCRP group averaged more unexcused absences in the second semester (2.8) than in the first (1.8).

Disciplinary actions. Again, although there is no specific objective or activity that addresses this area, disciplinary actions are important to overall student performance. These disciplinary actions include behavioral infractions, disrespect, truancy and suspensions/expulsions. The number of disciplinary actions was relatively low for both groups.

School-Related Disciplinary Actions, by Semester (2015–2016 School Year)

Average school-related disciplinary actions per semester



- In the first semester, the CCRP group averaged more school-related disciplinary actions than the non-CCRP group. By the second semester the reverse was true.

* Statistically significant difference between CCRP and non-CCRP groups in second semester.

Ns=First semester: CCRP=25, non-CCRP=24; Second semester: CCRP=25 non-CCRP=18

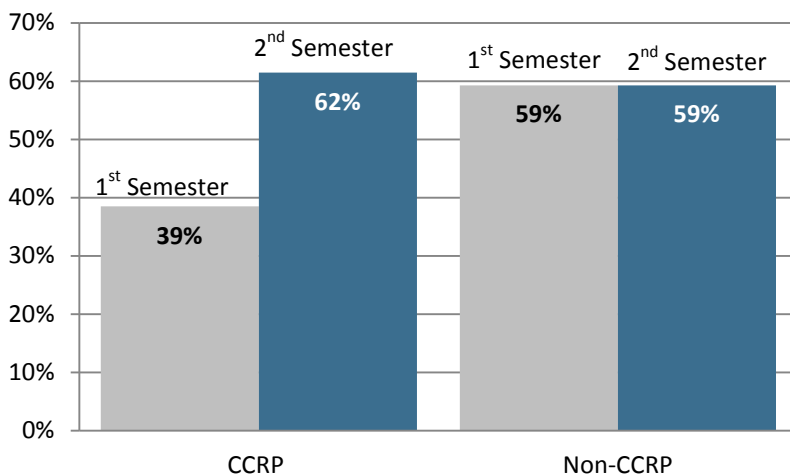
Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

Although there were increases in the average number of disciplinary actions in both groups, the average number of disciplinary actions in the CCRP group increased less (34%) than in the non-CCRP

group, which more than doubled (145%). The result being that in the first semester the CCRP group averaged 34% more disciplinary actions than the non-CCRP group, but by the second semester the average for the non-CCRP group was significantly greater (36%) than the CCRP group.

Percentage of Students on Track for Graduation, by Semester (2015–2016 School Year)

Percent of students on track for graduation



- By the second semester the CCRP group exceeded the non-CCRP group in the proportion of students who were on track for graduation.

Ns=First semester: CCRP=26, non-CCRP=27; Second semester: CCRP=26 non-CCRP=27

Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

Objective 2: Improve career and college readiness for CCRP students compared with the non-CCRP group

On track for graduation. “On track for graduation” was defined as a student having the sufficient number of credits by their junior year to graduate on time. The proportion of CCRP students on track to graduate (39%) was substantially below the proportion in the non-CCRP group (59%) at the end of the first semester. At the end of the second semester the share of CCRP student had jumped 60% bringing the CCRP proportion (62%) to a level slightly above that of the non-CCRP group (59%). **The program objective for 66% of youth “on track for graduation” is within reach—only 2 additional youth “on track” are needed.** This suggests that the CCRP

program is helping move students in the right direction.

Continued education or training. Of the students who exited the program at the end of the first year of this evaluation, five graduated from high school, three were accepted and are attending college, and two work full-time. One CCRP youth has received a *HiSET*[®] high school equivalency diploma.

Objective 3: Improve case outcomes for CCRP students compared with the non-CCRP group

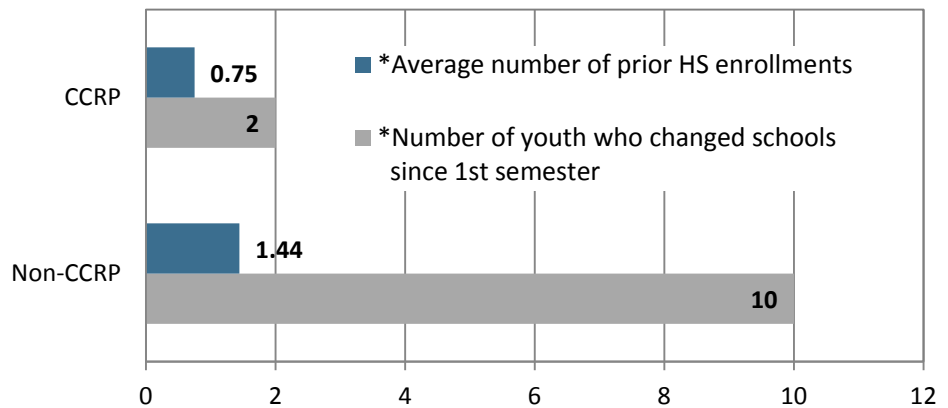
School stability. The *Infinite Campus* database includes information on students' number of prior high school enrollments and whether students had changed schools during the school year. CCRP students had fewer average prior high school enrollments than non-CCRP students. Only 2 of CCRP students changed schools since the first semester compared to 10 of the non-CCRP group. Both differences were statistically significant.

Independent living. All youth ages 14–18 in foster care are given a Casey Life Skills Assessment annually. Independent Living plans are created as part of the assessment and are updated every 6 months. The first-year evaluation confirmed that 100% of the students in the CCRP program have independent living plans. A Year 2 survey was disseminated to the students in the program to collect information from the students' perspectives on how prepared they thought they were for life after high school.

Study Limitations

The study was designed to use a multi-method approach to examine satisfaction with and effectiveness of the CCRP. Several challenges and limitations were identified in year one of the assessment. There were some challenges in selecting youth to participate. The evaluation team

Prior High School Enrollments and Changed Schools Since First Semester (2015–2016 School Year)



- Compared with non-CCRP youth, CCRP youth had a significantly lower average prior number of high school enrollments and significantly fewer CCRP youth had changed schools since the first semester.

* Statistically significant difference between CCRP and non-CCRP groups.

Ns=First semester: CCRP=26, non-CCRP=27; Second semester: CCRP=26 non-CCRP=27

Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

strongly encouraged a random assignment to the study condition, identifying all at risk youth and then randomly placing them in CCRP or control. It was unclear to researchers if this occurred or not. The groups were dissimilar in age and grade, although fairly similar in other characteristics. A second challenge with the sample was attrition. Several youth were selected to participate in the study and chose not to, requiring that other students be identified to participate. The number of youth in the program was already fairly small (30); after attrition the number participating in both first and second semesters was just 26 youth which created even more challenges to meaningful statistical comparisons.

In addition to concerns with sample selection and attrition, the evaluation was further limited by a low response rate. Despite emails and follow-up emails to youth and stakeholders, the response rate was very low. For youth, approximately 50% completed the survey. It would be helpful to better understand

why the other youth did not complete the survey. With only half, it is possible that responses were only by the youth who felt the program was valuable. Low response rate makes it challenging to. In the future it would be helpful to find ways to improve response rate.

A final limitation of the study was the timeliness of data. Response rates were low and often surveys had to be kept open in efforts to ensure that an adequate number of persons responded to yield findings of relevance. This delayed analysis of data. In addition, the list of students in the non-CCRP group was provided later than expected, and analyses could not be conducted until data were extracted from Infinite campus and put in a usable format for analysis.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The data collected from the first year evaluation of the College and Career Readiness Program (CCRP) provide insight into the effectiveness and various perceptions of the program. Steps are already being taken in Year 2 of the study, to improve survey response rates such as, additional reminders as well as incentives for responding.

Program Recommendations

At this stage of piloting the College and Career Readiness Program it is not necessary to make substantial changes. The findings show signs of progress in students' school performance. The program would benefit, however, from additional training opportunities for Educational Advocates and Tutors. Other relatively simple additions would help with consistency, collaboration, and youth and family engagement: develop formal packet of training, program and student orientation materials, take steps to increase collaboration among stakeholders, parents, and youth, create more opportunities for youth and parent feedback.

One final program recommendation would be to explore implementing **Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)** strategies. PBIS is a national initiative to define, develop, implement, and evaluate a multi-tiered approach to Technical Assistance that improves the capacity of states, districts and schools to establish, scale-up and sustain the PBIS framework. Emphasis is given to the impact of implementing PBIS on the social, emotional and academic outcomes for students with disabilities. Although foster youth do not necessarily have disabilities, applying PBIS strategies may be effective to reduce disciplinary infractions. There was some indication on the PBIS website

that PBIS may already be in some schools in Washoe County, if so it could be very beneficial for the CCRP program connect with PBIS in a more formal way.

Process Recommendations

Participants and the stakeholders find the CCRP to be valuable, with more than half the students saying they would like to continue being involved in the CCRP the next year. It will be important to involve the Tutors and Educational Advocates as well as youth and parents in process related matters to provide feedback on program implementation and how to sustain it moving forward. This will increase buy-in and help identify where they see barriers and opportunities to enhance the project.

One recommendation is to determine if the frequency and duration of student and stakeholder (Educational Advocate & Tutor) meetings are satisfactory to all parties. The data collected demonstrated that meetings with the Tutors decreased from meeting at least once a week to at least once every other week. The second year evaluation should aim to determine why a decrease in tutoring sessions was seen. It may be that CCRP youth no longer needed as many sessions. But if not, the reduced frequency may get in the way of student success. Similarly, the decrease in meetings with Educational Advocates (from majority of students meeting biweekly to once a month) should also be analyzed in the second year evaluation. It will be important to explore these areas in the next evaluation as there are several potential reasons for the change (students getting more confident, naturally occurring change due to time in the school year, etc.) and identifying those reasons will allow for more precise improvements to the program.

The purpose of the CCRP is to help students prepare for future after high school be it college and/or career. This aspect of questions has already been added to the second year evaluation. For example, asking students if they have applied to college or what career they would like post-high school, and asking students if the stakeholders (Educational Advocates and Tutors) are helping to reach these aspirations. Furthermore, exploring how the stakeholders (Educational Advocates, Tutors, Foster Parents, Counsellors, and Social Workers) encourage the students to think about continuing education past high school is also recommended.

Student Outcome Recommendations

The primary objectives of the CCRP is to improve education outcomes, improve college and career readiness, and to improve case outcomes (education placements, independent living plans) for students involved in the program.

A recommendation for the second year evaluation of the CCRP would be analyze the data collected to determine if there is any correlation between students' attendance, behaviors, and their college and career readiness. This additional step in the analysis would allow us to pinpoint any specific causes for the students' not being on track for graduation and for better recommendations to improve student outcomes.

