

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

County Name: Berks

Date of Plan: July 12, 2018

Initial

Update

Section I. Team Members

<p><u>Sponsor Team</u> Krista McIlhaney Wendy Seidel Brandy Neider Barbara Jakubek Brad Bernhard Sheila Arnold</p>	<p><u>CI Team</u> Zachary DeMara Melissa Evans Bob Jakubek Nicole Kauffman-Jacoby Kierstan Edris Blanca Rivera Sara Golden Bethanne Minner Lisa Heins Megan Heath</p>	<p><u>Workgroups</u></p> <p><u>Father Engagement:</u> Brandon Clinton Marsha Ganter Kelsey Glass Leah Knott</p> <p><u>Team Formation/Function:</u> Court: Brandon Clinton Gregory Gerdeman Crystal Talarico Kathy Lashinsky Hiring/Training: Lisa Eshbach Kevin Bush Cindy Milian Carol Fisher Mobility/Technology Lisa Eshbach Emily Schilling Alayna Printz Dawn Kaisen Leah Knott Rob Lambert Kasi Offerman</p>
--	---	---

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

Section II. Background and Development of the Desired Future State including Priority Outcomes

Upon reviewing the QSR results, Berks County Leadership determined that they wanted to establish a CQI process to develop their CIP. The agency formed a Sponsor Team comprised of Senior Leadership within the organization, who then chartered the agency CI team, comprised of staff from all aspects of the organization, to address the priority outcome areas identified.

The charter clearly identified the following priorities:

- Father Engagement (to include paternal relatives)
 - This will include researching successful father engagement strategies with clear evidence of success; outcomes, model fidelity, and measures which clearly define that a program is working.
 - Identification of tools and resources available to address father engagement
 - Identify methods to include providers in these engagement efforts, which will be a culture shift.
 - Identify ways to support caseworkers and other staff in having these critical conversations with families around father engagement.
- Strengthening Team Formation and Functioning
 - Develop ways to strengthen teaming between county staff, providers, and families.
 - Identify methods to insure clear communication.
 - Understand the impact of high functioning and efficient teams fiscally.

The CI Team organized themselves into two subgroups to address the priority areas and began working through the DAPIM process. As they reviewed the QSR Results from the case review and the focus groups, considered the QSR protocol descriptions of engagement (specifically for considering fathers and paternal relatives) and teaming formation and function, they determined that some additional data collection was needed to ensure that planning around teaming included a broader staff perspective. The teaming workgroup developed a survey to assess communication challenges and barriers to feed their recommendation on how to improve communication amongst team members which in turn allows for improved team formation and function. The father engagement workgroup collected additional information as well to assist in identifying why fathers aren't engaged and what supports might be needed to engage them.

Outcome #1 – Father Engagement

Outcome #2 – Teaming Formation and Function

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

Section III. Plan Strategies and Action Steps to be Implemented and Monitored

Outcome # 1: Father Engagement (Engagement Efforts)

Definition from the QSR Protocol Version 4.0: Degree to which those working with the child/youth and family (parents and other caregivers) are:

- Finding family members who can provide support and permanency for the child/youth.
- Developing and maintaining a culturally competent, mutually beneficial trust-based working relationship with the child/youth and family.
- Focusing on the child/youth 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 child care supports, where necessary, to increase family participation in planning and support efforts.

Desired Future State (DFS)

Identifying/Finding

- Identify fathers from the first contact with the agency
- Use diligent search and then reach out using more than letters to contact the father and his family
- Ensuring that the father and his family are safe, healthy members to engage
- We would know the “why” behind a mom not wanting the father involved (ex. Domestic violence)

Caseworker Skills for Engaging

- Being able to talk with mothers and work with them to identify the father
- Talking with the family and gaining their agreement to hold a Family Meeting
- Skills for involving an incarcerated father at the appropriate level
- Caseworkers would have the skills to engage families in the dialogue about FF and Family Meetings
- Families would agree to FF and Family Meetings
- Supervisors would actively support staff in developing the skills to engage fathers and paternal relatives
- Mentoring would occur with all new caseworkers to support skill development

Court Support

- Judge asks the mother/family to identify father and other family members in court and have it be part of the court record
- Judge follows through on court order for family to disclose father and other members
- Fathers would be involved before reaching the point of TPR

Services

- Have services to support co-parenting

From this DFS, the team identified goals which they believe when accomplished, will result in greater engagement of fathers and paternal relatives.

