

Allegheny County Improvement Plan

County Name: Allegheny

Date of Plan: June 2013

Initial

Update

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Section II. Background

Allegheny County has hosted several forums to gather input for the development of the Allegheny County Improvement Plan. Leadership from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families Western Region, the University of Pittsburgh's Child Welfare Resource Center and Allegheny County Department of Human Services hosted the Quality Service Review (QSR) "Next Steps Meeting" on May 09, 2013, before an audience of 50 participants representing public and private stakeholders involved in child welfare and other family-serving systems. The Next Steps Meeting provided a comprehensive review of the February 2013 QSR findings, with a focus on data that identified opportunities for improving outcomes for children and families served by the Allegheny County DHS Office of Children, Youth and Families. Results were also presented to the DHS Children's Cabinet, CYF regional offices and DHS Youth Support Partners.

Allegheny County's Improvement Plan is informed and enhanced by a number of current DHS initiatives and, particularly, by two significant investments underway within DHS: 1) implementation of a universal practice model; and, 2) partnership with the state and four other counties in the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Demonstration Project. Each of these activities is designed to further our progress toward full integration and has significance for policy and practice improvements incorporated within the plan. They are described below to provide a context for the CIP:

Allegheny County DHS Practice Model

In late 2012, the Allegheny County Department of Human Services adopted a universal practice model across all program offices, including our child welfare system, as a first step towards achieving long-term goals that include adoption of common practices, with focus on engagement and teaming, structural integration, financial and operational efficiencies, and quality improvement processes across DHS. Full incorporation of these practices will have a dramatic impact on permanency, family engagement and teaming, and will require ongoing, comprehensive planning as well as implementation of revised policies and procedures, changes in contract monitoring and significant changes in staff development and training.

Child Welfare Demonstration Project

DHS has dedicated resources to new opportunities that have emerged at the state and federal levels; as one of five counties in Pennsylvania selected to participate in a five-year federal Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project, Allegheny County will utilize new approaches to service delivery in an effort to improve outcomes for children, youth and families involved in the child welfare system. Allegheny County plans to build on the practice model described above, focused on family engagement, assessment and the

expanded use of evidence- based practices (EBPs), to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families. By focusing on these strategies, there is a plan for overall reduction over the five years across all five counties in each of the following areas:

- Congregate care
- Reentry rates
- Days in care.

Allegheny County has identified six main approaches to achieve lasting systems' changes and improved outcomes for children and families; each approach is connected to the data identified in this plan:

1. Improvement in family engagement and service integration through implementation of Conferencing and Teaming, Permanency Roundtables, in partnership with Casey Family Programs
2. Implementation of assessment approaches to assist families to state their needs in their own terms and to direct clients and families to appropriate natural and professional services and supports (CANS, FAST)
3. Development and implementation of decision support tools to improve placement and service decision making (Best Interest Placement Tool; expanded resource care recruitment and retention programs)
4. Improvement of process and quality of care through the expanded use of evidence-based interventions
5. Reformation of contracting and payment procedures to align county and provider incentives (Performance-based Contracting)
6. Use of strong quality improvement processes to continuously assess and evaluate services.

Section V. Findings

Quality Service Review

Allegheny County DHS conducted the annual Quality Service Review, in partnership with the PA Office of Children, Youth and Families and the University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Resource Center, over a two-week period in February 2013. A total of 20¹ randomly selected cases were reviewed on 22 factors related to safety, permanency and well-being, as well as the overall quality of our child welfare practice. The reviewers conducted an average of 12 interviews for each case, with the focus child, parents, informal and formal supports, and representatives from the legal community and system partners. In addition to the on-site case reviews, Allegheny County hosted

¹ One in-home case was excluded from the final submission, as the focus youth was unavailable for an interview.

three focus groups composed of: 1) randomly selected caseworkers across the regional offices; 2) casework supervisors selected similarly; and 3) representatives from a variety of partnering systems. The focus groups generated ideas for improved collaboration and continued service integration, while offering feedback on DHS's reformed practice model and strategic direction.

Results of the Quality Service Review 2013 generally reflect findings comparable to the 2012 results.

Strengths related to measure of QSR Status Indicators (child safety, permanence, well-being and caregiving capacity, generally over past 30 days) include:

- Safety: Child safety (risk from threats, risk to self and others) in all settings.
- Living Arrangement: Children are placed in the most appropriate, least restrictive living environments.
- Physical and Emotional Health: physical health and emotional health needs are being met.
- Early Learning and Development: Young children are attending and thriving in early education settings.
- Caregiving Function: Fathers and caregivers are providing and sustaining parenting roles throughout the lifetime of their children.

Opportunities for improvement related to measure of Status Indicators include:

- Stability: Stability in home and school settings should be free from risk of disruption.
- Academic: Academic status requires immediate and concerted attention, including: attendance; educational settings that meet needs; meeting requirements for annual promotion; and course completion.
- Permanency: Children require an unconditional commitment for achieving legal permanency that includes: safely remaining with family; safe and permanent return to family; achieving legal permanence; and family connections, including adoption and permanent legal custodianship.

Strengths related to measure of QSR Practice Performance Indicators (extent to which best practice guidelines are applied successfully by members of the team serving the family and child, generally over the past 90 days) include:

- Cultural Awareness and Responsiveness: The identification of culture is addressed in practice with children and mothers.

- Assessment and Understanding (child and caregivers): There is recognition and understanding of strengths and needs, as well as those changes required in order for child and family to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes.
- Timeliness to Permanence: The system is adhering to most timeline requirements for children in care to return safely home or to be placed with “forever families.”
- Family Connections: CYF is supporting and coordinating appropriate and timely interventions at building and maintaining positive interactions and emotional supports between mothers and their children.
- Resource Availability: Allegheny County continues to provide a rich array of accessible community resources.

Opportunities for improvement related to measure of Practice Performance

Indicators include:

- All practice performance indicators for fathers: Fathers need to be included as full and equal team members throughout all phases of child welfare involvement.
- Assessment and Understanding: Collection and sharing of essential information should include: understanding of strengths and needs based on underlying issues; identifying what changes must occur in order for child and family to live safely together; achieving timely permanence; and, improving well-being and functioning.
- Teaming: All team members should be identified and effectively work together to share information, plan, provide and evaluate services to achieve desired outcomes and safe case closure.
- Efforts to Timely Permanence: CYF needs to demonstrate a pattern of urgency and relentlessness in efforts to achieve permanency for children to return and/or to remain safely home or to achieve legal permanence through adoption or legal custodianship.

Annual Licensing Review

The Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families Western Region conducted its annual licensing review of the DHS Office of Children, Youth and Families on March 06 through 08, 2013 by means of: random sample record review (same cases reviewed through the QSR process); interviews with administrative, supervisory and casework staff; review of internal policies and procedures; review of

personnel records, including required training; review of resource family records; and, review of agency fiscal documentation.