The final recommendation is to compare educational placements in the first and second years. Educational placements had not been previously tracked, and decreasing it is one of the CCRP's main objectives. Collecting this data in the second year evaluation will help determine if the frequency of high school changes impacts the effectiveness of the program.

Next Steps

There are several “next steps” for Year 2 of the evaluation.

- Involve the Tutors and Educational Advocates in process related matters to help design how the program will be implemented. This will increase buy-in and help identify where they see barriers and opportunities to enhance the project.
- Identify opportunities for incentives for stakeholders and youth to increase response rates.
- Increase communication and timeliness of data to ensure up-to-date and timely reports.
- Increase the amount of communication with team to ensure on schedule and completing milestones.
- Re-examine project goals to ensure all needed data is being collected to fully examine project’s anticipated success.

Conclusion

While the program may not have reached all of the preliminary goals and objectives yet, there are important signs of the progress the program has made. The CCRP has been well received by students and stakeholders alike. Several outcome measures showed school progress for CCRP students even if only a few of these measures showed statistical significance. Perhaps the most positive finding is the improvement in “on track” for graduation. With two additional students moving into the “on track” category, the program will have reached one of its most important objectives.

Following Year 2 of the evaluation, WCDSS will be faced with at least three options. If for some reason, additional data show that the CCRP program has no impact on students’ college and career readiness, or worse, a negative impact, WCDSS will need to discontinue or substantially modify the program.

If at the end of Year 2, CCRP students continue to show some improvement in their college and career readiness, one option would be to seek funding to continue the program or even increase its capacity to support all the high school-aged youth in foster care.

Another option would be to conduct a more robust evaluation with a randomized control design. This would involve identifying a pool of youth that meet the program eligibility criteria and assigning them to either the CCRP or non-CCRP comparison group randomly. Only with such random assignment can observed changes in school performance and college and career readiness be attributable to the program and not to preexisting differences between the CCRP and non-CCRP groups.

It is often the case when evaluating real-life programs in the social sciences that program administrators are hesitant to assign youth to what is perceived as a beneficial program in a random way, essentially denying some youth of a needed service. In medicine, however, we would never consider subjecting our children to a treatment that hadn’t been proven



effective through random controlled trial. There are technical strategies to allow “control group subjects” to receive the treatment if after a period of study the treatment appears to be effective. For example, after some period of time, two years perhaps, non-CCRP group students could be “discontinued” for study purposes and added to the CCRP group, not for the study, but to receive the benefits of the program.

Conducting a randomized evaluation would also involve some cost, but would be well worth considering prior to expanding the program statewide.

Introduction

Foster youth typically have different individual, family, and community characteristics and experiences compared to youth who are not in foster care. Several studies have shown that youth who have been in foster care fare significantly worse in life in terms of educational and employment outcomes than youth who have not been in foster care; foster care youth also are more likely to suffer from mental illness and to be homeless (Doyle, 2007; Pecora, et al., 2006; English, Kouidou-Giles, & Plocke, 1994). In addition, foster youth emancipating from foster care show poorer health, educational, and economic outcomes in comparison to those in the general population due to more developmental challenges (Maher, Darnell, Landsverk, & Zhang, 2015). These usually occur due to a lack of usual supports found in non-foster families (English, Kouidou-Giles, & Plocke, 1994). These may include things such as permanent family or adult connection, connectedness to school, and positive peer relationships which are all associated with improved health outcomes later in life. Furthermore, foster youth may experience issues throughout their early life with adequate housing, employment or other income, educational or vocational advancement, GED or high school graduation attainment, having identifying documents, and financial stability.

Adolescence, specifically from ages 13–18, is an especially critical time due to the development and maturation of the adolescent brain, specifically in structures that help support self-regulation, responses to rewards, emotional responses, and responses to stimuli. During this time, youth are in the process of acquiring and coordinating educational, vocational, social, and behavioral skills that accompany adulthood (Cauffman & Steinberg, 2012). Development towards

psychosocial maturity is also influenced by environmental conditions such as a parent or guardian, prosocial peers, and participation in extracurricular, educational, and employment activities (Cauffman & Steinberg, 2012).

Ensuring that youth have appropriate support including educational advocacy, stable living, connections to peers and positive adult role models, are especially critical to support normative adolescent brain development and psychosocial skill sets. All of these components point towards the importance of preparing foster youth with independent living skill services and support prior to graduating high school and potentially aging out of the system (Katz & Courtney, 2015).

In an attempt to reduce these unmet needs, there have been federal and state advances aimed to allocate and extend provisions and supplementary support to foster care youth. Federal examples include the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, also known as the “Fostering Connections Act”, amended Title IV-E to extend the age of eligibility for foster care from age 18 to 21. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) also established the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and guarantees all children the opportunity to attend school regardless of learning, developmental, emotional or physical disabilities. This law applies to many children in foster care.

State advances include the California Senate Bill 1023, Oregon’s Fostering Youth Success Initiative, and Nevada’s Division of Child and Family Services’ Independent Living (IL) Program (<http://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/IL/>). The IL program, specifically, was designed to assist and prepare foster and former foster youth in making transition from foster care to adulthood through the provision

of opportunities to obtain life skills for self-sufficiency.

Social Science Research

While statewide and local legislative efforts have advanced, social science research surrounding educational, vocational and well-being outcomes of foster youth have also improved. Examples of this include:

The Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth (Midwest Study): This study collected data on foster care youth from Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois who were transitioning into adulthood (Courtney, Dworsky, & Pallack, 2007). Baseline data was obtained at ages 17-18 and follow-up interviews were conducted at age 19, 21, and 23-34. As it pertains to postsecondary educational attainment, data suggests that an average of 35 percent of foster youth from all three states had attained at least one year of college by the age of 21 (Dworsky & Courtney, 2010b). Data also suggests that at age 21 former foster youth’s earnings were not enough to overcome poverty and only half were currently employed (Naccarato, Brophy, & Courtney, 2010).

California Youth Study (CalYouth Study): Similar to the Midwest Study, the CalYOUTH study examined California youth ages 16-17 who were living in some sort of foster care, group care, or shelter (Courtney, Charles, Okpych, Napolitano, & Halsted, 2014). Researchers analyzed and obtained information from the youth, child welfare workers, and data from government programs to determine if the extension of foster care past the age of 18 influenced youths’ outcomes during their transition into adulthood and how youth outcomes such as education, family/adult connections, employment, and finances were affected as a result of specific services received. The study found that at age 16-17 only

1.2 percent of youth had a GED, 9.4 percent a high school diploma, and 15.2 percent a vocational/job training certificate or license (Courtney et al., 2014). This longitudinal study is still ongoing, and it is expected to provide outcome educational and vocational data of those who remain in foster care in California.

Kids in Transition to School (KITS): The KITS study is a 5-year, randomized control trial funded by the U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Drug Abuse, and National Child Health and Development that examines a preventive intervention aimed to enhance psychosocial and academic school readiness in foster children entering kindergarten. The intervention program focuses on high risk children to better prepare for school both socially and academically using a two-pronged approach (Pears, 2013).

The research clearly indicates that youth in foster care could use assistance to help them achieve their career and educational goals. Preliminary findings from other studies suggest that assisting youth with career readiness can improve outcomes. The current report discusses findings from an assessment of a College and Career Readiness Project, developed by the Washoe County Department of Social Services to promote positive educational and vocational engagement through a multi-disciplinary team model that provides advocacy, support, and case management to high school aged foster youth. The overall goal of the program is to promote positive environment conditions such as participation in educational and employment activities with adult role models.

Methods

Foster care children are an especially vulnerable population at an increased risk for barriers and challenges related to post-secondary education and career

readiness. To combat these challenges, the Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) implemented a pilot project, College and Career Readiness Project (CCRP) to help bridge the gap between the two groups of students. CCRP provides selected high school-aged foster youth in the public school system additional support and assistance regarding academics and independent living. The WCDSS holds the belief that every youth has a right to lead a healthy, safe existence, which will promote his or her capacity and opportunity to become a responsible, productive citizen.

CCRP's goal is to improve educational outcomes of children and youth in foster care to prepare them for their future education and career paths. The program provides foster youth with: targeted case management, mentoring support, and individualized academic tutoring to accomplish this goal. CCRP provides youth in-school and out-of-school services appropriate to their assessed needs. Each student involved in the program is assigned a Student Tutor, and an Educational Advocate to help assist with academic and vocational barriers, and to help promote plans to achieve future aspirations. The three main objectives of CCRP are:

1. Improve education outcomes for CCRP students compared to non-CCRP group
2. Improve career and college readiness compared to non-CCRP group

3. Improve case outcomes compared to the non-CCRP group.

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) in collaboration with the Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) is conducting an on-going evaluation of the CCRP program. This report covers the first two semesters of CCRP and, as such, findings herein should be considered preliminary. This initial review of the program was done to assess if the program is on track in achieving the above mentioned objectives, and also presents the perspectives and suggestions of the youth and stakeholders involved in the program.

The CCRP Coordinator assigned foster youth into either the CCRP or non-CCRP group and then provided the lists to NCJFCJ researchers. Foster youth were selected to participate in the CCRP cohort through eligibility criteria outlined by the CCRP Coordinator (see box below). Additional foster youth were identified by the CCRP Coordinator to serve as the non-CCRP group for the project.

Many components of this evaluation were conducted through the dissemination of user surveys. User surveys were adapted by NCJFCJ researchers based on evaluation tools used in prior national foster youth projects conducted by the NCJFCJ and other national organizations. Adapted tools for CCRP were vetted by various professionals in Washoe County

Selection criteria included two or more of the following risk factors:

- Low criterion referenced test scores unaccountable by major intellectual disability
- Social/emotional learning issues affecting academic performance
- Behavioral issues related to school frustration per educators
- Classroom observation of academic underperformance
- Social worker observations of educational underperformances
- Mild Intellectual impairments or learning disability
- Low GPA
- Credit deficient
- Pattern of missed assignments
- History of school failure
- School moves or low school stability
- Truancy

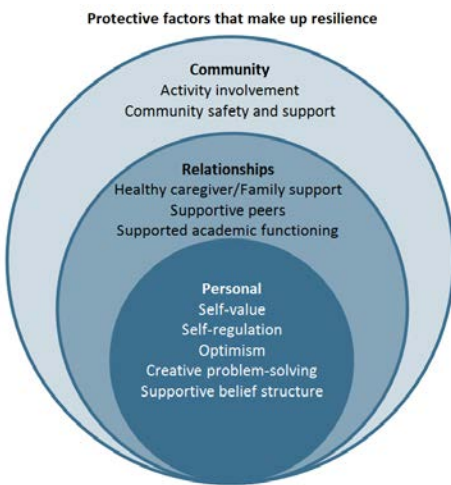
Deselection Criteria included any of the following:

- Profoundly mentally retarded
- Moderately to severely autistic
- On wait list for RTC placement
- Current runaway
- No current risk factors
- Refusal to participate

prior to dissemination to ensure they were appropriate for the targeted demographic. Dissemination efforts for stakeholder surveys were largely implemented by the NCJFCJ researchers via emails that contained imbedded Survey Monkey links. Dissemination efforts for foster youth surveys were largely implemented by CCRP stakeholders via presentation of hard-copy surveys or Survey Monkey links. In addition, information was pulled from the Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database. Data was collected among both the cohort and control groups at the end of the first (6 months) and second (12 month) semesters. Information that was collected included: demographics (i.e. age, grade, gender, current school), current semester and overall GPA, graduation progress, attendance, and behavioral incidents.

