



Court Improvement Program

Community Improvement Councils Quarterly News Apr-Jun 2014

Issue 3

July 2014

**SAVE THE DATE ~ 2014 CIC SUMMIT ~ OCTOBER 2-3
AT THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL COLLEGE ~ RENO**

Inside this issue:

NCJFCJ Finalizes Evaluations	2
Planning for Action 9th JD	2
ABA Center on Children and the Law to Create Immigration Checklist	2
9th JD Action Plan	3
CIP Contact Information	4
Judicial Districts' CIC Future Meetings/Event Schedule	4

The CICs Have Spoken – CIC Summit will Focus on Quality Hearing Practices

In a survey conducted by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, nearly 100% of the respondents indicated that they would like the next CIC Summit to focus on strategies for quality hearing practices. Another 63% were also interested in strategies to improve timeliness and time to permanency. Judicial officers will join Justice Saitta the morning of October 2nd for a round table discussion on hearing quality and court timeliness. The other CIC members will join their judges for the remaining 1½ days to learn about strategies to improve hearing quality and court timeliness; and determine what and how their districts wish to implement.

A technical assistance grant through the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges will fund compilation of baseline court practice data for each judicial district to guide the next steps they may wish to take.

Eventful Quarter for State's CICs



**April 2014
Pinwheels for
Prevention
National Child Abuse
Prevention Month**

The majority of the Community Improvement Councils contributed to child welfare's 5-year strategic plan by offering intervention strategies and measureable objectives for the following goals: children and youth will be safe in out of home care and in their own homes; children and youth will have improved well-being; the state will be able to identify the strengths and needs of the child protective delivery system utilizing continual quality improvement;

and children and youth will achieve timely permanency through stable and supportive placements.

In April the 3rd JD implemented a family drug court with Judges Blake and Breen presiding, and the 10th JD has initiated discussions with Judge Blake regarding starting a family drug court, as well. The 10th JD, also, launched its CASA program. Following a newspaper article, 8 volunteers have already

stepped forward to be trained by Temporary Acting Coordinator, DeVere Karlson, who can be contacted at: dkarlson@churchillcounty.org

The 2nd JD's restructured Protective Custody Hearings, including parent representation and presentation of facts, became effective May 1, 2014. For more information contact Rachel Anderline at: rachel.anderline@washoecourts.us

Child Welfare Information Gateway connects child welfare and related professionals to comprehensive information and resources to help protect children and strengthen families. They feature the latest on topics from prevention to permanency, including child abuse and neglect, foster care, and adoption. See all they have to offer at:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/>

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Finalizes Two Evaluations for CIP

The 2nd and 5th Judicial Districts' Mediation Programs Top-Rated

For Additional
Information Contact:

Alicia Summers
Research Director
National Council of Juvenile
and Family Court Judges

asummers@ncjfcj.org

As part of CIP's continual quality improvement efforts, the NCJFCJ completed a process evaluation of the implementation of dependency mediation in the 5th JD and an outcome evaluation of the dependency mediation program in the 2nd JD.

The 5th JD's process evaluation demonstrates that their mediation program is off to a successful start with those mediations conducted thus far all resolving with agree-

ment. All parties agree that mediation is a useful tool. Parents feel they are listened to, their opinions are respected, and they are part of the decision-making process. The stakeholders find mediation increased parental engagement and provided a valuable alternative to litigation while not increasing their workload.

The keys findings from the 2nd JD's outcome assessment were very significant. Medi-

ated cases are more likely to result in reunification (88% compared to 50% non-mediated cases). Fathers who participated in mediation were more engaged (72% compared to 50% in non-mediated cases).