Allegheny County plans to submit a plan of correction for the regulatory issue noted in the Licensing Inspection Summary. A summary of licensure findings follows:

Highlights of Allegheny County Practice

- Allegheny County DHS as a “forward thinking agency”, with a full array of services accessible to children and families served
- Participation in Title IV-E Child Welfare Demonstration Project, with state and four other PA counties
- Commitment to improved permanency through implementation of the Permanency Roundtables, with the support of Casey Family Programs
- Commitment to improved family engagement and teaming through the implementation of Conferencing and Teaming model of practice

Strengths in Practice

- Response timelines for investigations
- Completed ten-day Supervisory Logs
- Thorough intake documentation
- Monthly child visitation
- Use of kinship care as primary placement type
- Family visitation, including sibling
- Completion of safety assessments within required intervals
- Enhancement of KIDS system

Recommendations for Improvement

- Global assessment of the family’s current environment and situation; use of assessment tools (CANS, FAST noted)
- Enhancement of quality home visits that address service goals
- Enhancement of engagement, teaming practices (references Conferencing and Teaming)
- Improvement of Shared Case Management practices
- Establishment of concurrent permanency goals
- Continued use of least restrictive placement settings, reduction of congregate care settings as placement option
- Adherence to Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children Bulletin (ICPC)

Regulatory Improvements

- Family Service Plans, Child Permanency Plans to be developed every six months
- Review of all Family Service Plans by supervisors within 10 days of plan development, including supervisory signature
- Procedures for parents, children over age 14 to sign the Family Service Plan; caseworkers to also sign
- Supervisory oversight to evaluate safety threats, including documentation of clear justification that warrants determination
- Annual update of photos for all children accepted for service

PRIORITY OUTCOME # 1: Improved Permanency

Improved permanency remains one of DHS's priority improvement outcomes for the CIP 2013. Permanency in child welfare refers to achievement of "a *legally permanent, nurturing family*" for children served within the child welfare system. Once safety is assured, child welfare professionals' foremost focus is "*on preserving families and preventing the need to place children outside of their family homes.*" If efforts to preserve the family and ensure the child's safety are unsuccessful and children must be removed from their homes, permanency planning efforts then "focus on returning them home as soon as is safely possible or on placing children with another permanent family. Other permanent families may include relatives, adoptive families or guardians who obtain legal custody."²

Permanency is achieved when the child/youth is living successfully in a family situation that the child/youth, parents, caregivers and other team members believe will be life-long. Permanency, commonly identified with the meaning of "family" or "home," suggests not only a stable setting but also stable caregivers and peers, continuous supportive relationships and a necessary level of parental/caregiver commitment and affection. Evidence of permanency includes resolution of guardianship, adequate provision of necessary supports for the caregiver, and the achievement of stability in the child/youth's home and school settings.

Administrative Data related to Permanency

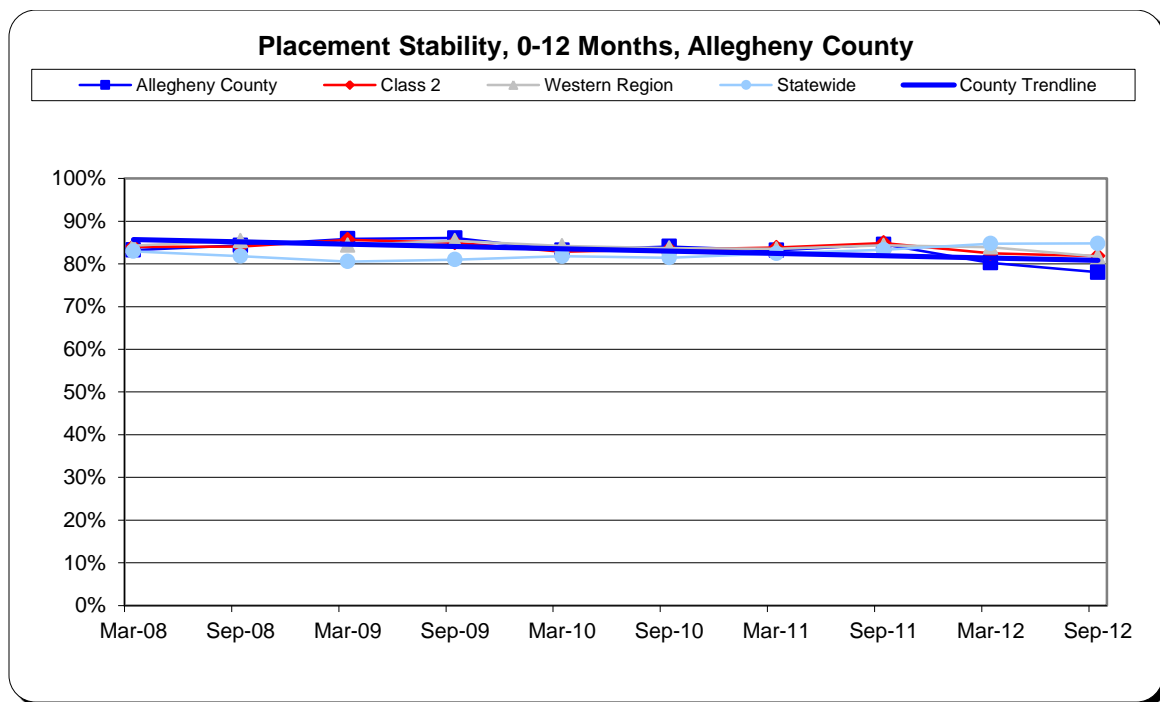
Permanency for the purposes of this plan includes: placement stability; living arrangement (placement type); and permanency (as defined above.) This year's updated administrative data do not reveal significant changes from the previous year.

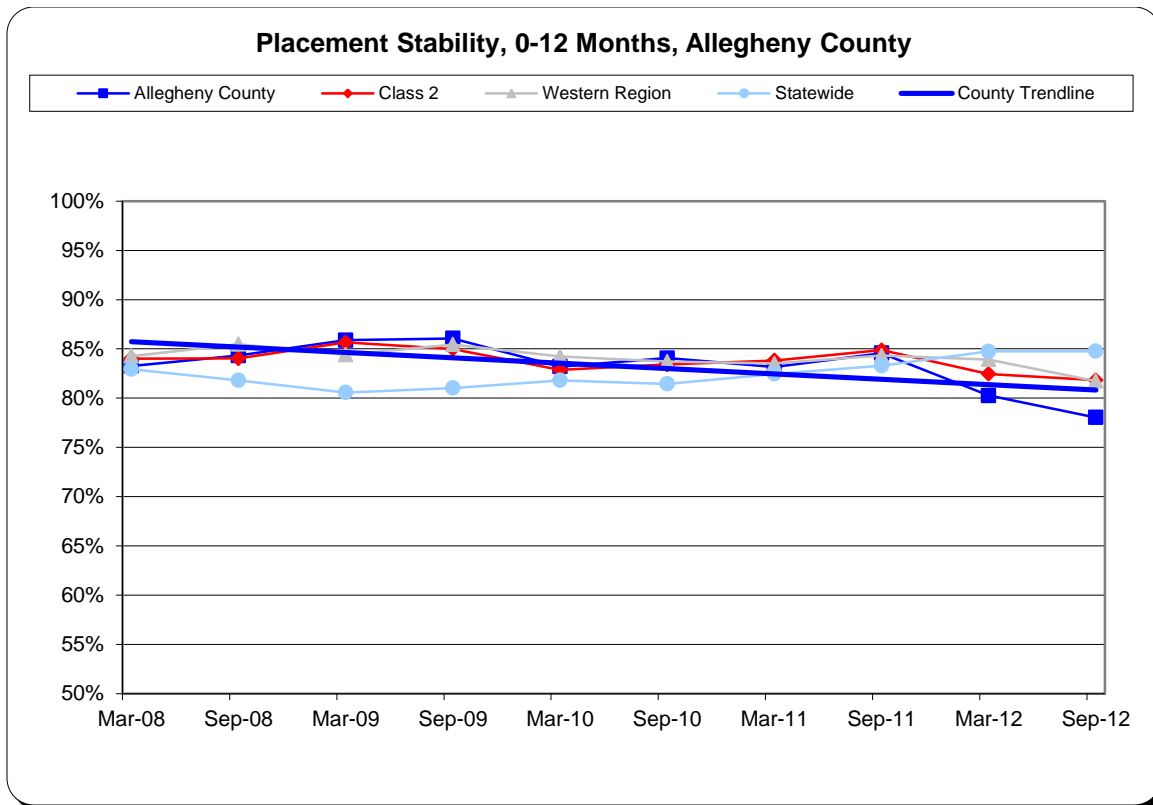
² Child Welfare Information Gateway (2011). "Achieving and Maintaining Permanency: Overview."