Training

Training was provided for CCRP Educational Advocates and Tutors. Training materials included information regarding: (1) adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), (2) toxic stress, (3) resilience, (4) effective approaches in building positive relationships with foster youth, and (5) strategies for mentoring and tutoring.



Trainings were evaluated for these stakeholders using a pre-post design. Stakeholders were surveyed prior to receiving training developed by the CCRP Coordi-

	First Semester		Second Semester	
	Sent	Responded	Sent	Responded
Total stakeholders	61	19	55	26
Tutor	13	11	11	8
Educational Advocate	2	1	2	2
Social Worker	8	2	8	5
School Counselor	18	4	23	6
Foster Parent	20	1	8	2
Judicial Officer	-	-	3	3
CCRP youth	29	17	30	17

nator and then again after having received training. Both pre-and post-surveys consisted of similar questions to assess for changes in knowledge acquisition. The post-survey included additional questions to assess stakeholders' satisfaction with the training, their confidence to implement the information they received into practices, and suggested improvements that could be made to improve trainings in the future. Respondents were matched between their pre-and post-survey responses based upon unique identifiers (i.e. respondent's initial of birth month and date).

Stakeholder Surveys

Stakeholders, including Educational Advocates, Tutors, WCDSS Social Workers, Washoe County School District School Counselors, and Foster Parents, were surveyed at the end of the first semester (6 months) and again at the end of the second semester (12 months). Surveys were used to evaluate attitudes, practices, and barriers/challenges of working with foster youth in general. First- and second-semester surveys included similar questions to ensure comparisons across surveys could be made. Educational Advocates and Tutors were asked additional questions to assess their satisfaction and future recommendations for the CCRP. Participants were provided three weeks to participate in both pre and post-surveys. A reminder email was sent out

one week after the initial email invitation to increase response rates.

Youth Surveys

Youth surveys were developed to ensure the use of non-technical language, specifically a 5th grade reading level. CCRP involved foster youth were surveyed at the end of the first semester (6 months) and again at the end of the second semester (12 months). Surveys evaluated attitudes regarding CCRP foster youth's connectedness with their school, and future education and career aspirations. Surveys also assessed CCRP foster youth's satisfaction with the CCRP, their involvement with stakeholders of the project, and suggested areas of improvement. First semester-surveys were administered to youth through Tutors; second semester-surveys were administered to youth through Educational Advocates. The NCJFCJ researchers provided materials to Tutors and Educational Advocates to help ensure proper implementation (fidelity) of the youth surveys and consistent administration. Tutors and Educational Advocates were given a four week time period to ensure CCRP youth completed the surveys. The NCJFCJ researchers were available for assistance during these time frames, should any challenges arose regarding data collection.

**Washoe County School District's
Infinite Campus Database**

Data were extracted from the Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database for analysis to compare students in the CCRP group to those in the non-CCRP group. Data were collected for both the CCRP and non-CCRP groups at the end of the first (6 months) and second (12 month) semesters. Information that was collected included: demographics (i.e. age, grade, gender, and current school), current semester and overall GPA, graduation progress, attendance, and behavioral incidents.

Process Evaluation

Training Survey:

Eighteen Tutors and two Educational Advocates received training developed by the CCRP Coordinator. A total of 18 stakeholders participated in the pre-training survey; 8 participants completed the post-training survey. The majority of those trained and responding to the training surveys were Tutors. Tutors indicated they had worked with youth for an average of 6 years; the two Educational Advocates indicated they had over 35 years of experience.

Knowledge. There was an increase in knowledge pre- and post-training:

- Participants seemed to have the most knowledge regarding topics related to Adverse Child Hood Experiences (ACE). A high ACE score puts an individual at an increased risk for developing mental, physical or health related issues.
- Educational Advocates correctly answered all knowledge questions in both pre- and post-surveys. Tutors were able to correctly answer two knowledge questions in both pre-and post-surveys.
- There was an increase in knowledge for Tutors between pre- and post-regarding the statement “Children with higher ACE scores are more likely to have problems in school compared to children with lower ACE scores.”
- There was an increase in how participants rated themselves regarding knowledge gained from pre- to-post-regarding the principles of resilience. Resilience refers to the ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or sources of stress.

Current Practices. Participants were asked what techniques they used to build resilience. The techniques most often used in the pre-survey included: (1) supporting positive role model relationships/healthy attachment, (2) modeling appropriate behaviors/responses, and (3) improving positive self-worth and confidence. Effective tutoring strategies

included: using concept learning techniques, building connections/comfort level with foster youth, and utilizing mnemonic learning techniques.

Satisfaction. All Educational Advocates indicated that the training **exceeded** their expectations. Furthermore, the majority of stakeholders indicated they felt **very confident** in applying the information they received from the training into practice.

Stakeholder Survey:

There were 19 of 61 stakeholders who were sent surveys, completed the surveys at the end of the first semester; 26 of 55 stakeholders who were sent surveys, completed the survey at the end of the second semester. Surveys were developed for direct CCRP and indirect CCRP involved individuals. Direct CCRP stakeholders included Tutors and Educational Advocates; while indirect CCRP stakeholders included Social Workers, School Counselors and Foster Parents of CCRP enrolled foster youth. The majority of respondents in both surveys were Tutors.

Current practices. Stakeholders worked with 1–5 foster youth each semester. All participants indicated they encourage youth to continue education past high school. In the first semester survey:

- All Tutors and Educational Advocates worked with their foster youth **at least once a week** and spent an **average of at least one hour** with each youth.
- All (100%) Educational Advocates, Social Workers, and School Counselors reported collaborating with other agencies.

In the second semester survey:

- Tutors reported meeting with foster youth **at least once a week** and reported spending more time with students (2–3 hours).
- Educational Advocates reported meeting with foster youth **at least once every other week**. Although this may underrepresent interactions student, as phone and text communications also take place.

Perceptions and attitudes. Both surveys asked participants to rate their agreement among six statements related to common (often misguided) perceptions of foster youth. These statements included both negative and positive perceptions/attitudes.

In the first semester and second semester surveys, the statements that had the highest majority of stakeholders agreeing to any extent included “Foster youth need extra services to succeed.” Among the positive statements, “Foster youth are hard-working” had the most agreement.

There was the most variability in responses regarding three negative statements:

- Foster youth have more behavioral problems than others.
- Foster youth are less motivated than others.
- Working with foster youth is difficult.

Satisfaction. In the first semester survey, stakeholders indicated:

- Feeling connected to the youth with whom they work.
- The tools and information provided by the program were useful and were applied when working with foster youth.
- The CCRP program met or exceeded their expectations (80%).
- The CCRP exceeded their expectations (40%).

In the second semester survey, stakeholders indicated:

- Feeling supported by the program,
- Knowing where get help or additional resources.
- Feeling connected to the youth with whom they are working.
- The CCRP program met or exceeded their expectations (90%).
- The CCRP exceeded their expectations (46%).

Youth Survey:

There were 17 foster youth who participated in the first and second semester surveys.

Perceptions and attitudes. Participants were asked questions regarding how much they like school, how important good grades were to them, and if they believed they were on track to graduate. In the first semester-survey, the majority of CCRP students said they liked school (81%) and agreed with statements reflecting they were connected with school:

- 69% agreed with “I go to school because it’s a place where I learn skills that I will use later in life,”
- 69% agreed with “The teachers at my school are interested in me.”

This may indicate that CCRP youth understand the importance of high school in their future career and educational advancements.

In the second semester survey, 71% of students said they liked school and agreed with statements reflecting school connectedness:

- 88% agreed with “When I work hard, my teachers tell me I did a good job,”
- 71% agreed with “I go to school because I’m learning things I will use later in life.”

On both the first semester and second semester-surveys only about 2 in 10 students indicated that they did not like school at all.

The other first and second semester survey results for perceptions and attitudes are as follows:

- Most students indicated that good grades were very important or important to them. On average only 25% of students indicated that good grades were not important.
- Approximately one-quarter of survey respondents indicated they had been “late for school 7 or more times this last year” in both the first and second semester (25.1% and 23.1% respectively).
- Fully 77% of respondents in the first semester survey agreed they would need to graduate high school to obtain the job they wanted; 82% of respondents in the second semester survey indicated they would need to graduate high school to obtain the job they wanted.

Current involvement. In the first and second semester-surveys, students indicated:

- Majority of students (43.7%) said started out seeing their Educational Advocates **biweekly**, and eventually majority of students (50%) only saw them in-person **once a month**.
- In the pre-survey 42.9% of students indicated that they met their Tutors **once a week**. In the post-survey, 50% of students met their Tutors **once a week**
- Students stated that they receive the most encouragement to continue education past high school from Tutors and from Foster Parents.

Satisfaction. The majority (78.6%) of foster youth were glad they were involved in the program. Of those who were not graduating, half of the second semester-survey respondents were glad they were involved in the program. Furthermore, half (50%) indicated that they were satisfied with the program; while an additional 50% indicated they were neutral on the subject. Roughly 57.1% of non-graduating youth said in the second semester survey that they would like to be involved in the program again next year.

Year 1 Outcome Results

Using data from the Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database, the analysis compared students in the CCRP group to those in the non-CCRP group. Data were collected for both the CCRP and non-CCRP groups at the end of the first (6 months) and second (12 month) semesters.

There was some attrition in both the CCRP and non-CCRP groups. Only CCRP youth who were in the program both the first and second semester were included in the analyses. Thus, for the *Infinite Campus* analysis, the CCRP group included 26 youth and the non-CCRP group included 28 youth. Specific data elements were not available in the database for every youth so some analyses are based on fewer youth.