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

Goals

1. Fathers have been correctly identified
2. Fathers have an active voice and are involved in casework
3. Paternal relatives correctly identified
4. Paternal relatives have an active voice and are involved in casework
5. Engage fathers on cases that will be accepted for service
6. System is accommodating to the needs of fathers to encourage their participation
7. Caseworkers have the skills necessary to work with mothers to identify and then engage fathers/paternal relatives

Assessment

Strengths (What we already do)

- Family Finding Coordinator meets with the family at court
- Caseworkers talk with the family about Family Finding and receiving in-home services
- Offer Family Group Meeting to families, which includes fathers and paternal kin
- Continue father engagement/paternal kin throughout the time the family is involved with the agency
- Send monthly letters to fathers to notify them of what is happening with their child(ren)
- Annual Family Finding expectation
- Caseworkers are expected to consistently ask about kin when meeting with the family
- Fathers are invited to court hearings
- At the time of placement fathers are informed and sent placement paperwork
- Have a second shift that can do visits outside the regular business day
- Fathers are invited to participate in plan development
- Send letters, make phone calls
- Use the interstate compact process

Challenges (Gaps – Why we don't engage)

- Mother may not tell us who the father is
- Mother says father doesn't want to be involved
- Mother may not know who the father is
- Father doesn't want to be involved – may be a cultural value that mothers raise children, not fathers
- Father is working and not available
- Father may not feel valued by the agency/court
- Father is incarcerated and involving them is challenging
- Fathers are not nearby and/or not in this country
- Mother doesn't like or have a relationship with paternal kin
- Location of kin is a distance

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

- Challenges around fathers/kin wanting to visit, but not a be a resource
- When fathers do come to court, they get inundated with expectations
- Plan requirements are not individualized to fathers
- Cultural barriers to engagement
- Sometimes fathers are the perpetrator, pending criminal investigations
- Services are more geared toward mothers, not as many services for fathers

Root cause:

- Because of time constraints, do the minimum
- If fathers don't respond we assume they don't want to be involved
- Our culture is more mother focused
- Female dominated field both CW Agency and Provider – harder to connect with father's
- Fathers may be more open to a male caseworker than a female
- Young workforce makes it more challenging
- Concerns about how a female caseworker may be perceived by the father (can't be too nice, misconstrued as flirtatious/overly friendly)
- Judicial system only available during daytime hours
- Transient nature of the clients
- We place higher expectations on fathers, unable to get the same public assistance as mothers
- May be an incentive for the family to keep father's information a secret
- Only get birth certificates for children in placement. Cost prohibitive to do it for all children.
- Workforce is not reflective of the population served
- Limited number of bi-lingual staff

Planning

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
Goal 1: Fathers being correctly identified					
	a. Refine a Father Finding Referral Form (replace the multiple existing forms)	Form completed	Father Engagement Workgroup	May 2018	Form was approved by sponsor team
	b. Add the form to the H drive once approved by Sponsor	Form added to the H drive	Clerical Supervisor	May 2018	Check in with clerical/sponsor for completion

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
	c. Caseworker sends the form to a staff distribution list of ones who have access to mechanisms to search for fathers (Facebook, driver's license, Accurint, etc.) to initiate the request for finding/identifying (follow the same process as CLEAN)	Updates to the form will be emailed to the distribution list	Caseworker and Distribution List Members	June 2018	Check in with clerical/sponsor for completion
	d. Develop and distribute posters to remind staff about engaging fathers	Poster samples	Father Engagement Workgroup	October 2018	Post them around the office around the time of the mini-meeting
	e. Hold mini-meetings to train staff on how to use the search venues	Agenda from the mini-meeting	Father Engagement Co-Chairs	October 2018	Roll the form out at a mini-meeting – review what is currently on schedule for mini-meetings, find a time to hold the mini-meeting Hold mini-meetings annually
	f. Develop a definitions page of each type of father (putative, legal, etc.)	Definitions page provided at the SWAN conference	Father Engagement Workgroup	July 2018	Give out at mini meetings and to new staff during onboarding
	g. Can identify the type of father in CMS and have a different color for fathers (mom is pink)	Requests will be completed	CYS Errors Group and Weidenhammer group	2019	Request has been made for the change, other items have higher priority at this time
	h. Explore what search venues all caseworkers could access	List of approved search venues	Father Engagement Workgroup	May 2018 – discuss with Sponsor Team	Workgroup will report back to CI Team