Placement Stability

Allegheny County has conducted some analysis on placement stability due to past limitations in the data. However, Allegheny County's Key Information Demographic System (KIDS) has the capability to provide more reliable information about placement stability, and enhanced data will be reported in the future. Evaluation of this metric will also examine the number of moves made during a home removal episode, the nature of the moves (e.g., move from a congregate to a family setting), and how placement stability varies by demographic characteristics.

The AFCARS placement stability measure is one tool used to assess stability in Allegheny County. According to these data, placement stability in Allegheny County was comparable to stability in the state and the region within 0-12 months of placement until 2012, when placement stability decreased in Allegheny County slightly more than in other jurisdictions. At 49%, Allegheny County continues to outperform the state (38%) and region (42%) for placement stability beyond two years in care.





Living Arrangement (Placement Type)

Data related to living arrangement indicate minimal change in use of congregate and kinship care. Kinship care remains the primary placement type for Allegheny County’s foster care population. The table below indicates placement types for first entries only.

Primary Placement Type for First Entries, by Entry Year (Chapin Hall)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Count	1,111	869	845	849	772	794
Kinship Care	49%	45%	47%	46%	44%	47%
Foster Care	26%	31%	28%	32%	33%	34%
Congregate Care	23%	21%	22%	20%	19%	16%
Independent Living	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

At a recent point in time (May 17, 2013), 49% of all children in placement were in a kinship care setting and a total of 79% were in a family setting. About 18% of youth were in a congregate setting.

Point in Time Placement Settings (KIDS)

17-May-2013

Placement Type		Total	Percent
Foster Care	Kinship Care	736	49%
	Non-Kinship Care	370	25%
	Shelter Foster	81	5%
Congregate Care	RTF	14	1%
	Group Home	142	10%
	Residential	33	2%
	Shelter Group	72	5%
Independent Living		42	3%
Alternate Location		3	0%
Total		1,493	100%

Permanency

From 2006 through 2011, over 70% of children exiting placement exited to a permanent setting. Half of all youth exiting care returned to their family, 14% were adopted and another five percent exited to permanent legal custodianship.

Exit Destinations from All Exits, by Exit Year (Chapin Hall)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Count	2,067	2,077	1,984	1,753	1,570	1,416
Return to Family	53%	53%	48%	50%	49%	48%
Adoption	14%	15%	15%	14%	14%	15%
Permanent Legal Custodianship	4%	5%	5%	6%	7%	7%
Reach Majority	6%	5%	4%	7%	12%	7%
Runaway	13%	13%	14%	10%	9%	11%
Other/Nonpermanent	29%	27%	31%	28%	26%	25%
Unknown	1%	1%	1%	4%	3%	5%

About 39% of all youth who exited to reunification from 2006 through 2011 experienced a reentry. The majority of reentries (about 80%) occurred within 12 months. Rates for reentry within one year of exit to family and legal custodianship are much lower (30%) than general exit reentry rates (57%), and, as the second table below shows, reentries from exit to family within one year (for the first placement episode) have consistently dropped.

Reentries from Exits to Reunification (2006-2011: Chapin Hall)

Total Exits	5466
Reentries	2005
Percent Reentries	37%
Time to reentry, as percent of reentries	
Under 1 month	14%
1 to 2 months	24%
3 to 5 months	22%
6 to 11 months	20%
12 to 17 months	7%
18 to 35 months	9%
3 years or longer	3%

Exits and Reentries from First Placement Episode (Chapin Hall)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Entries to First Spell	1111	869	845	849	772	794
Exits	1086	854	815	785	622	468
As % of all Entries	98%	98%	96%	92%	81%	59%
Exits to Permanency	917	754	686	663	537	408
As % of all Entries	83%	87%	81%	78%	70%	51%
As % of all Exits	84%	88%	84%	84%	86%	87%
Total Reentries	375	280	251	198	148	82
As % of all Entries	34%	32%	30%	23%	19%	10%
As % of all Exits	35%	33%	31%	25%	24%	18%
Reentries from Exit to Family	275	218	181	144	117	66
As % of Exits to Family	42%	37%	36%	28%	27%	17%
Reentries from Exit to Family Within 1 Year	204	161	147	117	105	64
As % of Exits to Family	31%	27%	29%	23%	24%	16%

*The dataset is censored on June 20, 2012, so youth exiting July 1-December 31, 2011 have not had a full year to reenter.

Quality Service Review Data related to Permanency

The QSR process measures permanency across three child status indicators: Stability, Living Arrangement and Permanency. Reviewers rated 76% of cases as acceptable across the three indicators: 56% in Stability; 98 %in Living Arrangement; and 74% in Permanency. In one-third of the out-of-home cases, the kinship/foster care provider was considering adoption or legal guardianship. While the majority of cases were in the acceptable range for Living Arrangement, three in-home cases had permanency scores in the unacceptable range, and four cases noted concerns with stability. Cases rated as unacceptable stemmed from a variety of causes, including a lack of adoptive home for

youth whose permanency goal was not yet changed; another case was noted where the ASFA timeline was approaching and no pre-adoptive home had yet been identified. In two cases, the children’s extreme behavioral challenges had potential to disrupt permanency. Another case involved a dependent teen mother with her baby and the continued need to assess mother’s abilities to care for her child.

The QSR focus groups viewed Allegheny County’s expanded use of Family Finding as a key to improved permanency. Casework staff also found value in the Permanency Roundtables and provided input regarding the sustainability of the process, including targeting youth ‘stuck’ in care with no specific plan to achieve legal permanence. While recognizing the value of this practice, they also spoke to the challenge of balancing time between daily work requirements and investing resources in these initiatives. The court system was viewed as a key stakeholder in addressing barriers to achieving permanence for children in care.

QSR: Stability

Stability and continuity in a child/youth's living arrangement, school experience and social support network are all factors that provide a foundation for normal development. Continuity in caring relationships and consistency of settings and routines are essential for a child/youth's sense of identity, security, attachment, trust, social development and sense of well-being. The stability indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth’s daily living and learning arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions; their daily settings, routines and relationships are consistent over recent times; and known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruption. This QSR indicator looks retrospectively over the past 12 months and prospectively over the next six months to assess the relative stability of the child/youth’s living arrangement and school settings.