Table 1 shows that the non-CCRP and CCRP groups were significantly different

Table 1. Characteristics of the Youth Included In *Infinite Campus* Analysis (2015/16 School Year)

Characteristic	CCRP	Control
Number	26	28
Average age*	16.4	15.5
Grade*		
7th	0%	4%
8th	0	18
9th	8	33
10th	35	14
11th	27	21
12th	31	11
Gender		
Male	46%	54%
Female	54	46
Race/Ethnicity		
Caucasian	58%	68%
African American	23	18
Hispanic	8	11
American Indian	4	0
Multi-racial, not Hispanic	8	4

* Statistically significant difference.

Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

in age, and grade, but not in gender or race/ethnicity. The CCRP group is older on average and in higher grades than the non-CCRP group.

To better understand if the first-year objectives have been met, they have been broken down into sub-objectives. The data collected will be presented for each corresponding sub-objective. It should also be noted that these results are only from the 1st year of this program and do not include any progress the students may have made between the end of the last semester and now.

Objective 1: Improve education outcomes for CCRP students compared with the non-CCRP group

Several educational outcome measures were developed for the evaluation to address the sub-objectives. The sub-objectives for Objective 1 (to be achieved by end of project) are:

- Increase aggregate GPA by 10% for youth in CCRP group.
- Increase aggregate test scores by 7% for youth in the CCRP group.
- Decrease the number of school-

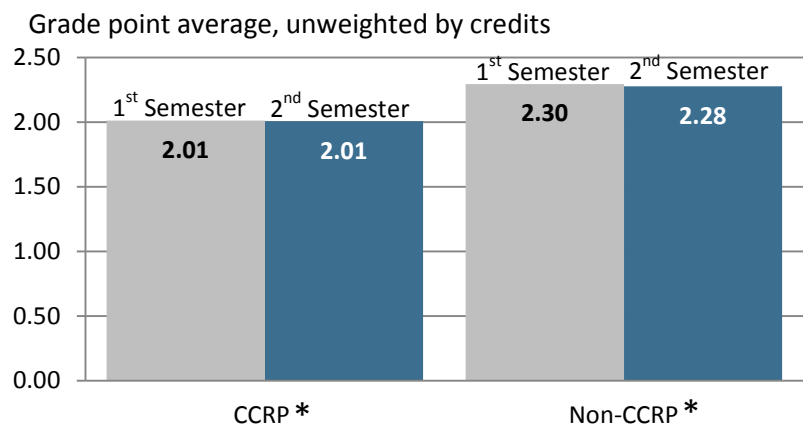
related disciplinary actions by 25% for youth in the CCRP group.

Grade point average. Grade point averages (unweighted GPAs) for both CCRP students and students in the non-CCRP group remained essentially unchanged across semesters. GPAs were significantly lower for the CCRP group than for the non-CCRP group (12% lower each semester). Nevertheless, it is also important to re-emphasize that these are preliminary findings and that GPA is not the only salient indicator of student school progress or success.

Aggregate test scores. The High School Proficiency testing processes being changed since the conceptualization of this evaluation and the information needed to determine if this objective has been met was unavailable. WCDSS is working with the school district to discern if aggregate test scores are available. If the data are available, they will be included in the Year 2 Evaluation report.

Other measures of school progress. Data were available in the *Infinite Campus* database on several other measures of students' school progress that although they

Figure 1: Year 1 Grade Point Average, by Semester (2015–2016 School Year)



- There was no significant change in GPAs from the first to the second semester for either group.

* Statistically significant difference between CCRP and non-CCRP groups both semesters.

Ns=First semester: CCRP=26, non-CCRP=26; Second semester: CCRP=26 non-CCRP=23

Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

do not address a specific objective are nevertheless informative.

Table 2, below, shows that the students in the CCRP group took more courses and attempted more credits than the non-CCRP group. This difference was statistically significant in the first semester and approached significance in second semester.

Table 2. Courses, Credits Attempted and Earned, by Semester (2015–2016 School Year)

Number of:	CCRP	Non-CCRP
1st Semester		
Courses taken*	7.0	6.0
(N)	(25)	(25)
Credits attempted*	3.3	3.0
(N)	(25)	(24)
Credits earned	2.5	2.2
(N)	(24)	(27)
2nd Semester		
Courses taken	6.6	6.0
(N)	(24)	(20)
Credits attempted	3.3	3.1
(N)	(24)	(19)
Credits earned	2.3	2.8
(N)	(26)	(27)

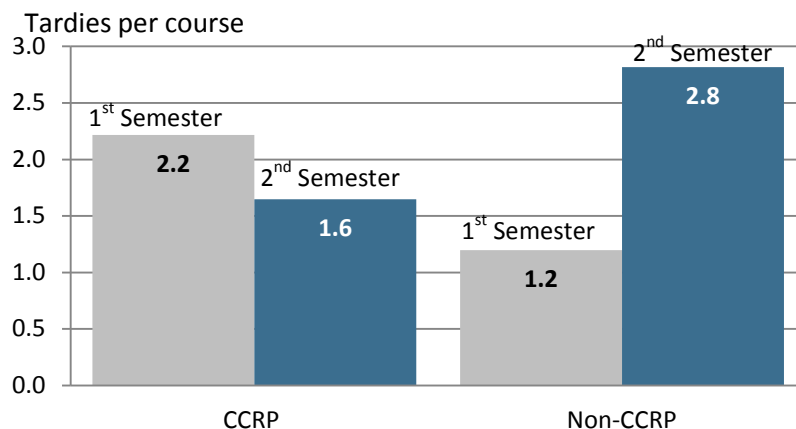
* Statistically significant difference.

Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

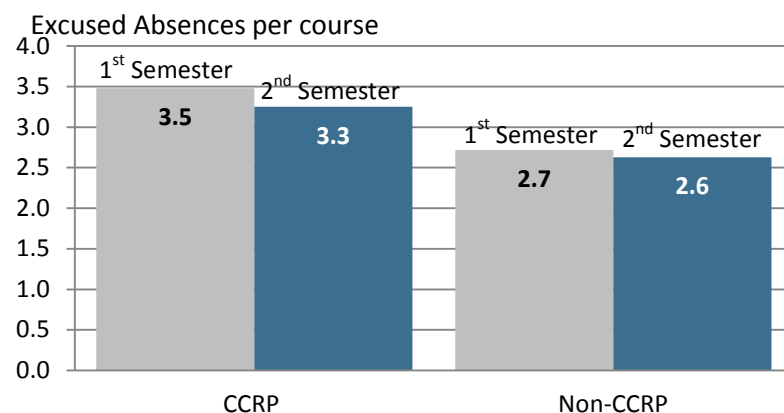
In the first semester, the CCRP group took more classes and attempted more credits on average than youth in the non-CCRP group. The CCRP students on average attempted one additional course than the non-CCRP group, which translated in to attempting more credits than the non-CCRP group.

Attendance. While there is no specific objective or activity that addresses this area, attendance is important to overall student performance. Absences become a disciplinary issue when a student has three or more absences within one school year without permission by the parent/guardian or school, so patterns in this area speak to the educational stability of the student. It should be noted that this is an area in which the student may

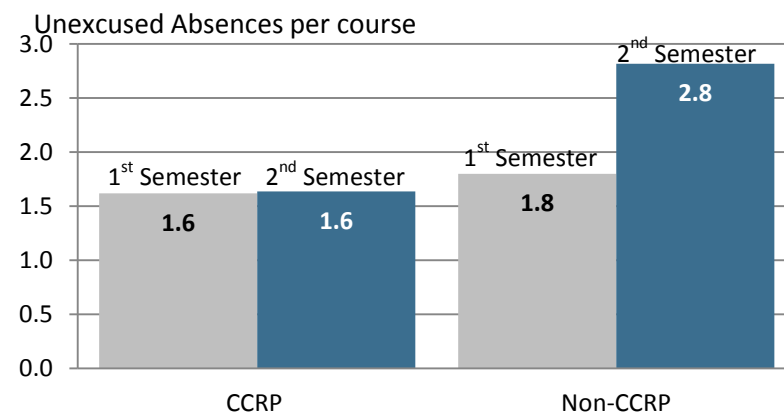
Figure 2. Average tardiness and attendance per course, by semester (2015–2016 School Year)



Ns=First semester: CCRP=24, non-CCRP=23; Second semester: CCRP=21 non-CCRP=18



Ns=First semester: CCRP=24, non-CCRP=23; Second semester: CCRP=20 non-CCRP=18



Ns=First semester: CCRP=23, non-CCRP=23; Second semester: CCRP=21 non-CCRP=18

- CCRP students had relatively small semester differences in attendance measures. In comparison, non-CCRP youth had better attendance in the first semester.

Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

not always have control, due to the unique dynamics affecting the lives of youth in foster care.

The school district's Infinite Campus database captures data course-by-course on "tardies" as well as excused and unexcused absences. Averages were calculated for each youth by summing occurrences within each measure and dividing by the number of courses in which the youth was enrolled. Group averages were then calculated for each semester.

Figure 2 shows that CCRP students showed a decline in class **tardiness** from the first to second semester (-26%). Non-CCRP youth, in contrast, increased 135% in average tardies per class. The averages are influenced by a few youth who were more often tardy. Both semesters, half of youth in both groups averaged one or fewer tardies.

Regarding **excused absences**, the CCRP group reduced their average from 3.5 to 3.3 (-7%). Half of CCRP youth averaged 2 or fewer excused absences. The non-CCRP group's average number of excused absences changed only slightly from 2.7 to 2.6. Half of non-CCRP averaged 3 or fewer excused absences.

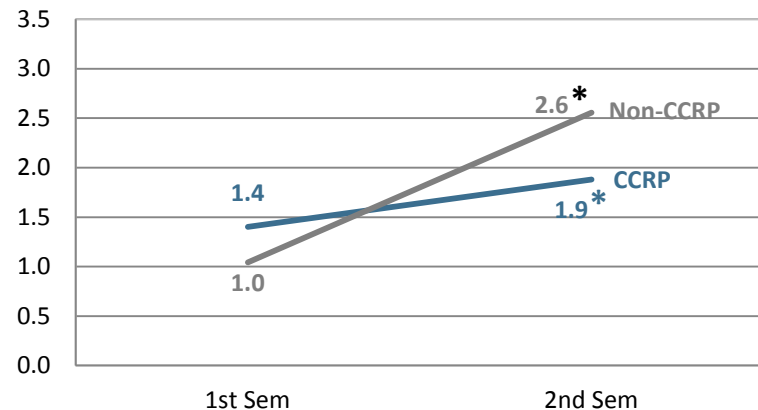
CCRP students averaged 1.6 **unexcused absences** in both semesters. Both semesters, half of CCRP youth averaged one or fewer unexcused absences. The non-CCRP group averaged more unexcused absences in the second semester (2.8) than in the first (1.8). In the first semester, half of non-CCRP youth averaged fewer than one unexcused absence. In the second semester half averaged one or fewer unexcused absences.

