

BEAVER County Children and Youth Services  
**County Improvement Plan (CIP)**

**Date of Plan:** August 8, 2018

**Initial**

**Update**

**Section I. Team Members**

**Sponsor Team:**

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**Continuous Improvement Team:**

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

Beaver County Children and Youth Services (BCCYS) has a long history of involvement in continuous quality improvement work. This is the third County Improvement Plan as a result of a Quality Service Review. The Continuous Improvement Team has met quarterly throughout the past six years to develop, implement and monitor the change efforts within the organization. Some highlights from the past three years include:

- A simplified Family Service Plan used as an operational document that prioritizes the work to be done by the family, agency and providers. The tool provides visual aids of the progress that is being made. For families with children in care it aids in the ongoing full disclosure discussion. During interviews by the Quality Assurance Specialist families report the tool to be very helpful.
- The development of a quality assurance position. The first task for the person in this position is to assess the quality of home visit between caseworkers and families. The Home Visit Checklist is a tool developed by the Sponsor Team in conjunction with the Child welfare Resource Center to identify components of a quality home visit.
- A subgroup of the CI Team developed an agency resource guide. The guide has instructions for each step of the process from call screening through adoption/reunification/case closure. The guide also includes the paperwork for each step in the process.
- Another subgroup of the CI Team developed an orientation/onboarding process for new staff. The process was designed to provide a full overview of agency services, resources and supports. An interview was developed to be conducted after the caseworker carries a caseload to determine how effective the process is and what changes might be beneficial.
- A concurrent planning workgroup developed a Parent Handbook, outlined the full disclosure process and trained staff about how to complete genograms with the purpose of identifying additional resources for the family; developed guidelines for supervision regarding concurrent planning and provided a full disclosure skills training in conjunction with CWRC.

Ten cases were reviewed during the QSR in May of 2018. Because of a return home during the period between sample identification and the review week one out-of-home case was scored as an in-home case. Thus, there were 7 in-home cases reviewed and 3 out-of-home cases. Overall, BCCYS had a high percentage of acceptable ratings.

#### Strengths in Child/Youth and Family Status:

- Safety
- Living Arrangement
- Permanency
- Early Learning and Development
- Physical Health

#### Strengths in Practice Performance Indicators:

- Engagement Efforts
- Role and Voice
- Teaming
- Cultural Awareness and Responsiveness

- Efforts to Timely Permanence

Challenges in Child/Youth and Family Status:

- Stability
- Supporting Emotional Well-Being
- Pathways to Independence\*
- Parent/Caregiver Functioning

Challenges in Practice Performance Indicators:

- Long Term View
- Involvement of Child/Youth & Family in Planning Process
- Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments

It should be noted that there was only one case randomly selected that represented the Independent Living population. The youth refused IL services, therefore, the team was forced to give this rating a low score. However, this is not indicative of the services and supports provided to transition aged youth by Beaver County CYS.

The CI Team noted that Stability, Long Term View and Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments were all interrelated. Consequently, many of the strategies to impact these areas would be the same and would have a ripple effect on outcomes. Teaming and family engagement, especially of non-custodial parents, will positively impact the agency's ability to plan for transitions, work toward the same goals and ultimately increase stability. Thus, much of the plan will focus on enhancing those areas.

A systemic challenge that emerged as a result of focus groups with child welfare staff members and interviews of parents and key stakeholders during the QSR process was the lack of timely and adequate mental health services for children and adults. This is a reoccurring theme each year that a review has been completed. Children are presenting with much more complex issues at a younger age and the system does not have adequate services to address their needs. In addition, the lack of adequate and easily accessible drug and alcohol treatment programs is adversely impacting the ability of parents, and some teens, to successfully complete treatment and close out with child welfare. The inability of drug and alcohol providers to join the team and share information continues to be a challenge that impacts family stability and the ability for families to thrive independently of CYS intervention.

Findings related to Outcome # 1: Engagement Efforts, Teaming, Long Term View; Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments

In the summary report created by Hornby, Zeller and Associates it was noted that:

For the indicator which assesses the 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, the county saw 90 percent

of cases rated as "acceptable." Cases were just as likely to be rated acceptably under the "Formation" sub-indicator (90%) as the "Functioning" sub-indicator (90%).

When "Teaming" was rated acceptably, there was a common reason reported in each corresponding case story that team members work as a whole and do not operate independently of one another and have a clear understanding of the permanency goal(s). The acceptable formation of the team appears to stem directly from the thorough assessment of the case participants that informed the caseworker of which service providers and extended family supports to bring into the case.

Per the reviewer's case stories, acceptable functioning was due to excellent rapport the caseworker developed not only with the child/youth and family but also with the service providers and other stakeholders. Reviewers from an in-home case observed, "Team members, particularly the child's service providers have been flexible in developing a plan for the child to help him succeed academically."

The two unacceptable ratings under "Teaming" both occurred within out-of-home cases but under different sub-indicators. The unacceptable "Formation" sub-indicator rating pertained to the lack of extended family involvement in the team. The unacceptable "Functioning" sub-indicator rating pertained to team members working independently from the group and towards separate permanency goals.