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
2. Develop and Distribute a policy on Family Finding/Father Engagement					
	a. Policy Workgroup is working on developing a policy	Policy complete and approved by sponsor	Policy work group with reps from Father Engagement	September 2018	Need to develop plan for monitoring with Sponsor Team
	b. Place the policy on the H drive	Policy can be found on H drive	Need to determine who	September 2018	Need to develop plan for monitoring with Sponsor Team
	c. Supervisors review policy with casework staff	Supervisory conference notes reflect discussion	Supervisors	September 2018	Need to develop plan for monitoring with Sponsor Team
3. Develop and/or contract for an evidence-based/promising practices fatherhood program.					
	a. Form a small workgroup to research evidence-based practices/promising practices to meet the agencies needs regarding engaging/working with fathers	List of programs/options	Small workgroup	December 2018	Present information to father engagement
	b. Develop recommendations on which programs would best meet the agency's needs	List of recommendations	Father Engagement workgroup	February 2019	Meet with the workgroup regarding recommendations
	c. Present the recommendations to sponsor team	Contracts completed and accepted by Sponsor Team	Father Engagement Workgroup	March 2019	Decision made on contracting with a program

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
4. Develop Caseworker skills for engaging and working with fathers.					
	a. Identify a group of caseworkers to participate in a pilot to intensely analyze cases to understand the barriers to and build the father engagement	Volunteers identified-2 from in-home and 2 from placement	Sara, Bob and Bethanne	December 31, 2018	Provide updates to CI Team
	b. Meet with the workers monthly to review engagement activities and progress on activities	Father engagement form completion	Sara, Bob and Bethanne	January 2019	Provide updates to CI Team
	c. Hold monthly meetings for a period of six months to track impact of the intensive case reviews	Spreadsheet showing the impact (numbers) related to the engagement efforts	Sara, Bob and Bethanne	June 2019	Provide updates to CI Team

Outcome # 2: Team Formation/Functioning

Definition: Degree to which: • Appropriate team members 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 have sufficient craft knowledge, skills, and cultural awareness to work effectively with this child/youth and family. • Members of the team have a pattern of working effectively together to share information, plan, provide, and evaluate services for the child/youth and family.

Desired Future State

Membership

- We would use the FGDM philosophy
- We would know the team members and their responsibilities

Communication

- We would establish clear communication that is direct, consistent, respectful and open

Services

- We would have clear expectations of services and they would meet the needs of the child and family

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

- We would have competent providers that meet the needs of our families and our contracts with them would reflect the teaming expectations
- Insurance companies would contract with providers that meet specific needs
- We would not have duplication of services

Goals

1. Universal expectations for providers – paperwork, timeframes
2. Expectations for CYS staff
3. Updating H Drive – relabeling things, creating folders
4. Update policies and procedures
5. Alternative work schedules, work from home, being more mobile
6. Need better technology
7. Court documents are being scanned in to make them easier to find
8. Increasing bi-lingual and ASL staff
9. Changing the court process, right now it's an all call at 9:30AM
10. Identify mutual benefit
11. Community based intervention

The team felt strongly that communication provides the foundation for team formation and functioning, which led to the further assessment via a staff survey on communication. The Communication categories included:

- Mobility (1)
- Technology (2)
- Court (3)
- Hiring/Training (4)

The team agreed that mobility and technology closely related to each other and the technology may be a barrier to mobility and maintaining communication.

Assess (Communication)

Strengths (What we have/already do)

- Agency provided cell phones
- Laptops
- Benefits:
 - More efficient
 - Better time management

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

- Timeliness of paperwork - Stay up to date on notes and paperwork
- More comprehensive notes
- Get to clients quicker
- Decrease stress
- More time with families
- Lower overtime
- Better services to families
- We would be more accessible to families, providers, system partners
- Would be able to text the families that only text – can reach the families
- Able to receive reports electronically and respond quickly
- Could have an electronic sign in

Challenges (Gaps)

- Process for obtaining an emergency order for placement
- Not everyone uses the technology
- Duplication of efforts/services
- Not everyone understands what resources we have
- Providers/GAL's, etc. can't enter information directly into our system