Disciplinary actions. Again, while there is no specific objective or activity that addresses this area, disciplinary actions are important to overall student performance. Figure 3 shows the average number of school-related disciplinary actions. These disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to, behavioral infractions, disrespect, truancy and suspensions/expulsions. As seen in Figure 4, the number of disciplinary actions was relatively low for both groups.

Although there were increases in the average number of disciplinary actions in both groups, the average number of disciplinary actions in the CCRP group increased less (34%) than in the non-CCRP group, which more than doubled (145%). The result being that in the first semester the CCRP group averaged 34% more disciplinary actions than the non-CCRP group, but by the second semester the average for the non-CCRP group was 36% greater than the CCRP group.

Figure 3: School-Related Disciplinary Actions, by Semester (2015–2016 School Year)

Average school-related disciplinary actions per semester



- In the first semester, the CCRP group averaged more school-related disciplinary actions than the non-CCRP group. By the second semester the reverse was true.

* Statistically significant difference between CCRP and non-CCRP groups in second semester.

Ns=First semester: CCRP=25, non-CCRP=24; Second semester: CCRP=25 non-CCRP=18

Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

Objective 2: Improve career and college readiness for CCRP students compared with the non-CCRP group

Several measures of college and career readiness were developed for the evaluation to address the sub-objectives. The sub-objectives for Objective 2 (to be achieved by end of project) are:

- a) Sixty-six percent (66%) of the CCRP group are on track for graduation.
- b) Forty percent (40%) of the CCRP group are accepted into post-secondary education or vocational training.

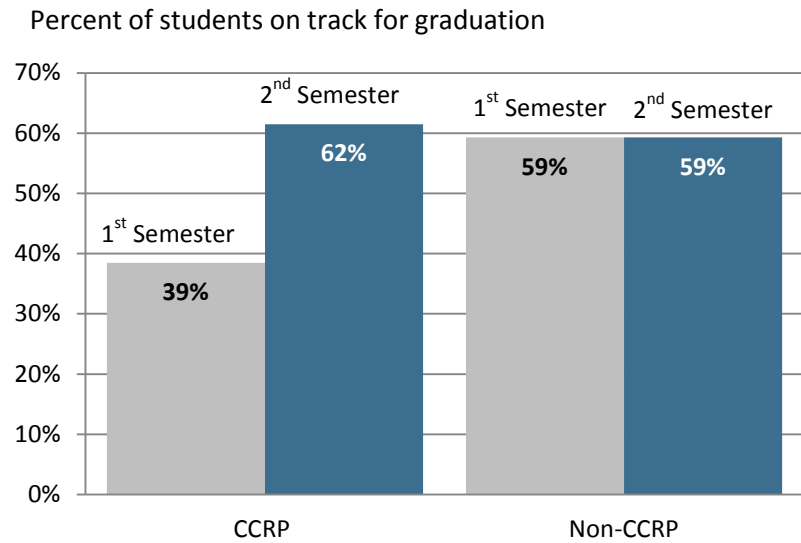
On track for graduation. For the purpose of objective 2a, “on track for graduation” was defined as a student having the sufficient number of credits by their junior year to graduate on time.

Figure 4, shows that the proportion of CCRP students on track to graduate (39%) was substantially below the proportion in the non-CCRP group (59%) at the end of the first semester. At the end of the second semester the share of CCRP student had jumped 60% bringing the CCRP proportion (62%) to a level slightly above that of the non-CCRP group (59%) which only increased 6%. This suggests that the CCRP program is helping move students in the right direction. **The program objective for 66% of youth “on track for graduation” is within reach—only 2 additional youth “on track” are needed.**

In addition to the data in Figure 4, various stakeholders including social workers, student Tutors and education advocates assigned to each CCRP participant were



Figure 4. Percentage of Students on Track for Graduation, by Semester (2015–2016 School Year)



- By the second semester the CCRP group exceeded the non-CCRP group in the proportion of students who were on track for graduation.

Ns=First semester: CCRP=26, non-CCRP=27; Second semester: CCRP=26 non-CCRP=27

Data source: Washoe County School District’s *Infinite Campus* database.

asked to share their perspectives on the program. One of these education champions stated that they “have seen consistent improvements” and that the students have said that they “feel valued as individuals.”

The perspectives from the stakeholders and the results shown in Figure 4 are important because they show that within the first year of the CCRP program, there is strong consensus surrounding the value and the positive impact of the CCRP.

Continued education or training. Of the 13 students who exited the program at the end of the first year of this evaluation, 5 graduated from high school, 3 of those were accepted and are attending college, and 2 work full-time. Nationally, just 1 in 5 foster youth who graduated from high school attended college (National Working Group on Foster Care and Education, 2014), so the 3 in 5 CCRP high school graduates continuing on to college figure is impressive, even though the

numbers are small. In addition, one CCRP youth has received a *HiSET*® high school equivalency diploma.

More information will be collected regarding the trajectory of the students in the year 2 evaluation.

Objective 3: Improve case outcomes for CCRP students compared with the non-CCRP group.

Several case outcome measures were developed for the evaluation to address the sub-objectives. The sub-objectives for Objective 3 (to be achieved by end of project) are:

- a) Decrease the number of education placements by 5% for youth in the CCRP group by the end of the project.
- b) Ninety-five percent (95%) of youth in the CCRP group have independent living plans in place by the end of the project.

School stability. The *Infinite Campus* database includes information on students' number of prior high school enrollments and whether students had changed schools during the school year.

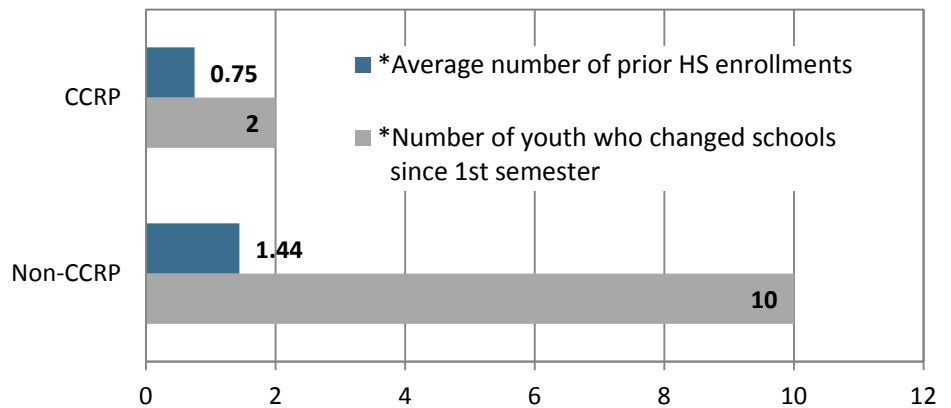
CCRP students had fewer average prior high school enrollments than non-CCRP students. Only 2 of CCRP students changed schools since the first semester compared to 10 of the non-CCRP group. Both of these differences were statistically significant.

Independent living. Washoe County Department of Social Services ensures that all youth in foster care between the ages of 14 and 18 are given a Casey Life Skills Assessment annually. Independent Living plans are created as part of the assessment and are updated every 6 months. The first-year evaluation confirmed that 100% of the students in the CCRP program have independent living plans.

In addition to independent living plans, the youth survey gathered information from the students' perspectives on how prepared they thought they were for life after high school. Items included were:

- I know where I am going to live after graduation
- I plan to work after graduation
- I already have a job when I graduate
- I know how to get a job in the future

Figure 5. Prior High School Enrollments and Changed Schools Since First Semester (2015–2016 School Year)



- Compared with non-CCRP youth, CCRP youth had a significantly lower average prior number of high school enrollments and significantly fewer CCRP youth had changed schools since the first semester.

* Statistically significant difference between CCRP and non-CCRP groups in second semester.

Ns=First semester: CCRP=26, non-CCRP=27; Second semester: CCRP=26 non-CCRP=27

Data source: Washoe County School District's *Infinite Campus* database.

These questions were really only applicable to the older students (juniors or seniors). Of the 17 students who responded to the youth survey in the second semester, 12 were junior or seniors. Of those 12 5 students responded to these questions (including 4 of the youth who graduated). While the small number of survey responses were generally positive indicating that students knew where they were going to live after graduation, planned to work after graduation and knew how to

get a job in the future, although they didn't necessarily have a job lined up following graduation. More data collected in the year 2 evaluation, would allow for expanded analysis.



Study Limitations

The study was designed to use a multi-method approach to examine satisfaction with and effectiveness of the CCRP. Several challenges and limitations were identified in year one of the assessment.

There were some challenges in selecting youth to participate. The evaluation team strongly encouraged a random assignment to the study condition, identifying all at risk youth and then randomly placing them in CCRP or control. It was unclear to researchers if this occurred or not. The groups were dissimilar in age and grade, although fairly similar in other characteristics. A second challenge with the sample was attrition. Several youth were selected to participate in the study and chose not to, requiring that other students be identified to participate. The number of youth in the program was already fairly small (30); after attrition the number participating in both first and second semesters was just 26 youth which created even more challenges to meaningful statistical comparisons.

In addition to concerns with sample selection and attrition, the evaluation was further limited by a low response rate. Despite emails and follow-up emails to youth and stakeholders, the response rate was very low. For youth, approximately 50% completed the survey. It would be helpful to better understand why the other youth did not complete the survey. With only half, it is possible that responses were only by the youth who felt the program was valuable. Low response rate makes it challenging. In the future it would be helpful to find ways to improve response rate.

A final limitation of the study was the timeliness of data. Response rates were low and often surveys had to be kept open in efforts to ensure that an adequate number of persons responded to yield findings of relevance. This delayed

analysis of data. In addition, the list of students in the non-CCRP group was provided later than expected, and analyses could not be conducted until data were extracted from Infinite campus and put in a usable format for analysis.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The data collected from the first year evaluation of the College and Career Readiness Program provide insight into the effectiveness and various perceptions of the program. Recommendations and next steps for the second year evaluation and for program improvement (where applicable) are identified and discussed. Steps are already being taken in Year 2 of the study, to improve survey response rates, including strategies such as, providing additional reminders as well as incentives for responding. Having Tutors and Educational Advocates encourage youth to respond to the youth survey and reinforce to them that there are no “right” answers and that their responses are confidential may also improve the youth response rate.