#### Findings related to Outcome # 2: Stability, Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments and Permanency

As indicated by the Hornby, Zeller and Associates report the indicator pertaining to the planning of upcoming transitions and life adjustments of participants in the case, the county had 58 percent of the applicable cases rated as "acceptable." In-home cases were more likely to be rated unacceptable, with four of the six in-home cases scoring an overall unacceptable rating for Stability. The stability of the "Living Arrangement" sub-indicator was less likely to be rated within the acceptable range compared to the stability of the "School" sub-indicator.

The reasons that reviewers noted in the case stories for the unacceptable ratings were varied. Among the in-home cases reasons included: a threat that the home would be officially condemned; up to three changes in residency over the past 12 months for two separate cases; and changes to the voluntary kinship placement of the focus child/youth. All of the out-of-home cases were rated within the unacceptable range for Stability due to a number of placement setting changes.

#### Findings related to Outcome # 3: Engagement Efforts and Role and Voice

Although Beaver County CYs had a relatively high engagement score engagement of non-custodial parents is an ongoing process. This is evident in the HZA Round 8 QSR Summary Report where the following was noted:

The "Engagement Efforts" indicator was rated as acceptable in 92 percent of the cases reviewed. All children, mothers, and substitute caregivers were reported as being fully engaged by the caseworker. Though several family situations were not conducive

to engagement efforts, such as the incarceration of parents and serious mental health issues, the caseworkers were reported to be managing these concerns and succeeding in engaging case participants. Much of this success appears to stem from the caseworker’s diligence in providing consistent casework, such as providing supervised visitations between parents and children along with providing transportation when needed, maintaining regular communication with case participants, and acknowledging caregivers by praising their “high motivation” to rectify the concerns of the County.

The three unacceptable ratings, across the five sub-indicators, were reported for fathers in one out-of-home case and one in-home case, and for the "other" case participant in a single in-home case. Reviewers noted the barriers to acceptable engagement with these fathers included a total lack of interest by one father in being involved in the child/youth’s life and one father who was reported as not feeling respected by the County. Reviewers noted this father felt the County had chosen to work exclusively with just the mother and his involvement was unnecessary.

In spite of the mostly positive results, engagement efforts remain high on the priority list of Beaver County CYS because it will impact outcomes in many areas for the children and their parents.

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

**Outcome #1: Engagement Efforts, Teaming, Long Term View; Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments**

**Goal: To increase positive outcomes for children and families by ensuring that family members, providers, child welfare staff and other key stakeholders work together throughout the life of the case.**

Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Status Update
<b>a. Improved teaming with key stakeholders and families</b>			
Jan 2019	Use FGDM/FTM more frequently for initial FSP development and throughout the life of the case for ongoing case planning.	FGDM Tracking Caseworkers Supervisors	Ongoing work from 2015 CIP
Jan 2019	Caseworker will monitor FGDM/FTM goals and activities through regular contact with meeting participants.	Documentation in CAPS Caseworker Supervisor	New
June 2019	Multidisciplinary team meeting will be held quarterly at a minimum, and more frequently for complex cases, to increase joint assessment and Family Service Plan development.	MDT invitation/participation list Quality of FSP Casework Managers Supervisors Caseworkers Providers	NEW

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Status Update
Oct 2018	Caseworkers and families will have input/feedback regarding effectiveness of providers and choosing a family's team.	Documentation in CAPS	Caseworkers Supervisors Providers	Ongoing work from 2012 CIP
Jan 2019	Quality Assurance interviews will lead to plan of action for improving practice when themes are identified.	QA Documentation CI Team work	Managers QA Specialist CI Team	NEW
Jan 2019	Supervisors will continue to hold unit meetings and case reviews where teaming is prioritized and planned for.	Supervisor documentation	Supervisors Managers	Ongoing
<b>b. Supervisors will have the skills and ability to support collaboration, coordination and case planning the is proactive.</b>				
Oct 2018	Supervisors will be educated about resources available/point persons at agency and educate staff during supervision and staff meetings.	Supervision Notes Staff Meeting Agenda	Managers Supervisors	NEW
Oct 2018	New supervisors will participate in an onboarding/mentoring process to learn new roles and responsibilities.	Adaptation of onboarding process	Managers	NEW
Jan 2019	Managers will model proactive thinking and planning during work with casework supervisors.	Supervision notes	Managers	NEW
Jan 2019	The QA Home Visit Checklist will be used as a tool to establish expectations for content and structure of home visits.	Supervision Notes Supervisor Meeting Agendas	Managers Supervisors	NEW

**Outcome #2: Stability and Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments**  
**Goal: Increase stability in home and school environments.**

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Status Update
<b>a. Parents will understand their roles and responsibilities in the casework process and those of key stakeholders.</b>				