Stability

Sub-indicator	N	Acceptable				Unacceptable			
		6	5	4	%	3	2	1	%
Living arrangement	19	5	4	2	58%	6	2	0	42%
School	13	3	3	1	54%	5	0	1	46%
Total		8	7	3	56%	11	2	1	44%

FIGURE 7: "STABILITY" QSR RESULTS

QSR: Living Arrangement

The child/youth's home is the one that the individual has lived in for an extended period of time. For a child/youth that is not in out-of-home care, this home can be the home of his or her parents, an informal kinship care setting, the home of adoptive parents or the home of a guardian. For a child/youth in out-of-home care, the living arrangement can be a resource family setting or a congregate care setting. The child/youth's home community is generally the area in which the child/youth has lived for a considerable amount of time and is usually the area in which the child/youth was living prior to removal. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth, consistent with age and/or ability, is currently living in the most appropriate/least restrictive living arrangement, consistent with the need for family relationships, assistance with any special needs, social connections, education, and positive peer group affiliation. If the child/youth is in out-of-home care, the living arrangement should meet the child/youth's basic needs as well as the inherent expectation of connection to his/her language and culture, community, faith, extended family, tribe, social activities, and peer group. This QSR indicator evaluates the child/youth's current living situation.

Living Arrangement

Sub-indicator	N	Acceptable				Unacceptable			
		6	5	4	%	3	2	1	%
Family home #1	14	5	6	2	93%	1	0	0	7%
Family home #2	3	1	1	1	100%	0	0	0	0%
Substitute home	8	3	3	2	100%	0	0	0	0%
Total		9	10	5	96%	1	0	0	4%

FIGURE 8: "LIVING ARRANGEMENT" QSR RESULTS

QSR: Permanency

Every child/youth is entitled to a safe, secure, appropriate and permanent home. Permanency is achieved when the child/youth is living successfully in a family situation that the child/youth, parents, caregivers and other team members believe will endure for a lifetime. This QSR indicator assesses the degree to which there is confidence by the child/youth, parents, caregivers and/or other team members that the child/youth is living with parents or other caregivers who will sustain in this role until the child/youth reaches adulthood and will continue to provide enduring family connections and supports into adulthood. Where such support is not available, the review assesses the timeliness of

permanency efforts to ensure that the child/youth will be enveloped in enduring relationships that will provide a sense of family, stability and belonging.

Permanency

Indicator	N	Acceptable				Unacceptable			
		6	5	4	%	3	2	1	%
Permanency	19	5	4	5	74%	5	0	0	26%
Total		5	4	5	74%	5	0	0	26%

FIGURE 9: "PERMANENCY" QSR RESULTS

Licensing Data Related to Permanency

The state recommends adherence to agency policy in establishing concurrent permanency goals at the start of each case for all children served (both in-home and out-of-home cases). The state encourages the continuation of Permanency Roundtables as a vehicle by which barriers to legal permanence can be identified and addressed. Of note is the introduction of the CANS and ANSA assessment tools to assist caseworkers in recognizing which interventions are needed to increase the probability of achieving safe case closure. The agency is also encouraged to continue the use of least restrictive placements settings and kinship care, in particular, to work toward reduction in placements in congregate care settings. The licensing agent also noted the need for compliance with the Interstate Compact legislation to ensure timely assessment and appropriate oversight of out-of-state caregivers.

Improved Permanency: Next Steps for 2013- 2014

Strategy #1: Implementation and Sustainability of Permanency Roundtable Process

Allegheny County, in partnership with Casey Family Programs, will continue to partner with the state OCYF, SWAN and other systems' partners to develop a sustainability plan for conducting Permanency Roundtables. Permanency Roundtables are structured, professional case consultations designed to expedite permanency for youth in out-of-home care through innovative thinking, application of best practices, and "busting" of systemic barriers. The purpose of Permanency Roundtables is to provide DHS with an opportunity to examine our child welfare system and to determine where the greatest need for expediting permanency lies. The primary goals of the Permanency

Roundtables are: to develop an action plan that will expedite permanency for select cohorts of children and youth in care; to stimulate thinking and learning about pathways to permanency for children in care; and to identify and address systemic barriers to expedited permanency.

With the support of Casey Family Programs, Allegheny County DHS conducted two rounds of Permanency Roundtables in December 2012 and January 2013.

Permanency Roundtables were conducted on a total of 94 children across two identified cohorts:

- Youth 16 years of age and younger, in care 18 months or longer, with a permanency goal of Other Planned Living Arrangement (OPLA) included 45 focus cases and 11 siblings (occurred during two weeks in December 2012)
- Youth in congregate care 12 months or longer, with a permanency goal of reunification; included 28 focus youth and 10 siblings (occurred for one week in January 2013)

Permanency Roundtables have helped Allegheny County to identify system barriers and internal challenges to achieving legal permanence for youth and their families. We are in the process of strategizing a multi-faceted response to those identified barriers and challenges by examining the issues and identifying solutions, both internally and with external partners.

Allegheny County plans to conduct additional roundtables in early fall 2013 for a cohort of children five years of age and younger, in care more than 18 months, with the permanency goal of reunification. The Quality Improvement team within the DHS Office of Data Analysis, Research and Evaluation is currently analyzing data to identify the children to be included in this cohort.

We have developed and implemented a web-based follow-up process that captures outcomes related to use of the Permanency Roundtables, and future plans include a survey of all participants regarding their experiences and lessons learned from the Roundtable process. Case Practice Specialists conduct a monthly follow up for each case that has gone through the process.

Identified outcomes include:

- Permanency goal change
- Exits to legal permanence (reunification; adoption; permanent legal custodianship)
- Change in level of placement restrictiveness
- Aftercare planning (associated with reentry data)
- Tracking of other administrative data related to permanency outcomes

Strategy #2: Planning for and Implementation of Uniform Post-discharge Services to Children and Families

DHS has several overlapping goals associated with serving youth who are placed in out-of-home care. Beyond the primary goal of maintaining a child's safety, CYF has pursued an overall reduction in the number of youth in placement by preventing out-of-home placement, promoting faster family reunification, and increasing the likelihood of and timeliness to permanency. While significant progress has been made on these goals, Allegheny County continues to experience a higher-than-average rate of reentry into out-of-home placement.

Performance-Based Contracting

Allegheny County is in the process of implementing a change in provider contracts to require provision of post-reunification services and follow-up from placement providers following reunification with family. DHS plans to increase its capacity for in-home and aftercare services to help reduce the number of days youth are placed in congregate care and to reduce the likelihood of reentry.³

In an attempt to realign incentives and performance, DHS is implementing performance-based contracting within our CYF office with providers of placement services with over 20 admissions in FY 11/12, shelter placements and CYF-paid placements.

Working with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, Allegheny County has laid the groundwork for performance-based contracting in child welfare placement. Key to performance-based contracting is use of an analytic model to understand how agencies perform on key system outcomes, such as timeliness to permanency, placement stability and reentry into care. This model, with unadjusted scores as well as scores adjusted for caseload composition, has been in place for several years. The Child Welfare Demonstration Project will provide the flexibility of resources needed to use these data to incentivize performance.

The goals of PBC are: 1) to increase the likelihood and timing of exits to legal permanency; 2) to increase utilization of family-based care; 3) to decrease reentry to care; and, 4) to improve providers' abilities to use data; and 5) to add an aftercare component to out-of-home placement.