Planning for Action in the 9th Judicial District

During the 2013 CIC Summit, each CIC was asked to create an action plan around court timeliness at their next CIC meeting. The 9th JD's CIC developed and has been implementing their Court Timeliness Action Plan (see page 3) with the specific goals of:

1. Avoiding contentious fact finding hearings
2. Improving relationships
3. Shrinking total court time

ABA Center on Children and the Law to Create Immigration Checklist

The American Bar Association's (ABA) Center on Children and the Law is developing a "Child Welfare and Immigration" checklist specifically for Nevada attorneys representing parents and children in dependency court. This document will highlight federal and state law and state resources for child welfare cases that involve immigrant families. It will include items for

attorneys to consider when working with clients who are not U.S. citizens to help them protect their clients' rights and children's best interests.

According to the U.S. Census, Nevada has the second largest population (37%) of families with one member not born in the U.S.

Jeff Martin, Washoe County Deputy District Attorney,

Kathy O'Leary, Washoe County Chief Deputy Public Defender, and Janice Wolf, Director of the Children's Attorney Project at the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada have volunteered to work with the ABA on this valuable project.



ACTION PLAN

Court Timeliness

Date and Time: May 29, 2014

Location: 9th JD Courthouse

Topic: Adhere to ASFA, NRS 432B, and NRS 128 time requirements

Needs Statement:

Outcome: Dates of Community Improvement Council Meetings: 2/6/2014, 3/13/2014, 5/29/14, 6/26/14, **8/28/14**

PRIORITY ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT CHILD SAFETY IN THE COURTS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
Shorten Time Between Hearings	Conduct hearings every 90 days versus every six months.		Owner: Judge Young Status: Complete & On-Going
Concurrent Plan Progress Updates	Have Caseworkers document specific progress on the concurrent plan in every DCFS report to the Court.		Owner: DCFS Status: In Place & On-Going
Initiate Mediation in Douglas County	Conduct mediation w/ family, Def Attys, DCFS prior to fact finding		Owner: Defense Attorneys, DCFS Status: OPEN Next Steps: Mediation will be implemented. Status Update at next meetings
Court Request: Notice to the Court within 72 hours for every child removed from the home and placed with a relative where no petition is filed			Owner: Judge/DCFS/DA Status: Open Next Steps: DCFS will contact DAG re: possible waiver

**NEVADA SUPREME COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
201 S. CARSON STREET, SUITE 250
CARSON CITY, NV 89701**

Katherine Malzahn-Bass
Court Improvement Program Coordinator
Phone: 775-687-9809
Fax: 775-687-9811
Email: kmalzahn-bass@nvcourts.nv.gov

Robbie Taft
Administrative Assistant III
Phone: 775-687-9812
Fax: 775-687-9811
Email: rtaft@nvcourts.nv.gov

Visit Our Web Site
[http://www.nevadajudiciary.us/
index.php/
courtimprovementprogram](http://www.nevadajudiciary.us/index.php/courtimprovementprogram)

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. 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**

Judicial Districts' CIC Future Meetings/Events Schedules

Judicial District	Meeting / Event	Date	For Additional Information Contact
1 st JD	CIC Meeting	July 21	Maribel Gutierrez mgutierrez@carson.org
2 nd JD	CIC Meeting	July 21	Rachel Anderline Rachel.Anderline@washoecourts.us
3 rd JD	CIC Meeting		Debbie Gilmore dgilmore@lyon-county.org
4 th JD	CIC Meeting	4th Friday of every month	Julie L. Thuemler jthuemler@elkocountynv.net
5 th JD	CIC Meeting	3rd Wednesday of every month	Tim Sutton tsutton@co.nye.nv.us
6 th JD	CIC Meeting	July 15	Kathy Brumm kbrumm@hcdenv.com
7 th JD	CIC Meeting	July 10	Faye Cavender fcavender@dcfs.nv.gov
8 th JD	CIC Meeting	July 23	Lori Parr parrl@clarkcountycourts.us
9 th JD	CIC Meeting	August 28	Bobbie Williams bwilliams@douglas.nv.gov
10 th JD	CIC Meeting	October 2-3	Sue Sevon ssevon@churchillcounty.org