Program Recommendations

At this stage of piloting the College and Career Readiness Program it is not necessary to make substantial changes. The findings show signs of progress in students’ school performance. The program would benefit, however, from additional training opportunities for Educational Advocates and Tutors. This could include:

- More comprehensive and streamlined information that provides additional examples to apply the information received;
- Ongoing training opportunities to assure Tutors and Educational Advocates feel comfortable in applying training materials;
- In-person opportunities to be able to role-play for difficult situations and

practice specific techniques to working with foster youth.

- To engage future Tutors more in the training, it might be possible to have experienced Tutors assist in providing the training, especially if a role-play component is added.

Other relatively simple additions would help with consistency, collaboration, and youth and family engagement:

- Development of a formal training and program packet so everyone knows what the program is and what is to be expected from them;
- Development and dissemination of an introduction/orientation for students who are involved so that they better understand the program.
- Encourage more collaboration so that professionals aren’t working in silos.
- Establish protocols to collaborate and work cohesively as a team unit with others.
- Continue regular and consistent meetings with Tutors and Educational Advocates.
- Work with all stakeholders to identify barriers to scheduling time with youth and strategize ways to improve this.
- Create more opportunities for youth and parents to provide feedback to the program to increase engagement.
- Identify ways to increase communication between parents, youth, and stakeholders.

One final program recommendation would be to explore implementing **Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)** strategies. PBIS is a national initiative to define, develop, implement, and evaluate a multi-tiered approach to Technical Assistance that improves the capacity of states, districts and schools to establish, scale-up and sustain the PBIS framework. Emphasis is given to the impact of implementing PBIS on the social, emotional and academic outcomes for students with disabilities. Although foster

youth do not necessarily have disabilities, applying PBIS strategies may be effective to reduce disciplinary infractions. There was some indication on the PBIS website that PBIS may already be in some schools in Washoe County, if so it could be very beneficial for the CCRP program connect with PBIS in a more formal way.

Process Recommendations

Based on the results from the process evaluation, overall the participants and the stakeholders find the CCRP to be valuable, with more than half the students saying they would like to continue being involved in the CCRP the next year.

One recommendation is to determine if the frequency and duration of student and Educational Advocate & Tutor meetings are satisfactory to all parties. The data collected demonstrated that meetings with the Tutors decreased from meeting at least once a week to at least once every other week. The second year evaluation should aim to determine why a decrease in tutoring sessions was seen. Similarly, the decrease in meetings with Educational Advocates (from majority of students meeting biweekly to once a month) should also be analyzed in the second year evaluation. It will be important to explore these areas in the next evaluation as there are several potential reasons for the change (students getting more confident, naturally occurring change due to time in the school year, etc.) and identifying those reasons will allow for more precise improvements to the program.

The purpose of the CCRP to help students prepare for future after high school be it college and/or career. This aspect of questions has already been added to the second year evaluation. For example, asking students if they have applied to college or what career they would like post-high school, and asking students if Educational Advocates and Tutors are

helping to reach these aspirations. Questions have also been added for year 2 to explore how Educational Advocates, Tutors, Foster Parents, Counsellors, and Social Workers encourage the students to think about continuing education past high school.

Student Outcome Recommendations

The primary objectives of the CCRP, in relation to the students, is to improve education outcomes, improve college and career readiness, and to improve case outcomes (education placements, independent living plans) for students involved in the program.

A recommendation for the second year evaluation of the CCRP would be analyze the data collected to determine if there is any correlation between students' attendance, behaviors, and their college and career readiness. This additional step in the analysis would allow us to pinpoint any specific causes for the students' not being on track for graduation and for better recommendations to improve student outcomes.

Next Steps

There are several "next steps" for Year 2 of the evaluation.

- Involve the Tutors and Educational Advocates in process related matters to help design how the program will be implemented. This will increase buy-in and help identify where they see barriers and opportunities to enhance the project.
- Identify opportunities for incentives for stakeholders and youth to increase response rates.
- Increase communication and timeliness of data to ensure up-to-date and timely reports.
- Increase the amount of communication with team to ensure on schedule and completing milestones.
- Re-examine project goals to ensure all needed data is being collected to

fully examine project's anticipated success.

- Year 2 analyses will explore how individual students have changed from one semester to the next over the school year. Understanding the pattern of individual trends will provide information critical to identifying program improvements that might be made. Special attention will be paid to students who remain in the program for two or more semesters.

Conclusion

While the program may not have reached all of the preliminary goals and objectives yet, there are important signs of the progress the program has made. The CCRP has been well received by students and stakeholders alike. Several outcome measures showed school progress for CCRP students even if only a few of these measures showed statistical significance. Perhaps the most positive finding is the improvement in "on track" for graduation. With two additional students moving into the "on track" category, the program will have reached one of its most important objectives.

In addition to the data already collected, the data from the second year of the evaluation will be helpful in further analyzing and determining to what extent and how the CCRP has had an impact on foster youths' school performance and college and career readiness.

Following Year 2 of the evaluation, WCDSS will be faced with at least three options. If for some reason, additional data show that the CCRP program has no impact on students' college and career readiness, or worse, a negative impact, WCDSS will need to discontinue or substantially modify the program.

If at the end of Year 2, CCRP students continue to show some improvement in their college and career readiness, one option would be to seek funding to continue the program or even increase its

capacity to support all the high school-aged youth in foster care.

Another option would be to conduct a more robust evaluation with a randomized control design. This would involve identifying a pool of youth that meet the program eligibility criteria and assigning them to either the CCRP or non-CCRP comparison group randomly. Only with such random assignment can observed changes in school performance and college and career readiness be attributable to the program and not to preexisting differences between the CCRP and non-CCRP groups.

It is often the case when evaluating real-life programs in the social sciences that program administrators are hesitant to assign youth to what is perceived as a beneficial program in a random way, essentially denying some youth of a needed service. In medicine, however, we would never consider subjecting our children with a treatment that hadn't been proven effective through random controlled trial. There are technical strategies to allow "control group subjects" to receive the treatment group if after a period of study the treatment appears to be effective.

For example, after some period of time, two years perhaps, non-CCRP group students could be "discontinued" for study purposes and added to the CCRP group, not for the study, but to receive the benefits of the program.

Conducting a randomized evaluation would also involve some cost, but would be well worth considering prior to expanding the program statewide.

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Appendix 12

State of Nevada MSC-TTA Work Plan



WORK PLAN FOR CSEC COALITION

Jurisdiction's Project Goal:

1. To mobilize all available resources in Nevada to stop commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth (CSEC), aid its victims with a trauma-informed and victim-centered approach and bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice.
2. To identify and utilize all resources that supports the Nevada Executive Order establishing the Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC).
3. Increase the capacity of the State and its partners to develop, implement, and evaluate efficient processes for children and youth who are victims or at risk of becoming victims and their families' navigation of complex and intersected systems.
4. Maintain sustained engagement with stakeholders, particularly with youth, victims and survivors across the state given Nevada's unique geographic expansiveness.

Participating Agencies and Organizations:

Various agencies and organization involved including statewide and multi-disciplinary representation of child/youth-serving agencies. This includes child welfare, juvenile justice, community based service providers, education, law enforcement and a vast array of others.

Objectives/Intended Outcomes:

1. Create a coordinated and collaborative planning effort to include the CSEC Coalition and working Subcommittees.
2. Identifying a model coordinated response protocol that is grounded in best practices and aids in identifying CSEC and those at risk of CSEC, in treating them as crime victims rather than criminals, and in providing these children the services they need.
3. The model protocol may be adapted to meet regional or local needs.
4. Coalition to receive and respond to recommendations from Subcommittees, including practice, policy and/or legislative changes that would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services.

Action Steps:

Action 1. Build the capacity of the Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Coalition to effectively address CSEC needs statewide and across multiple systems.

Steps	Responsible Parties	Target date	Resources	Measurement of Success
1A. Select decision-making model	Coalition members	Jan 2017	Survey of members	Approval of model
1B. Approve procedural bylaws.	Coalition members	Jan 2017	Draft bylaws Survey of Coalition members	Approval of bylaws
1C. Identify and engage at-risk youth, and CSEC youth and adult survivors as consultants. Youth & family engagement	Subcommittees Coalition members	Apr 2017	TBD: Family & Youth Liaison Survey of at-risk youth & survivors	At-risk youth, victims & survivors feel their voice is respected and heard
1D. Approve guiding principles for the work of the Coalition and partner agencies.	Subcommittees Coalition members	Apr 2017	Research of other jurisdictions Survey of Subcommittee & Coalition members	Approval of guiding principles

Action 2. Improve capacity to identify CSEC survivors and improve safety/services for them and their families by developing a model coordinated response protocol that is grounded in best practice and can be adapted to regional needs.

Steps	Responsible Parties	Target date	Resources	Measurement of Success
2A. Review model coordinated response protocols developed by other jurisdictions.	SMBC Subcommittees Coalition members	Apr 2017	Research of other jurisdictions Mapping of current regional service provision in NV Regional gaps analyses	Recommendation developed for a statewide model coordinated response protocol that addresses NV's needs
2B. Select a statewide model coordinated response protocol.	Coalition members	Jul 2017	Brief of recommendation Presentation of recommendation	Statewide model coordinated response protocol approved
2C. Develop regional task forces to adapt and implement the model coordinated response protocol.	SMBC Coalition members	Oct 2017	Recommendations of regional partners	Regional task force partners meet
2D. Develop regional multidisciplinary response protocols adapted to each community's needs.	SMBC Coalition Regional partners	Aug 2018	MOUs outlining roles & responsibilities of regional partners	MOUs approved by regional partners

Action 3. Develop a comprehensive Statewide Strategic Plan that addresses the provision of coordinated services for CSEC children and youth, and includes recommendations on how to address the Sex Trafficking Provisions of Public Law 113-183.*

* From the Nevada Governor's Executive Order #2016-14.

