

Butler County Children and Youth Services County Improvement Plan (CIP)

Date of Plan: 04/10/17

Initial Update

Section I. Team Members

Sponsor Team:

Charles Johns (Administrator)

Karianne Sarnese (Casework Manager)

Brandon Savochka (Casework Manager)

Continuous Improvement Team:

Brandie Birkbichler (Fiscal)

Laura Gellner (Caseworker)

Heather Kniess (Supervisor)

Christina Neuch (Caseworker)

Kayla Somerville (Caseworker)

Nicole Burdett (Caseworker)

Cathryn Heakins (Program Specialist)

Jodi Miller (Supervisor)

Erin Sankey (Paralegal)

Beth Culley (Caseworker)

Rhonda Jewart (Paralegal)

Heidi Morris (Caseworker)

Michelle Sink (Caseworker)

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

Butler County has been involved in multiple rounds of the Quality Service Reviews. Past County Improvement Plans have mainly focused on outcomes for cases accepted for services. This year, in addition to the Agency's QSR results (including focus group content), the sponsor team included data from its Needs Based Plan and Budget to identify areas to be addressed in the County Improvement Plan. The Continuous Improvement Team was asked to consider practice in both the Intake and Ongoing Units and to develop a plan to improve outcomes pertaining to:

- Engagement
- Stability
- Teaming

A Continuous Improvement Team was formed with representation from all Units in the agency. The Agency's Practice Improvement Specialist from the Child Welfare Resource Center facilitated this process over a series of meetings using the DAPIM model.

The team began by developing the following **Define Statements**:

Engagement

The Agency will identify, locate, and contact the parents. The Agency will also gather information to identify family members, family friends, and any other positive supports for the family. The Agency will use all available resources including, but not limited to, the Accurint Search to locate supports for the family.

The Agency will remain in regular, consistent contact with the parents while children are in placement. Contact with parents should be in a neutral location, preferably the family's natural environment, when at all possible. The caseworker should be the leader in the case, and should not rely solely on service providers to maintain contact with parents. While involved with a family, the Agency will encourage parents to utilize their natural supports.

Teaming

The Caseworker should arrange regular, frequent meetings with family members and providers. Throughout the family's involvement with the Agency, all team members should remain focused on the same goal(s) and assess progress regularly. It is important that all team members are aware of their own role as well as the roles of all other team members. Stability in team members is also important although not always possible.

Stability

Whenever possible, children should remain in their family home, and the Agency should provide adequate and appropriate supportive services to make this possible. If a child must be removed from the home, the Agency can help avoid disruption by choosing the best placement first. It is important for the Agency to consider the child's school placement and connections with supports when choosing a placement. The Agency must also identify possible issues with a placement and plan to prevent or address these issues as they arise. When a child is returned to the family home, the Agency will ensure that the parents are prepared and that the family has adequate natural supports to avoid recidivism.

Assess:

The priority gaps selected by the Continuous Improvement (CI) Team once the Assessment phase of the DAPIM model was completed focused on ways staff could engage and team with families to assist in identifying family and friends who could serve as supports. An equally important focus was placed on family engagement and teaming with family members and providers to ensure placement stability for children/youth placed in kinship care and for those placed in provider resource homes.

Of continuing concern to the CI team was the number of children entering placement placed outside of Butler County due to the lack of resource family homes in Butler County. Overall staff believes they do very good work identifying relatives and kin for children and youth who cannot safely remain in their homes. However, if no relatives or kin are available as a placement resource, few

children/youth remain within the county borders once placed in foster care. The county has phased out its foster care program and now uses provider foster care exclusively.

Plan:

The plan which follows is a direct result of the assessment work done by the CI team.

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

Outcome #1: Engagement Efforts, Stability, Teaming

Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Status Update	
a. Develop and implement best practice guidance for family finding				
July 2017	Write best practice guidance for family finding	Guidance	Workgroup	
Oct. 2017	Train staff on best practice guidance for family finding	Certificate	Workgroup CWRC	
Jan. 2018	Monitor use of the best practice guidance for family finding	Data	CI Team	
b. Develop and implement guidance outlining expectations for contacts/visits with parents				
June 2017	Write best practice guidance for contacts/visits with parents for both in-home and out-of-home cases	Guidance	Workgroup	
Sept. 2017	Review best practice guidance with staff for contacts/visits with parents	Certificate		
Jan. 2018	Monitor use of the best practice guidance for contacts/visits with parents	Data	CI Team	
c. Implement Ice-breaker meetings				
July 2017	Develop a plan for the implementation of Ice-breaker meetings for children entering placement or living with relatives/kin on a safety plan	Plan	CI Team	
Dec. 2017	Train all CYS and placement provider staff on Ice-breaker meetings	Certificate	TBD	

	Action Steps	Evidence of Completion	Person(s) Responsible	Status Update
Jan. 2018	Monitor implementation of Ice-breaker meetings	Data	CI Team	

d. Create information resources for substitute care providers

Sept. 2017	Write a handbook for relatives, kin, and Resource Parents who have children placed in their homes	Handbook	Workgroup	
Aug. 2017	Write an informational brochure for relatives and kin caring for children on a Safety Plan	Informational brochure	Workgroup	

e. Increase teaming on all cases

Oct. 2017	Determine who is part of the team, how often the team will meet, the location for team meetings, a plan for inviting team members, and a plan for communicating between team meetings	Written guidance	CI Team	
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The Agency's next state-supported Quality Service Review will be held in: 2019