A risk-free test year begins on July 01, 2013. Using individual agency data, each provider is working with DHS to define their baseline and outcome targets that are negotiated annually. Providers are measured only against their own data. During the

³ Note: 44% of youth between the ages of 13 and 17 years are placed in congregate care; 43% of those youth have been in care for one year or longer. However, only 25% of all youth exiting care receive one unit of paid non-placement service.

pilot year, reimbursements are not being adjusted based upon these data. However, beginning July 01, 2014, financial decisions will be based on providers' success in meeting their target outcomes. Those who meet or exceed their targets will receive financial reinvestment; however, those who do not will be penalized. A sophisticated formula has been developed for these calculations. While some details have yet to be determined, DHS is determined to make this process transparent to providers and the general public.

A component of PBC is the requirement of aftercare planning and increased focus upon service delivery by the placement provider for up to 90 days post-discharge, with input from the family team through the Conferencing and Teaming process.

PBC will monitor the following measures:

- Permanent Exits – Permanent exits include adoptions, reunification or permanent guardianship
- Care Days/Cost of Those Care Days –These are the number of days (and the cost of those days) used to serve the child/youth at an agency.
- Reentry Rates – Among those children who have exited to reunification or SPLC in the performance period, this is the percent who also returned to care with any provider within 12 months of that permanent exit.
- Non-Permanent Exits – Includes Transfers and “Other” Exits, defined as:
 - Transfers – A transfer occurs when a youth exits a provider’s facility for any reason
 - “Other” Exit – When a youth ages out of care or runs away and does not return to the provider from which they absconded.

Brief-Wraparound-Residential (BWR) and In-Community Stabilization (ICS)

Congregate care placement faces particular challenges in comparison to other out-of-home placement settings, particularly when it comes to preventing reentry. One challenge is that congregate care settings disproportionately serve teenagers, who tend to have more complex needs and/or behavioral health challenges. As of October 2012, 93 percent of youth served in congregate care settings were teens (ages 12 through 17), while teens made up only 29 percent of the total foster care population. In addition, the congregate care setting is structured in a way that promotes success, growth and leadership within the group home or shelter setting, rather than in a way that focuses on what youth need to succeed in a family, neighborhood and community setting. The expectations of these different settings are poles apart; in fact, adapting to a congregate care setting can actually work against successful reunification. When serving youth for whom the permanency goal is family reunification, adoption or (Subsidized) Permanent Legal Custodianship (SPLC), the focus of the residential placement facility should be on

preparing the youth and the family for long-term stability and success in the home and in the community, not for success in the congregate care setting.

BWR requires a fundamental shift in focus from traditional residential congregate care. The emphasis in this model is on what is needed for youth to be more successful away from the residential facility - specifically, in the home, school and community environment - versus what makes them successful in the residential facility. This requires a concerted effort by staff to work on developing and enhancing skills likely to increase the youth's success upon return to home and community.

The BWR process begins with intensive family and youth engagement from the first day of placement in a residential setting, including completion of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment, which becomes the core of the individualized planning process. The approach moves agencies from a levels system to a tailored, individualized plan for each child entering the program. The primary goal of this plan is to meet the family's self-identified needs and to safely return and maintain the youth in his or her home, community and school environment in a timely and lasting manner.

BWR has five core components:

- Increased family, parent and caregiver engagement and participation in the process
- Increased connection with youth's/family's natural community resources, supports and activities while the youth is in residential care
- Individualized planning focused on success in the home and community
- Generalized interventions to the home/community environment
- Transition Care and In-Community Stabilization

During placement and following the youth's return home, BWR requires consistent collaboration and communication with a wide spectrum of partners, supports and resources in the youth's home community. These collaborations, organized and driven through the teaming and family engagement process, might include local schools, community recreation programs, community-based service and support organizations, and other informal natural supports and resources (e.g., churches, extended family, friends, mentors). Throughout the process, staff should incorporate individualized behavioral strategies and interventions that are the best fit for the family's culture, tailored to the unique characteristics and individual needs of each family.

Implementation of BWR involves a critical re-thinking of location, use of space, staffing, planning, financial operation/documentation and family engagement. DHS will work collaboratively with residential providers undertaking implementation of the model to

provide technical assistance and share best practices and “lessons learned” among providers.

Providers who are a part of the PBC process will be allowed flexibility to align their services with BWR strategies and practices in order to improve outcomes for youth and families. DHS will work with provider agencies to ensure that a continuum of services is available to meet the needs of each family member so that successful reunification and ongoing stability can occur within the home.

Strategy #3: Enhancement of Practices, Documentation and Outcome Measurements related to Concurrent Permanency Planning

Next Steps for 2012-13

Concurrent Planning Requirements

Allegheny County has submitted our Concurrent Planning Bulletin Self-Assessment and Plan that identifies our strengths and challenges for the required core components of a concurrent permanency planning process, as well as actions and resources required to meet those requirements. We will work in concert with the state and other T.A. Collaborative members to implement the plan, once approved, with a compliance target of July 2015.

Synchronization of Family Service and Child Permanency Planning

Allegheny County has received state approval for a common service plan - the Family Plan - that combines elements of the former Family Service Plan and the Child Permanency Plan. CYF service planning and documentation processes are now synchronized through DHS Conferencing and Teaming. Through Conferencing and Teaming, we will continually evaluate the effectiveness of this combined service plan to measure the impact on achieving desired outcomes, including timely legal permanence. The alignment of DHS policies and practices with the Concurrent Planning Bulletin also relates to improved practice performance with fathers served by CYF, particularly through Family Search and Engagement, Relative Notification, Child/Family Visitation and Family Group Conferencing/Teaming core components referenced in the bulletin.

Strategy #4: Design and Implementation of Decision Support Tools

Next Steps for 2013-2014

Best Interest Placement Tool

DHS has begun implementation of a decision support tool to assist casework staff with identifying placements that are in the best interest of the child and family. The objective

of the tool is to increase placement stability and improve permanency and well-being outcomes for children in care through better, more informed placement decisions. Two examples of expected results are: first, to reduce congregate care placements (since foster homes will always be ranked above group homes), and second, to improve neighborhood/school stability by ranking homes based on shortest distance from the home removal address. Additionally, the tool will allow DHS to capture more comprehensive data on placement needs and share the information with providers to inform more targeted recruiting, enabling DHS and provider agencies to build placement resources in the county to better serve children and families.

The Best Interest Placement Tool is designed to impact placement decisions for foster, group and residential home placements but does not apply to Kinship care homes at this time. A home that is in a child's best interest includes but is not limited to, these factors: the most family-like setting; located in the child's community and school catchment area (if preferred); and, willing to care for the child's identified physical and behavioral health needs.

When making placement decisions, caseworkers electronically enter specific information about the child who requires placement, and the tool matches that information to information that providers enter and maintain on their active homes. The tool then generates a list of available homes, ranked by the best fit factors identified.

Key process changes of the Best Interest Placement Tool include:

- Removal of up-front selection of care type: Prior to the implementation of the Best Interest Placement Tool, caseworkers would post to a specific type of service: foster, group or residential. With the new process, caseworkers post to a more generic placement and it is posted to agencies that provide any of the care types. The tool prioritizes homes based on the least restrictive environment.
- Availability of additional home-level information: Both caseworkers and providers will now have more information presented consistently to support placement decisions. There is a comparison report available that allows users to select up to five homes to compare. The real-time report shows detailed information about the child(ren) being placed and compares it to information about each available home. Information includes:
 - All characteristics identified at the child level and whether or not the provider is willing to consider serving a child with the specified characteristics. The report also highlights those homes who have experience fostering a child with the specified characteristic
 - Capacity, each home's distance from the target address
 - Information on household members including age, gender, race and religion
 - Information on other children currently placed in the home
 - Whether or not the home is willing to provide legal permanence.