Steps	Responsible Parties	Target date	Resources	Measurement of Success
3A. Align efforts by promoting strategic and coordinated services for victims at state, county, local and tribal levels.*	Coalition members Subcommittee members	Oct 2017	Regional gaps analyses	Statewide model coordinated response protocol approved Strategic plan submitted to NV Governor, Chief Justice & Attorney General per Executive Order
3B. Improve understanding by expanding and coordinating child sex trafficking-related research, data, and evaluations to support evidence-based victim services.*	Coalition members Subcommittee members	Oct 2017	Data Subcommittee Charter Research of other jurisdictions Research of current data gathering practices Subcommittee & Coordinating Committee recommendations	A Central Repository is developed to capture prevalence and service data Strategic plan submitted to NV Governor, Chief Justice & Attorney General per Executive Order

<p>3C. Expand access to services by providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to increase victim identification and expand the availability of services.*</p>	<p>Coalition members Subcommittee members</p>	<p>Oct 2017</p>	<p>All Subcommittee Charters Research of other jurisdictions Identification of current services Subcommittee & Coordinating Committee recommendations</p>	<p>Training provided to partners and service providers Resource Directory of CSEC service providers developed Strategic plan submitted to NV Governor, Chief Justice & Attorney General per Executive Order</p>
<p>3D. Improve outcomes by promoting effective, culturally-appropriate, trauma-informed services that improve the short- and long-term health, safety and well-being of child victims.*</p>	<p>Coalition members Subcommittee members</p>	<p>Oct 2017</p>	<p>Engage/Identify & Care Coordination Subcommittee Charters Research of other jurisdictions Research of resources Subcommittee & Coordinating Committee recommendations</p>	<p>Training provided to partners and service providers Strategic plan submitted to NV Governor, Chief Justice & Attorney General per Executive Order</p>

<p>3E. Develop public awareness campaigns to better inform communities across Nevada about the commercial sexual exploitation of children.*</p>	<p>Coalition members Subcommittee members</p>	<p>Oct 2017</p>	<p>Prevention Subcommittee Charter Research of other jurisdictions Identification of resources Subcommittee & Coordinating Committee recommendations</p>	<p>National Hotline # posted in high-traffic sites Strategic plan submitted to NV Governor, Chief Justice & Attorney General per Executive Order</p>
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MSC Topics and Principles:

MSC Topics and Principles	Key Questions to Answer	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Relevant Steps	Challenges and Opportunities
<p>Leadership</p>	<p><i>Who will lead your team's efforts at various points?</i></p> <p><i>How will your team engage other system leaders in this process?</i></p>	<p>on-going</p>	<p>CSEC Coalition members (appointed per Governor's Executive Order)- statewide and multi-disciplinary representation</p> <p>Coordinating Committee members</p> <p>CSEC subcommittees co-chairs and members-(statewide and multidisciplinary representation)</p> <p>Community and business leaders/advocates</p>	<p>Convene quarterly CSEC Coalition meetings to receive recommendations, and discuss improvement strategies</p> <p>Standardize subcommittee charters and agreements of all parties to align efforts across all subcommittees</p> <p>Coordinate across all subcommittees to ensure alignment and reduce duplication of efforts</p> <p>Convene regular and frequent subcommittee meetings to meet the mission, goals and objectives for improving services to CSEC and to prepare recommendations for the Coalition.</p> <p>The work of the Coalition and subcommittees falls under the Open Meeting Laws of Nevada therefore affording opportunities for the public to be involved.</p>	<p>O-statewide and multi-disciplinary representation on Coalition supported by Executive Order</p> <p>C-Regional differences in a large state</p> <p>O-Large scale shift in service paradigm for victims of CSEC.</p> <p>C-Aligning mission, vision and strategies across various disciplines i.e. child welfare, juvenile justice, youth parole etc.</p>

<p>Youth and Family Engagement</p>	<p><i>How will you engage youth and families in your current work?</i></p>	<p>on-going</p>	<p>CSEC Coalition and its subcommittees</p> <p>Survivor of sex trafficking appointed to CSEC Coalition</p> <p>MSC-TTA Nevada team</p> <p>Youth, victims, survivors and their families</p>	<p>Coalition members to identify ways to involve youth, victims, survivors and their families in a meaningful way</p> <p>Youth, victims, survivors and family members of survivors will be included in subcommittee activities</p> <p>TTA will be requested and received by those that work well with engaging youth and families</p> <p>Align as possible with other youth engaging activities to include the NV System of Care grant.</p> <p>Explore (or Create) funding and a position for a Family & Youth Liaison to support engagement</p>	<p>O-Engaging victims, youth and family members in a genuine manner that ensures the program improvements will have intended outcomes</p> <p>C-Engaging victims and survivors in a way that does not create/perpetuate a negative stigma</p> <p>O-Learning from other jurisdictions of ways to engage youth/survivors in a positive and meaningful manner</p> <p>C-Engaging and keeping youth involved</p>
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Information Sharing	<i>What particular actions can you take to strengthen your information/data sharing capabilities?</i>	on-going	CSEC Coalition, Coordinating Committee, Co-chairs and Subcommittee members Data subcommittee Coalition partner agencies	CSEC Coalition to provide leadership on current information and data sharing capabilities and receive recommendations from subcommittees on how to strengthen. Data subcommittee to review data mapping and other resources available. Develop any required MOU's for information sharing for youth serving agencies and providers statewide that support the Model Response Protocol developed	O- to maximize information collected on youth, specifically CSEC youth in a manner that informs practice and needs of victims. C-Multiple systems that use different data systems with limited capability to merge data
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Developing a Program Evaluation Strategy:

Key Evaluation Questions	Information Needed	Data Collection	Administrative Schedule
<p>How do we demonstrate prevalence, service provision and service outcomes?</p>	<p>Probation booking and probation status</p> <p>CPS Intake calls (screened in/out)</p> <p>Calls and reports to National Hotline/Law Enforcement</p> <p>Service provided</p> <p>Permanency goal/outcome</p>	<p>Protocol for data-sharing</p> <p>Data tracking form</p> <p>Central Repository for data collection/tracking</p>	<p>Data collected/submitted quarterly to Central Repository by CSEC Coalition partner</p>
<p>Have we provided a coordinated response?</p>	<p>MOU describing coordinated response agreements</p> <p>Applicable policies of partner agencies</p> <p>Intake data</p> <p>MDT response</p> <p>Youth feedback</p> <p>Partner/service provider feedback</p>	<p>Policy manuals of partner agencies</p> <p>Data tracking form</p> <p>MDT schedule/minutes</p> <p>Surveys</p> <p>Central Repository</p>	<p>Data collected/submitted to Central Repository quarterly by CSEC Coalition partner, with surveys distributed semi-annually</p>

<p>Have we increased services that are trauma-informed and victim-centered?</p>	<p>List of CSEC service providers</p> <p>Quantitative/qualitative capacity of service providers</p> <p>Follow-up on case plan referrals</p> <p>Funding streams</p>	<p>Surveys of service providers</p> <p>Case plan referrals/dispositions</p> <p>Agency/service provider budgets</p>	<p>List of service providers updated annually by Care Coordination Subcommittee</p> <p>Annual review of service referral/capacity/quality/funding by Data Subcommittee</p>
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Appendix 13



Nevada Court Improvement Achievements

State of Nevada



Court Improvement Program Achievements

The Impact of Losing Court Improvement Program Data and Training Grants

Without the federal resources provided to me through state-distributed CIP funds, I will literally be left alone, to my own devices, to evaluate my work, to discover and draw upon assistance from experts elsewhere, without a forum in which to learn and expand my practice. State trial judges live and breathe on the front lines of the battles over the lives of children and families. Federal CIP funding helps, daily, save the lives of children in foster care. Losing it will magnify the tragedies I am witness to daily—Judge Egan Walker, 2nd Judicial District (Reno, NV)

Court Improvement Program (CIP) Efforts Focus On:

- ◆ Improving court handling of foster care cases
- ◆ Emphasizing and supporting children's rights to protection from abuse and neglect
- ◆ Avoiding unnecessary separation of children from their families
- ◆ Furthering timely permanency for children who have come into the court's jurisdiction due to abuse or neglect
- ◆ Seeking to protect the due process rights of all parties; the families' as well the children's
- ◆ Cultivating judicial leadership to ensure that courts provide efficient and timely justice to children and families

(Ref: Chief Justice Cherry's Letter)

Nevada Uses Its CIP Funds To:

Pilot such best practices as statewide dependency mediation, thereby improving the dependency court processes *(Ref: Judge Young's Letter)*.

Educate the judiciary, legal and child welfare communities, and other stakeholders by hosting annual conferences and on-line training.

Advance meaningful and ongoing collaboration within and among the courts and agencies serving neglected and abused children.

Develop data exchanges with dashboard capabilities to ensure appropriate and timely hearing notification, and improve timely permanent and safe placement of children.

Encourage local input and comprehensive systemic reform through the Community Improvement Councils (CICs).

Validate practice through research.

Impact of CIP Funds in the State of Nevada:

100% of state judicial districts have active Community Improvement Councils (CICs) created at the request and with the support of CIP to systemically improve court processing of abuse and neglect cases by implementing evidence-based, best practices, and continually assessing and improving their execution.

100% of CICs participate in the annual CIC Summits and develop annual data-driven action plans to improve the processing of child neglect and abuse cases *(Ref: Judge Walker's Letter)*.

CIC focus on improving time to permanent home placement decreased time to permanency by 22% or 182 days, time to adoption by 23% or 8 months, time to termination of parental rights by 20% or 146 days since 2011.

32% of the exits to adoption are taking place in less than 24 months as compared to only 14.6% in 2010. The national median is 26.8%.

CIC focus on timeliness of case processing increased the proportion of permanency hearings held within 12 months from 67% in CY 2012 to 82% in CY 2016.

73% of juvenile dependency mediations reach agreement statewide.

88% of successfully mediated cases result in reunification compared to 50% of non-mediated cases.

72% of fathers who participated in mediation became engaged in their cases compared to 50% of non-mediated cases.

CIP collaboration advanced the Governor's Coalition to Prevent Commercial Exploitation of Children.

CASA programs in 7 judicial districts started with CIP assistance.

On-line dependency training for attorneys and stakeholders involved with neglect and abuse cases launched.

Data sharing among the courts, child welfare agencies, school districts, and juvenile justice initiated to ensure that children are not out of a permanent, loving home one minute longer than necessary to make them safe.

Community Improvement Councils

District Courts and community partners identify barriers and solutions founded in best practices to improve timeliness to permanency, safety, and well-being of children in neglect and abuse cases. *(Ref: 5th Judicial District CIC's Letter)*



SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
STATE OF NEVADA
WASHOE COUNTY

EGAN WALKER
DISTRICT JUDGE
DEPARTMENT TWO
FAMILY DIVISION

February 3, 2017

PHYSICAL: ONE SOUTH SIERRA
MAILING: 75 COURT STREET
RENO, NEVADA 89501
(775) 328-3179
FAX: (775) 328-3565

Justice Nancy Saitta
Nevada Supreme Court
201 S. Carson St., Suite 250
Carson City, NV 89701-4702

Re: CIP funding for the State of Nevada

Your Honor,

I write to emphasize several points which I know you already understand deeply, but with the hope that you can add my voice to a chorus of voices decrying the need for continued CIP funds to all states, and especially to Nevada.