Root Causes (why we don't use technology to stay connected)

- Doesn't work in the field
- Difficult connecting to jet pack
- Staff don't do their updates on the computer
- IT may not know about all the issues
- Staff are not using the technology
- Technology is outdated
- Difficult to engage the family and use the computer
- Sometimes too much going on in the session
- Staff weren't trained on how to use the surfaces
- Difficult to maintain the privacy when working in the field

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

Planning

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
1. Complete a staff survey to determine the top priorities for the group to address					
2. Establish workgroups to address the four areas identified related to teaming: Technology/Mobility, Court, Hiring/Training					
3. Have the technology necessary to successfully complete our work and stay connected to the team in the field/when mobile.					
	a. Identify the reasons why staff don't use the technology.	List of reasons	Mobility/ Technology Workgroup	By December 2018	Survey/feedback from staff Feedback from training Educate the agency on using technology
	b. Check with other counties on how they use their technology 1) What successes are they experiencing? 2) What challenges are they having?	Meetings with Dauphin, Montgomery, Delaware, Chester, York, and Lancaster Memo stating strengths/weaknesses	Teaming Co-chairs and other reps from CI Team as approved Mobility/ Technology Workgroup	By December 2018	Formal meetings with other counties Check on workgroup's research
	c. Research technology available to meet the staff needs/wants (ex. Mobile scanners)	Compile power point	Mobility/ Technology Workgroup	By December 2018	Present power point to sponsor team
	d. Develop a proposal for the technology needed	Actual proposal	Mobility/ Technology Workgroup and CI Team	By December 2018	Included in budget for FY 2020-2021

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
4. Train staff on how to use the technology					
	a. Inform IT of the issues identified (need a point person for IT and possibly an agency liaison for IT to inform of updates, changes, etc.)	List developed of the needs related to using the technology (Surface Pro)	Teaming Workgroup	August 2018	Possible QW- information from 3a. Currently may be Justin
	b. Determine what technology is available to staff currently	List of technology	Mobility/ Technology Workgroup	August 2018	Gathered information on current technology
	c. Schedule training with IT for all staff	Mini-meeting Feedback forms	Teaming Workgroup and Krista	September 2018	Gather information from the helpdesk on what issues are submitted Have general training on the surface pro-then gather more specific needs and hold additional mini-meetings
5. Increase the buy in for the use of technology					
	a. Meet with the union stewards and administration to discuss the use of technology and being mobile	Notes summarizing the meeting	Teaming Workgroup	TBD	Pending negotiations with union
	b. Develop recommendations on guidelines for using technology and working while mobile (strengthening time management, allowing more time with families, staying connected to team members)	Draft guidelines/ policy and procedure	Teaming Workgroup	Recommendations by June 2019 Implementation by July 2020	Pending negotiations with union

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
6. Increase the support for caseworkers					
	a. Increase the number of case aides to accomplish the work (ex. Additional transportation and translation)	Cost analysis of using case-aides vs. contracting out	Hiring/ Training Workgroup	June 2019	Present analysis to sponsor team
7. Hiring staff that best fit the need of the agency and retaining them					
	a. Participate in job fairs to help market the agency and solicit individuals with the degrees that best fit the agency needs	Interview candidates would report that they heard about the job from a job fair	QA staff and the hiring/training workgroup	June 2019	Track how many candidates are hired and how long they stay
	b. Supervisors sit in on the interview to help identify the best candidates	Calendar/ interview notifications	Administration	August 2018	Update from supervisors and caseworkers
	c. Supervisors provide training to new staff post orientation and certification training	Performance review and supervisory notes which would include supervisor's observation in the field	Supervisors	March 2019	Recommend to sponsor team that the performance evaluation policy be revised to include the observation expectations
	d. Supervisors go out in the field with new staff to teach them how to do the work post orientation and certification training	Performance review and supervisory notes which would include supervisor's observation in the	Supervisors	March 2019	CI Team check on the data Feedback from supervisors and caseworkers