Benefits include:

- *Child welfare staff review and consider best fit homes across all agencies:* Prior to the Best Interest Placement Tool, caseworkers were limited to choosing homes that were proposed and recommended by providers. In the new process, they still receive recommendations from providers, but they see how each of those recommended homes were ranked by the tool. They can also see a list of all the homes regardless of provider response. This enables them to be more pro-active and call providers with best fit homes who may not have responded.
- *More targeted outreach for shelter/emergency placements:* As part of the Best Interest Placement Tool initiative, a quick search tool is also created to be used for emergency placements. Shelter coordinators and night and evening intake staff use this tool to quickly generate a list of best fit homes based on child-level information entered. The staff currently uses the Shelter Search tool to prioritize calls, calling a provider with the highest tier homes first. This tool is designed to improve placement stability by identifying a better fit home at the initial emergency placement.

DHS conducted training for casework staff across all CYF regional offices during the first week of April, 2013, and staff are now utilizing the tool. DHS is in the process of evaluating the process and effectiveness of the tool and will continue to provide supports to casework staff and providers to maximize the impact on child permanency and well-being.

PRIORITY OUTCOME # 2: Engagement of Families, with Emphasis on Fathers

As noted in previous County Improvement Plans, father involvement remains critically relevant to the three major outcomes of the child welfare system: safety, permanency and well-being. There is evidence that a healthy father-child relationship produces positive benefits for all family members across all socio-economic and cultural groups. *“When fathers are involved, children can learn more, perform better in school, and exhibit healthier behaviors. Even when fathers do not share a home with their children, their active involvement can have a lasting and positive impact.”*⁴ Children living in homes without a father are significantly more likely to experience poverty and incarceration and are twice as likely to repeat a grade in school. They are also more likely to use drugs, alcohol and tobacco, and they generally have poorer physical and mental health. Furthermore, children from single-parent homes have a 120 percent greater risk of suffering some form of child abuse or neglect, as compared to children from two-parent homes.⁵ A report to the Pennsylvania State Roundtable (May 2011) noted disparities within Pennsylvania’s dependency system in the engagement, inclusion and treatment of fathers, particularly non-resident fathers, and those efforts

⁴ Minnesota Fathers & Families Network (2011). “Child Welfare Sector Analysis: Linking Father.”

⁵ Casey Family Programs (2009). “Engaging Fathers in the Child Welfare System.”

underway to raise awareness and effectuate changes within the system, in both culture and practice.

Allegheny County's Quality Service Review 2013 findings draw attention to the need for improved father engagement for those children/youth served by Allegheny County CYF. The QSR Practice Performance Indicator of Engagement measures the diligence shown by the team in taking actions to find, engage and build a rapport with children and families and to overcome barriers to families' participation.⁶ This indicator assesses the degree to which those working with the children/youth and their families (parents and other caregivers) are:

- Finding family members who can provide support and permanency for the child/youth.
- Developing and maintaining a culturally competent and relevant, mutually beneficial trust-based working relationship with the child/youth and family.
- Focusing on the child/youth's and family's strengths and needs.
- Being receptive, dynamic and willing to make adjustments in scheduling and meeting locations to accommodate family participation in the service process, including case planning.
- Offering transportation and childcare supports, where necessary, to increase family participation in planning and support efforts.

Findings from the 2013 QSR indicate that engagement efforts by systems professionals can be improved for all case participants. Engagement efforts were more likely to be rated as acceptable for the children/youth (69%) and substitute caregivers (63%). Based on the earlier discussion, it is not surprising that mothers were much more likely to be engaged (61%) than fathers (33%). The lack of engagement with fathers negatively impacted other practice performance ratings relating to fathers: Maintaining Connections between parent and child (44%), Role and Voice (40%), Assessment and Understanding (27%), and Family Planning Process (20%). However, even though fathers were not engaging with professional team members, data indicate that 65 percent of fathers had regular contact with their child(ren). Three fathers in the QSR sample were the primary caregiver to their child. Four fathers, including one stepfather, resided in the same household as the child and co-parented with the mother. Six fathers shared parenting responsibilities but did not reside in the family home with the child. Two fathers had not had recent contact with their child due to the out-of-county incarceration of one father and inpatient substance abuse treatment of the other father following his release from jail. Children in the remaining four cases had no contact with

⁶ While there is no specific measure for father involvement, there are four items on the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) that can be examined for engagement with fathers: parental visitation; needs/services provided to parents; child/family involvement in case planning; and, worker visits with parents (Minnesota Fathers & Families Network, 2011.)

their fathers due to two fathers being deceased, the termination of parental rights for one father, and the single parent adoption by a mother when the youth was a small child.

Licensure review recommended that caseworkers visit monthly with the children on their caseloads. CYF will continue to work toward meaningful engagement of all family members, particularly fathers, so that they become a stable factor in their children's lives and key partners in the planning process.

Enhanced Father Engagement: Next Steps for 2013-2014

Strategy #1: Enhancement of Engagement with all Fathers

Child Welfare Demonstration Project

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Demonstration Project referenced in this document, invests resources in enhancing Family Engagement and Family Assessment. A core element of the engagement component of the Child Welfare Demonstration Project is improving case practice through an engagement model that recognizes the importance of family and other support systems in the life of the child. This is a critical component in Allegheny County's framework that will lead to reduced first entries into placement and improved well-being outcomes.

DHS Conferencing and Teaming

Allegheny County will use Conferencing and Teaming for the first component of the demonstration project, Family Engagement. The target population for Conferencing and Teaming is children/youth birth through 17 years of age in placement or receiving in-home services in the child welfare system. The characteristics of children in these families will match those of all youth served by the Office of Children, Youth and Families (CYF); about half are African American, thirty percent are Caucasian, and the remaining youth served are multi-racial. The ages of youth served will be consistent across all age groups, with a slightly higher representation of teenagers and infants than youth between the ages of one and 12. For the family engagement component of the Demonstration Project, Allegheny County will introduce Conferencing and Teaming in phases in each of five regional offices, beginning with the Central Regional Office; by the end of FY 2014, it is estimated that approximately 1,275 families will have participated in Conferencing and Teaming. The assessment component of the demonstration project will focus on children and youth in placement between the ages of five and 17. Conferencing and Teaming will be implemented in phases through the county regional offices

Family Advocacy & Support Tool (FAST)

- Sharing the CANS philosophy and values is the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST), the family version of the CANS, aimed at service planning and decision making at the family level that includes fathers and paternal kin. The purpose of the FAST is to help identify strengths and underlying issues and needs for families that have been accepted for service in CYF, in order to support effective interventions when the focus of those efforts is on entire families rather than single individuals. FAST is most commonly used to address the needs of families who are at risk of child welfare involvement. Results from the FAST are used to inform the planning process and to help set goals, objectives and strategies to meet needs in a strengths-based manner.