I cannot overstate the benefits children in Washoe County who are in foster care receive through CIP funding. Among them are:

1. Independent, third party data collection, collation, and feedback on timely, (or not), permanency outcomes for children

Through the Administrative Office of the Courts, each Community Improvement Council ("CIC") in Nevada reports on foster care permanency timelines, consistent with the requirements of the Federal Children's Bureau. Data is collected and reported on time to disposition, timeliness to first review, timeliness of annual permanency hearings, and ultimately the elapsed time to reunification or aging out of foster care for children. Katherine Malzahn-Bass then collates, synthesizes and recapitulates that data, in a usable form, to each CIC at an annual conference. The information is publicly displayed, and publicly discussed. The forum is collegial and collaborative, but make no mistake it is transparent and painfully public, at least among system stakeholders.

Judges, DAs, PDs, social workers and others from around the state are confronted with data about how often and how well they conduct hearings to ensure the welfare of children in the foster care system. It is an atmosphere of gentle chiding, competition and critical evaluation; it is invigorating and motivating. We are all forced to critically evaluate whether or not we conduct regular hearings in order to appropriately address the needs of abused and neglected children, while meeting the permanency guidelines of the Adoption and Safe Families Act ("ASFA") and relevant state statutes. Experts then train us all on how to improve areas of weakness.

I can assure you the process is humbling and unnerving but incredibly necessary. Without such feedback and training, I am left as a Judge to base my practice on the caprice of my own sense of success, my own anecdotal recollections, and my own sense of self-worth, all while accountable to no one for the outcomes of the children I serve. With such feedback I am confronted by the reality of the strengths and weaknesses of the processes I use, as they are reflected in the lives of children. When we as a team can celebrate, and we can at times, the successes are revealed in the data we get at these meetings, and the celebration is warranted because improvements in the lives of children are written in the data – not by the self-serving vagaries of our own reports.

This service alone is worth many times more to the children who suffer in the child dependency system in Nevada than the entire CIP allotment to the State for use throughout the year.

2. A resource for research to validate practice

Katherine Malzahn-Bass, in collaboration with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, proposed a study, gathered data, aided in the collection and evaluation of that data, and helped produce reporting which validated the efficacy of mediation in the child welfare system in Washoe County. That research demonstrated that more families reunify with their children after mediation than in cases which are not mediated, and fathers who participate in mediation engage more frequently in reunification with their children.

The research may well be a first in the nation. Whether it is or not, children I serve would not have the benefit of what is now an “evidence based” practice without Ms. Malzahn-Bass and the funds that bring her to me through CIP. Funding and resources for mediation through the AOC, which are of course derived from CIP funds at least in part, have paid an exponential benefit in the lives of children whose parents have mediated about the foster care of their children.

What is the value of one less day in foster care for a child? Must it not exceed many thousands of dollars, and many tears of heartbreak in our communities?

3. A “friend” and an oasis in the wilderness

I was a criminal prosecutor for ten years in Nevada. I prosecuted 50 felony jury trials, ten of which were first degree murder trials. I achieved a multi-million dollar tort verdict for a client in a wrongful death case during ten subsequent years of civil litigation in private practice.

None of that is remarkable except to say that I’ve been around the legal system. None of that experience, none of it, prepared me for the nature, extent and complexity of the challenges I now face daily in a dependency court in a metropolitan area. There are more than 900 children in the legal custody of social services in my judicial district. CIP funding which provides training to me and to my team about the needs of those children helps us to help them, daily.

Without the federal resources provided to me through state-distributed CIP funds, I will literally be left alone, to my own devices, to evaluate my work, to discover and draw upon assistance from experts elsewhere, without a forum in which to learn and expand my practice. State trial judges live and breathe on the front lines of the battles over the lives of children and families. We have got to have the tools which only education can provide to help children survive that battle. Neither county nor state legislatures understand the battle, nor do they have the kind of information necessary to motivate funding to address that battle.

Federal CIP funding helps, daily, save the lives of children in foster care. Losing it will magnify the tragedies I am witness to daily.

I stand ready to answer any questions and offer any additional information you may need.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Egan Walker". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "E" and a long horizontal stroke.

Egan Walker
District Judge

cc: Katherine Malzhan-Bass

SUPREME COURT OF NEVADA

MICHAEL A. CHERRY, CHIEF JUSTICE

201 SOUTH CARSON STREET

CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701-4702

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February 3, 2017

Justice Nancy Saitta, Ret.
Nevada Supreme Court
201 S. Carson St., Suite 250
Carson City, NV 89701-4702

Reauthorization of Court Improvement Program Funding

Dear Justice Saitta:

Since 1995, the Nevada Supreme Court has applied for and received all three Court Improvement Program (CIP) grants to improve the processing of child abuse and neglect cases through our state district courts. Please be aware of the wise investment the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has made in neglect and abuse court systems throughout the country. With a mere \$400,000 in federal grants, CIP in Nevada supports children's rights to protection from abuse and neglect. It manages this altruistic goal by developing and implementing data-driven, evidence-based, and outcome-focused best practices to advance meaningful and ongoing collaboration among court, child welfare agency, and other stakeholders to ensure the safety and well-being of our vulnerable children in a fair and timely manner.

Nevada's CIP has undertaken a broad-based, comprehensive systemic reform by collaborating with our three child welfare agencies (Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, and Washoe and Clark Counties) and every dependency court in the State to resolve barriers to moving children into permanent home environments per state and federal mandates, to accurately assessing child safety, and to due process of law. As a result of its focus on educating the judiciary, legal, and child welfare communities, CIP:

- conducts training on such topics as Child Safety Decision Making, Ensuring Quality Hearings and Legal Representation, Implementation of the Enhanced Resource Guidelines and the new Indian Child Welfare Act Guidelines ;
- developed attorney certification training to ensure high quality legal representation for both the parents and the children; and
- distributes quarterly newsletters to all judicial districts and their Community Improvement Councils;

To ensure that the dependency courts have available to them outcome-focused programs

- CIP launched a Statewide Dependency Mediation Program, allowing families to resolve serious issues in a meaningful way and saving value court resources; and

- it has funded CASA program start-ups across the state, the Children's Attorney Project and a pro bono recruitment and training program in Clark County which is being shared across the state.

Nevada CIP safeguards that the State and its courts comply with federal mandates by:

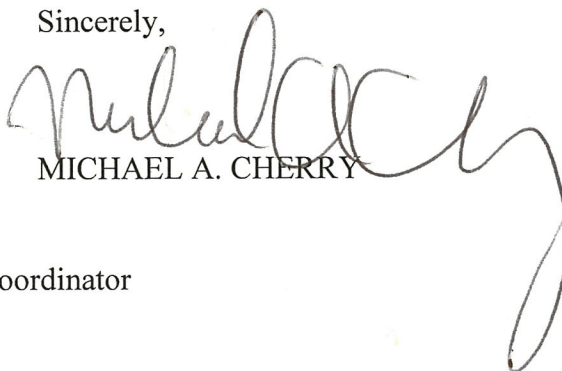
- creating court order templates worded precisely to ensure that neglected and abused children receive the Title IV-E funding due them;
- chairing a Statewide Educational Collaborative to assist and guide the implementation of Fostering Connections and Every Student Succeeds Acts; and
- guiding the development of the Coalition to Prevent Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

Nevada CIP helps the courts continually improve their efforts on behalf of children by:

- distributing court timeliness data to the courts to help them ascertain where improvements have been made and where more work is needed;
- developing a data warehouse with dashboard capabilities to help the judges better manage their caseloads;
- creating an automated court event notification process to ensure that all parties to a case are properly notified of hearings;
- conducting court observations, trauma audits, and program evaluations to confirm that practices and programs are being appropriately implemented and offer recommendations for improvement; and
- assisting court's Community Improvement Councils' development and implementation of annual action plans designed to continually apply strategies delivering the best outcomes for children and families.

These funds are vital to ensuring that Nevada assesses and improves court processes related to child abuse and neglect, and increases the safety and well-being in permanent, loving homes for all our State's children.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL A. CHERRY

MAC/jl

cc: Katherine R. Malzahn-Bass, Coordinator
Court Improvement Program



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February 2, 2017

Justice Nancy M. Saitta
Administrative Office of the Courts
Supreme Court of Nevada
201 S Carson Street, Suite 250
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Justice Saitta,

As members of the Fifth Judicial District Community Improvement Council, we would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the expertise and resources that Nevada's Court Improvement Program provides in supporting Nevada's children's right to protection from abuse and neglect.

This program has not only benefited the relationship between DCFS, DAG, DA, CASA and the Court, it has also significantly improved the hearing process as it pertains to families in the expediency of the legal process. The training and education that the program provides is vital to the continued growth and development of the relationship of all parties noted above. When we improve, Nevada's children and families benefit.

CIC in Nye County meets on a monthly basis. Issues and concerns that effect the court hearing process are addressed during these meetings as well as the sharing of new information. The direction and education during these meetings is invaluable and has had a direct result on the improvement of the legal process of our 432B hearings. These meetings, as well as participation in this program, has afforded an opportunity to develop and improve in such areas as:

- Court hearing process
- Comfortability of children who must attend Court
- Warrant procedure
- Communication between agencies and the Court
- Better understanding the roles of all parties involved (DAG, DA, CASA).
- The timely assigning of CASAs to child welfare cases
- Protection of the rights of children and parents
- Addressing and improving action plan hearing quality and strategies

The statewide mediation program and its funding have been an integral part of our judicial program. It has expedited the hearing process, diminishing the amount of time in court, so children are returned home.

The Annual Summit and other yearly meetings offer an opportunity to learn, coordinate, brainstorm, and network between other judicial districts learning from their successes as well as challenges. These collaborative efforts have greatly increased the quality of the processing of child welfare cases and improved safe and timely permanent placement for Nevada's children in need.

Please contact us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Cason
District Office Manager
Division of Child and Family Services

Shannon C. Richards
Deputy Attorney General
Nevada Attorney General's Office

Timothy Sutton
Deputy District Attorney
Nye County District Attorney's Office

Dorothy Van Zuilen
Advocate Coordinator
Pioneer Territory CASA