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
		field			
	e. Supervisors would model for new staff how to do the work	Performance review and supervisory notes which would include supervisor's observation in the field	Supervisors	March 2019	Feedback from supervisors and caseworkers
	f. Supervisors would have the knowledge and skills to teach/model for staff	Performance review and supervisory notes which would include supervisor's observation in the field	Supervisors	March 2019	Feedback from supervisors and caseworkers
	g. Have a staff member that can provide the training/modeling for new workers and revamp orientation process	Job Description created	Hiring/ Training Workgroup	July 2019	Feedback from workers who shadow and who train new workers
	h. Review interview process and questions and make recommendations including ensuring that they meet all the necessary requirements before being hired	Proposed recommendations for changes	CI Team/ Admin	August 2018	Provide proposed changes to sponsor team
8. Increase teamwork amongst the caseworkers and providers					
	a. Have a meeting between caseworkers to move a case from one department to another (intake to in-home, intake to	Check box on passing sheet	Hiring/ Training Workgroup	June 2019	Gather feedback from caseworkers on how the meetings are going

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
	placement, in-home to placement, placement to in-home) – shorter than a pass meeting	Add to policy Passing case checklist			Guidance on the meeting structure
	b. Update checklists to include having the meeting between caseworkers	Updated Checklist	Hiring/ Training Workgroup	August 2018	Obtain approval from sponsor team
	c. Have the passing worker and the assigned worker attend the hearing with the family to help with transfer process.	Add to policy	Hiring/ Training Workgroup	January 2019	CW and Sup sign off on the checklist
	d. Develop a policy/procedure for teaming in Berks County	New policy	Hiring/ Training Workgroup	June 2019	Use FGDM philosophy to inform the policy
	e. Update and distribute the resource guide	Updated guide	Hiring/Training Workgroup	January 2019	Share at a staff, update the guide every six months as needed, give to all new caseworkers during orientation
9. Establish expectations for teaming and reporting information with providers					
	a. Establish expectations for communication with the caseworker	FGDM Philosophy Training	Hiring/ Training Workgroup	June 2019	Ensure that all staff receive the training
	b. Establish guidelines for reporting to the agency to foster clear communication.	FGDM Philosophy Training	Hiring/ Training Workgroup	June 2019	Ensure that all staff receive the training

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
	c. Explore having a portal (way to access each other's systems) that providers and agency staff can access and enter information into to facilitate quicker sharing of information (help with organization, time management, court reporting, communication)	CMS Portal	Technology, CYs Errors and Weidenhammer Workgroups	Recommendations - June 2019 Implementation by July 2020	Explore if there is a way to do this like the billing access Discussion with Brad – twice weekly tech meetings
10. Improve court process to allow for better time management and more cost-efficient functioning of team members.					
	a. Explore how other counties schedule court	List of strengths weaknesses from Dauphin, Montgomery and Delaware, Chester, York, Lancaster	Court Workgroup/CI Team	December 2018	Schedule and meet with other counties
	b. Explore alternatives to having judges hear all dependency cases (using hearing masters more often - Talk with AOPC/OCFC about options for how court is held – dependency/review hearing	List of Alternatives	Court Workgroup	December 2018	Share information gathered with sponsor team and gain approval to continue
	a. Make recommendations on changing court scheduling	Proposal for scheduling	Court Workgroup	January 2019	Obtain sponsor team approval
	b. Establish guidelines/expectations for the all team members for court	Guidelines published	Court Workgroup/CI Team	June 2019	Written guidelines
	f. Share ideas with administration to meet with the court and discuss	Presentation of proposed	CI Team	June 2019	Sponsor Team agreement to share with the court

County Improvement Plan (CIP)

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date/ Timeframe	Monitoring
		guidelines			
	g. Implement changes to court process	Revised court scheduling process	Admin	June 2020	Survey agency staff, GAL's, Attorneys, Judges, Masters, and families
	h. Attend bi-monthly Court/CYS Roundtable with the judges to discuss court process or work through Krista as a liaison to this meeting.	Greater understanding of changes, challenges and processes, stronger teaming with the court system	Court Workgroup, Court Scheduling Committee	September 2018	Reporting at CI Team of the information from the Court/CYS Roundtable, relay information to staff as needed to improve communication, schedule time with Krista prior to her monthly meeting with the judge on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

Enter monitoring plan here: CI Team will meet monthly to review plan progress, Sponsor will meet bi-monthly

Month and Year for the next state-supported Quality Service Review: September 2020

State-supported QSRs must occur at least every 3 years, but frequency cannot occur more than once every year.