Other strategies designed to strengthen engagement with fathers include:

- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of: current supports to facilitate court-ordered visitation through Family Court and visitation between children and their incarcerated parents.
- Survey of fathers with systems involvement in Allegheny County to highlight their self-identified needs, systemic barriers to receiving services and explanations of why they are/are not engaged with the staff and/or agency providing services.
- Implementation of recommendations regarding engagement with fathers from the improvement roundtable processes⁷ through Allegheny County Children's Court and Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts.

Strategy #2: Enhancement of Coaching and Staff Training Strategies, inclusive of Father Engagement

Child Welfare Resource Center- "Building and Sustaining Father Engagement in the Welfare System" Training

The University of Pittsburgh PA Child Welfare Resource Center is in the process of revising and releasing a training component on father engagement: "*Building and Sustaining Father Engagement in the Welfare System.*" DHS CYF has requested that it be selected as one of two counties to pilot the new curriculum. CYF will incorporate the new training module as required "callback" training for new caseworkers.

DHS Family Conferencing Institute

For caseworkers to successfully adopt and implement the engagement and assessment components of the demonstration project, Allegheny County will conduct extensive

⁷ Kids Need Their Dads: Engaging Fathers in the Child Dependency System. A Report to the Pennsylvania State Roundtable. May 2011.

training and staff support both within CYF and externally with its service provider network. Presently, DHS’s Family Conferencing Institute is building its internal capacity to implement staff training and skill development in family conferencing and service integration. The institute utilizes peer coaches to work in conjunction with supervisors to support and guide skill development of caseworkers as facilitators in the engagement component of the Demonstration Project. Facilitator training, which began April 01, 2013 in the Central Regional Office, includes a three- day course followed by six to nine months of coaching. Facilitators must complete two successful Family Conferences to receive certification.

CANS/FAST Training

The County’s internal CANS/FAST Team will conduct internal and external training as part of the Child Welfare Demonstration Project, including a certification process prior to using the assessment tools.

DATA RELATED TO OUTCOME # 3: Improved Teaming

The QSR Practice Performance Indicator of Teaming examines and evaluates the formation of the team and the functioning of the team as two separate components. This indicator assesses the degree to which appropriate participants have been identified and formed into a working team that shares a common “big picture” understanding and long-term view of the child/youth and family. Team members are expected to have sufficient craft knowledge, skills and cultural awareness to work effectively with the child and family to share information, plan, provide and evaluate services.

Reviewers measured Teaming (Formation and Functioning) for the 19 cases submitted as Allegheny County’s final sample. Thirty three percent of cases were rated as acceptable across both sub-indicators (formation and functioning): 37 percent received an acceptable rating for Team Formation and 32 percent received an acceptable rating for Team Functioning, primarily due to: lack of a working team that identifies and holds equal all members, including the family and child; lack of an identified team leader; and, lack of a shared vision (“long term view”) and failure to work in unison toward common goals.

Sub-indicator	N	Acceptable				Unacceptable			
		6	5	4	%	3	2	1	%
Formation	19	1	4	2	37%	6	3	3	63%
Functioning	19	1	2	3	32%	6	5	2	68%

Sub-indicator	N	Acceptable				Unacceptable			
		2	6	5	34%	12	8	5	66%
Total									

FIGURE 19: “TEAMING” QSR RESULTS

Licensure review recommended continued use of the Youth and Family Support Partners and the CYF Case Practice Specialists as key team members in all phases of practice, in partnership with the assigned casework staff. License findings also notes DHS’s implementation of the Conferencing and Teaming model as means to enhance engagement, planning and teaming: *“The agency has recently begun conferencing and teaming philosophy which will enable all parties working with the family the opportunity (for) constant communication with one another to assure that no area of concern is missed due to the formation and functioning of the team.”*

Improved Teaming (Formation and Functioning): Next Steps for 2013-2014

Strategy #1: Implementation of Conferencing and Teaming Practice Model

As discussed, DHS is adopting Conferencing and Teaming as our universal case management and engagement practice. Implementation of Conferencing and Teaming is a key strategy in the system-wide adoption of a DHS Practice Model, integrating DHS services according to a shared vision and values, in order to promote the health, well-being and self-reliance of those served. This common case practice of assessing, planning and integrating services fosters and supports the weaving of services around the particular needs of consumer participants.

The conferencing component of the new model engages the participant and his or her natural support system in a planning process that manages risks and improves long-term functioning. Using existing records and assessments, the participant, family and all natural supports formulate a plan based on the perceived needs and goals of all involved. The main principle behind this conferencing portion of the model is that the participant benefits from decreased dependency and increased personal responsibility.

The teaming component of the model recognizes that as a person’s situation changes, his or her plan may need alteration. The individual meets periodically with his or her natural supports and attending professionals to address events or circumstances that may call for a reassessment of current plans and strategies. The goal of this process is to build a strong support system that can continue to assist families after services end.

DHS envisions that all DHS direct services staff and human service providers will eventually utilize this integrated conferencing and teaming approach with consumers as their core case management practice. Any consumer who needs coordinated planning regardless of system involvement should have the option to participate.

DHS Conferencing and Teaming:

- Is how direct workers will conduct business (not a referral service).
- Focuses on identifying and utilizing the strengths, needs and goals of consumers and families.
- Emphasizes natural supports and informal resources.
- Focuses on individualized needs of the consumer rather than on traditional services to be offered.
- Promotes the coordination of multiple plans by serving as the primary planning meeting for consumers.
- Is appropriate for all consumers in Allegheny County.

DHS is in the process of phasing in Conferencing and Teaming across the Department, beginning with the CYF Central Regional Office. Once Conferencing and Teaming is fully implemented, all individuals needing services will participate in this newly developed approach.

Training and coaching on our model will occur within CYF through 2013 and beyond 2013 for other services within DHS, in order to build capacity and to ensure strategic model development. January 2014 is the planned implementation date for the DHS Conferencing and Teaming Institute, a community-wide resource available to provide training, consultation and orientation regarding DHS Conferencing and Teaming.

Strategy #2: Improved Teaming between Allegheny County DHS Office of Children, Youth and Families and Juvenile Probation (Shared Case Management)

Planning and Implementation of Crossover Youth Practice Model

Allegheny County's DHS, Juvenile Court Probation and Children's and Family Divisions Courts have partnered with the Georgetown University Public Policy Institute's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) and Casey Family Programs to launch a practice model that strengthens how the juvenile justice and child welfare systems serve crossover youth. The Crossover Youth Practice Model is designed to enhance practices to meet the high needs of youth who are involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and will be integrated into Conferencing and Teaming.

An Implementation Team comprised of knowledgeable key staff and community partners has been established and will begin their training in October 2013. The Implementation Team will refocus the efforts of our existing collaboration among

systems with the goal of promoting best practices for crossover youth by implementing an integrated practice model.

The practice model will be implemented in three phases:

Phase One

Practice Area I: Arrest Identification and Detention

This practice area addresses the handling of a case from the point of arrest. It will identify protocols that need to be instituted to ensure that crossover youth are identified and appropriate assessment is occurring following the detention decision. It also emphasizes the early engagement of family and cross-system workers assigned to the family when the arrest occurs.

Practice Area II: Decision-making regarding charges

This practice area addresses the need for a cross-system team approach when a youth already involved in the child welfare system has been arrested and the decision is being made whether the case should be filed and referred to the court or diverted from the juvenile justice system. It will further emphasize the use of a team approach that includes the family at all decision-points.