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Status Update
Sept 2018	Caseworkers and families will use FSP/ CPP to review goals, progress and discuss timelines	CAPS documentation FSP Junior	Supervisors Caseworkers	Ongoing
Sept 2019	Families will provide feedback on the FSP assessment, planning and implementation process vis quality assurance interviews.	Quality Home Visit Checklist Interview Guide	Quality Assurance Specialist	NEW
<b>b. All team members will participate in developing a plan for case closure.</b>				
Sept 2018	In cases of reunification, visitation of child with family will continue to increase over time.	CAPS Documentation Court Order Visitation Plan	Caseworker Supervisor Visitation provider	Ongoing
Sept 2018	FGDM will continue to be used for transition planning/case closure.	FGDM Tracking CAPS Documentation	Supervisors Caseworkers Contract Monitor	Ongoing
Jan 2019	A transition plan for CYS visits to a family prior to case closure will be developed and implemented.	New policy and procedure CAPS documentation	Workgroup	New
June 2019	A 3-month after care plan will be developed to support transition and family's independence.	New policy and procedure	Workgroup Administration	NEW
June 2019	The court will be educated about the process of reunification and case closure.		Administrator Court Liaison	NEW
June 2019	The FGDM process will be analyzed and tracked to determine when it can have the greatest positive impact.	Tracking information Family Outcomes	Contract Monitor Supervisors Provider	NEW
<b>c. Supervisors will model and support critical thinking and decision making.</b>				
Oct 2018	Supervisors/Managers will discuss successful case closure criteria from the date of case acceptance.	Supervisory Notes	Supervisors Casework Managers	NEW

	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Evidence of Completion</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Status Update</b>
Oct 2018	Supervisors/Managers will review risk and safety assessment and additional information with caseworker to evaluate stability of the family's living arrangement and plan accordingly.	Supervisory Notes FSP/PPP Goals	Supervisors Casework Managers	Ongoing
Jan 2019	Supervisors/Managers will provide clinical supervision that focuses on family circumstances, progress and challenges to support proactive casework and plan for transitions.	Supervisory Notes	Supervisors Casework managers	NEW
Jan 2019	Supervisors will be involved and FGDM planning and preparation meetings with provider and caseworker.	Supervisory Notes	Supervisors	NEW

### **Outcome #3: Engagement Efforts and Role and Voice**

**Goal:** Beaver County staff members will work with all family members, including non-custodial parents, to jointly assess needs and develop, implement and monitor a plan of action.

	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Evidence of Completion</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Status Update</b>
<b>a. Casework will reflect agency values and best practice</b>				
Oct 2018	Monitor effectiveness of orientation/mentoring program for new hires and ongoing mentoring for seasoned staff that reflects agency values and practice	Exit and Stay Interviews	Administrator QA Specialist	Ongoing
Oct 2018	Quality Assurance Specialist will interview families to assess fidelity to agency standards.	Quality Assurance Data	Administration Casework Managers	NEW
Oct 2018	A communication will be developed to help families understand the purpose of the QA process	Brochure/email	Quality Assurance Specialist	NEW
Jan 2019	Quality Home Visit Checklist will be used to convey goals and expectations for to staff of content of home visits.	Included in staff orientation Supervisory Notes	Casework Managers Supervisors	NEW
Jun 2019	A mentoring structure will be established that includes a 6-month mentoring relationship.	Revision to onboarding process	Administration CI Team	NEW

Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Status Update	
<b>b. Paternal and maternal family members will be engaged throughout the casework process.</b>				
June 2019	Enhanced family finding process to be developed/defined for Beaver County CY5.	Policy and Procedure FEI Tracking	Workgroup	NEW
June 2019	Staff will receive ongoing training about updates to the family finding process.	Training Calendar	Administration	NEW
Jan 2019	Enhance current fatherhood program to include regular communication with casework staff RE: father's progress	Referral and communication process	Caseworkers Supervisors Providers Contract monitor	NEW
Jan 2019	Fatherhood workgroup recommendations will be revisited to renew commitment to relevant strategies.	CI Team notes	CI Team Casework Managers	Ongoing from 2012 CIP
June 2019	All staff will participate in values training regarding the importance of father involvement.	Training Sign-in sheets	Management/CWRC	NEW
June 2019	Caseworkers will attempt regular contact with incarcerated parents to involve them in the casework process and plan for their transition home.	CAPS Documentation	Casework Managers Supervisors Caseworkers	
<b>c. Families will have multiple opportunities to ask questions and provide input throughout the life of the case</b>				
June 2019	Regular team meetings to include key stakeholders and families	Documentation in CAPS	Caseworkers Supervisors	Ongoing
Sept 2018	FSP will outline needs and services by order of importance with target dates	FSP Junior CAPS Documentation Family Interviews	Caseworkers Supervisors Providers QA Specialist	Ongoing

	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Evidence of Completion</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Status Update</b>
Sept 2018	Parent Handbook will be provided as resource for parents' rights and responsibilities	Handbook	Caseworkers	Ongoing
Sept 2018	FSP's will be used as a tool to guide work during home visits	Case Notes Supervisory Notes QA Interviews	Caseworkers Supervisors QA Specialist	Ongoing
September 2018	Home visits will be structured in a way that promotes clear goals, next steps and people responsible.	Case Notes Supervisory Notes QA Interviews	Caseworkers Supervisors QA Specialist	Ongoing

The Agency's next state-supported Quality Service Review will be held in: 2021