Phase Two

Practice Area III: Case Assignment, Assessment, and Planning

This practice area has a strong emphasis on a variety of case management functions to be performed in a cross-systems manner, court operations for streamlining judicial oversight, and service delivery including but not limited to the use of evidenced-based practices.

Phase Three

Practice Area IV: Coordinated Case Supervision and On-going Assessment

This practice area builds on the capacity created in Phase Two and also focuses on the entry of youth from the juvenile justice system to the child welfare system. It looks to strengthen the use of a cross-systems approach in working with families, improve educational and behavioral health supports provided across the two systems, and enhance community engagement.

Practice Area V: Planning for Youth Permanency, Transition, Case Closure

This phase focuses on permanency and case closure. It looks to enhance the permanency planning that occurs throughout the case and improving permanency outcomes for crossover youth. It also stresses the importance of engaging community supports in order to ensure a safe transition from the system for all youth.

Target Population:

The practice model targets those youth who have current and simultaneous involvement in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems in the following ways: 1) youth initially involved in the child welfare system who are subsequently referred to and become involved in the juvenile justice system; and, 2) youth who are initially involved in

the juvenile justice system and are subsequently referred to and become involved in the child welfare system because of suspicions of abuse/neglect in the home. Youth falling into these categories are dually-involved youth and may be dually-adjudicated youth depending on the level of involvement in both systems.

Outcomes:

The goals for this initiative follow:

1. A reduction in the number of youth placed in out-of-home care
2. A reduction in the use of congregate care
3. A reduction in the disproportionate representation of children of color
4. A reduction in the number of youth crossing over to the delinquency system.

Status of Next Steps from Allegheny County DHS Improvement Plan 2012-13

Recommendations	Status
Priority Outcome – Improved Permanency	
1) KIDS System Modifications ○ Modification of the field on the placement screen in KIDS, <i>“Has the child ever been adopted?”</i> to a forced data field.	Completed 2012
○ To enhance tracking of re-entry cases, addition of field in KIDS for call screening to identify when a referral is made on a previously closed case because of achieved legal permanence through Adoption, Permanent Legal Custodianship.	Completed 2012
2) Development and implementation of an ongoing quality improvement process for follow-up to Permanency Action Plans and measurement of improved permanence for youth reviewed.	Instituted May 2013
○ Development of a web-based follow up process that captures outcomes related to the Permanency Roundtables. Case Practice Specialists conduct monthly follow up for each case that is round tabled. Outcomes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Permanency goal change ▪ Exits to legal permanence (reunification; adoption; permanent legal custodianship) ▪ Change in level of restrictiveness ▪ Aftercare planning (associated with reentry data) ▪ Tracking of other administrative data related to permanency outcomes 	March 2013; ongoing evaluation and modifications
3) With the support of the Casey Family Programs, provision of Permanency Orientation, Values and Skills Building Training for Permanency Roundtable participants, DHS leadership and other key stakeholders.	Completed November 2012
4) Implementation of the first phase of Permanency Roundtables- review of youth ages 16 and under with permanency goal of OPLA (approximately 40 youth).	Completed December 2012

5) Implementation of the second phase of PRTs- review of youth placed in congregate care for 12 months or longer with goal of reunification (approximately 30 youth).	Completed January 2013
6) Implementation of the third phase of PRTs- review of children under age five years with the permanency goals of PLC, adoption and FWR (approximately 30 children).	Will occur Fall 2013
7) Continuation of permanency focus, including consideration for the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) to provide training for DHS CYF supervisors within each regional office on the purposes of SWAN services and the importance of SWAN referrals for all children (i.e., those with permanency goals other than adoption) in order to improve referral rates, to enhance permanency services for children and families, and to favorably impact re-entry rates.	
○ With the support of the Casey Family Programs, provision of enhanced permanency values and skill building training for key DHS and CYF staff.	Post roundtable skills building training completed May 2013
○ SWAN technical support staff has conducted rounds of all CYF regional offices to train staff on the array of permanency services and supports available through their organization.	
8) Modification of CIP 2011 strategy from Safe Case Closure Protocol to <u>full implementation of the Safety Assessment Management Process (SAMP)</u>	
○ Facilitation by CYF's Training Department of three- hour out-of-home safety update training to all the staff from at each CYF regional offices. In addition, review of safety assessment and safety planning at the monthly Supervisors' Meetings to continue to assure staff's understanding of the safety protocol, including safety assessments, intervals and planning	April to May 2012
○ Implementation of the Safety Assessment and Management Process (SAMP). State Training Documents on Safety, Risk, Case Closure and Case Closure for Sexual Abuse have been posted to a networked policy portal for Casework Staff to review for guidance, and Family Group Decision Making and Inua Ubuntu's Case Closure Guidelines are shared with provider staff.	
○ Development by CYF's Training Department of a checklist for staff use until the state issues final SAMP guidelines.	
○ Implementation of <i>SafeMeasures</i> , a reporting tool developed by the Children's Research Center and designed to support ongoing accountability and quality improvement processes. Using this tool, CYF supervisors and case managers monitor their work and compliance with local case practice standards, as well as with state and federal outcomes.	Piloted October 2012 Implemented January 2013
Priority Outcome – Enhanced Engagement with Fathers	

1) Analysis of Administrative Data related to Custodial and Non-custodial Fathers served within DHS CYF	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Qualitative and qualitative analysis to describe this population and to better inform strategies for improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis by DHS Office of Data Analysis, research and Evaluation of data related to custodial and non-custodial fathers served in the child welfare system as well as Family Group Decision- Making placement outcomes in order to begin identifying what data on fathers is captured and what data needs further enhancement through KIDS. First steps involved a look at descriptive data related to fathers served by CYF by collecting data associated with relationships between children with active CYF case involvement and their identified fathers, as of March 27, 2012. 	Completed Spring 2012
2) Review and Revision of CYF Documentation related to Fathers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modifications in functional areas in KIDS to highlight information on fathers for caseworkers. The father's name is now displayed first on the following DHS OCYF reports: Family Service Plan and Family Service Plan Review; Child Permanency Plan; Intake Risk Assessment; Family Service Risk Assessment; and, the Intake Transfer Summary. Termination of Parental Rights is now shown, next to the corresponding parent, on the Family Service Plan and Child Permanency Plan. 	Completed November 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Classification of kinship foster care parents by their relationship to the child in order to track placement rates with paternal kin 	Completed
3) Enhancement of Communication Resources available for Fathers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaboration between DHS and the Allegheny County Jail to create two brochures – “Be an involved dad even while you are incarcerated” and “Be an involved mom even while you are incarcerated” - to help parents learn about their parental rights and responsibilities during their incarceration. 	Completed June 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Update by DHS Office of Community Relations (OCR) of online resource guide to include services offered to fathers and expectant fathers. Special attention is being paid not to duplicate existing resources but to provide tools to better assist fathers and community providers in locating appropriate services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of “Fathers Involved Now” resource toolkit, created by Allegheny Family Network, on DHS website. 	Completed
Priority Outcome – Enhanced Teaming (Formation and Function)	
Planning and Implementation of Conferencing and Teaming Model across DHS, with start within CYF	Planning process 2012; pilot implementation at

	DHS CYF Central Regional Office April 2013
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