Annual Program Assessment Report

December 31, 2010

NEW YORK STATE
CHILD WELFARE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
ANNUAL REPORT

2010

New York State Unified Court System

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Introduction

This report describes activities undertaken towards implementation of the child welfare court improvement project grant objectives described in the preliminary five year strategic plan submitted with the 2006 grant proposals and refined in the final strategic plan submitted in the 2007 grant proposals. Activities undertaken during 2010 are the primary focus of this report.

Much of our work during 2010 has expanded upon the groundwork laid in preceding years on projects focused on improving the timeliness of child welfare court proceedings, particularly in the New York City Family Court and the largest jurisdictions outside New York City.

Major accomplishments during the year included:

- A kick off conference in support of our Enhanced Interdisciplinary Practices Initiative was held in March of 2010;
- Four additional CIP liaison staff was hired to support court improvement activities in New York City. The new hires assumed their positions on or about April 1, 2010;
- Darlene Ward was appointed as CWCIP Training Manager effective in December 2010
- Numerous local training programs were conducted and a plan for regional training programs was developed; and
- Work continued on the soon to be completed statewide child welfare court data metrics report that will provide meaningful data to assess and monitor child welfare court case management practices;

Implementation Strategies

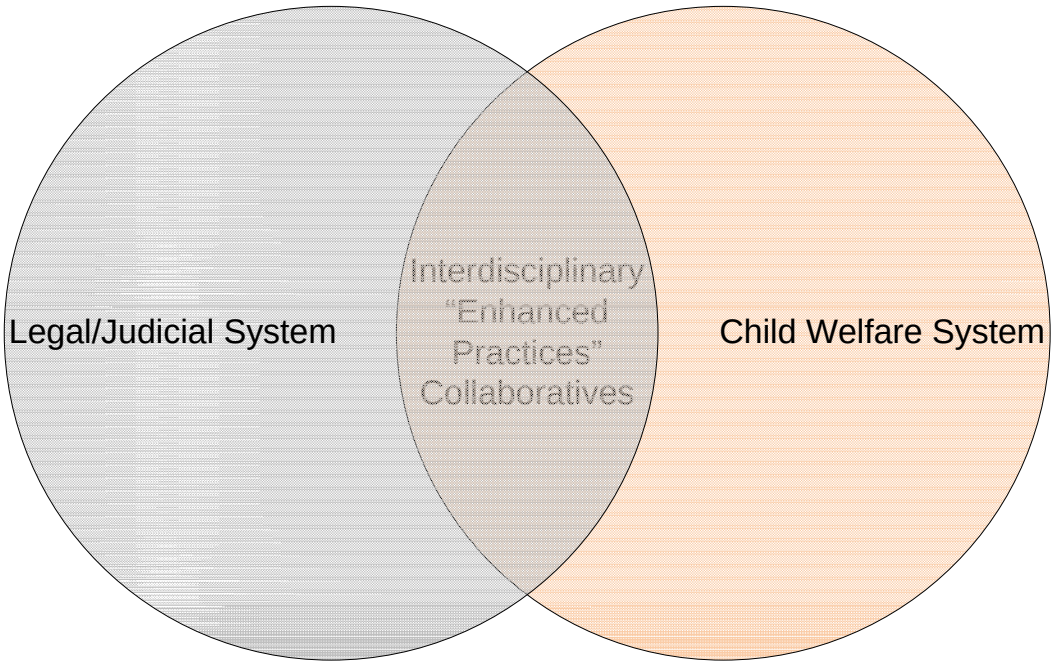
Significant progress has been made in developing the architecture across the state to support the expansion of Court Improvement and Model Court practices. The "Enhanced Interdisciplinary Child Welfare Practices Initiative" (the Initiative) aligns the goals of the statewide CWCIP with the NCJFCJ Model Courts project, the New York City Family Court Child Protective Plan and the Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan. The Initiative focuses court improvement activities in New York City, the 16 large counties outside of New York City and the St. Regis Mohawk Native American Tribe, jurisdictions that serve nearly 90% of the foster care population in New York State. Each of the local social service districts that are the focus of the CFSR PIP is included in our initiative.

The Initiative is coordinated with the advice and counsel of the Statewide Interdisciplinary Collaboration Group. As part of the state's Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan, the CWCIP and OCFS formed this statewide committee to bring stakeholders from the court and legal community together with social service district staff and OCFS regional office staff. In 2011 the CWCIP Advisory Group and OCA/OCFS Collaboration groups will be

merged to reduce costs, improve efficiency, and ensure members of both groups are "on the same page." The newly combined group will continue to act as the required advisory group for the CWCIP.

Each of the 22 jurisdictions has been assigned a CWCIP liaison whose primary function is to provide technical assistance to the interdisciplinary system change effort. CWCIP staff plays a key role in coordinating training programs and helping local groups effectively use data to guide improvement efforts. In addition, the CWCIP liaisons are a crucial resource in facilitating the development of strategic plans tailored to the needs of the respective localities.

Intervention at the Point of Intersection Between Interdependent Systems



At the local level, each county has established a multi-disciplinary group to plan and oversee the implementation of the reform effort. In each county a lead judge willing to accept the responsibility to spearhead systems reform efforts was selected. Planning groups generally include the commissioner of social services and other key system participants including court managers, local department of social services managers, attorneys for children, respondent parents' counsel, LDSS attorneys, CASA and mediation program administrators, foster care agency staff, and other service providers

Below is a summary of steps taken during 2010 towards implementation of five major statewide goals:

Goal 1: To achieve earlier permanency for children in foster care by improving timeliness to adjudication, disposition and resolution of termination of parental rights proceedings, decreasing number and duration of adjournments and providing for continuous trials.

Action steps taken during the year to accomplish goals:

- The Unified Court System established revised standards and goals requiring Family Courts to dispose of 75% of child abuse and neglect petitions within 6 months of filing;

- The CWCIP agreed to co-sponsor with the NY City ACS and Casey Family Programs an operational review of the Bronx and Queens county Family Courts to identify practices that impact on timeliness of court proceedings (see Appendix A, Project Description);

- County Teams participated in Ready, Set, Go! Statewide Conference (Agenda attached as Appendix B) which included a preliminary release of county-specific data related to time to adjudication and disposition;

- Judicial Leadership training was provided to Lead Judges to support their role in supporting local court improvement efforts (Agenda attached as Appendix C)

- CWCIP staff supported strategic planning in the 22 jurisdictions that are part of the "Enhanced Interdisciplinary Practices Initiative"

- CWCIP created four additional liaison positions to support activities in the New York City Family Court.

- A regional training entitled "Frontloading without Railroading" was developed and the first program was held on Long Island in early December (flyer attached as Appendix C) This training will focus on the respective roles and responsibilities of each professional to ensure cases get on the right track. Particular emphasis will be placed on services, placement decisions, visiting and conferences during the first 60 days post removal.

- Planning has begun for CWCIP and OCFS to partner with ABA and National Resource Center on Child Protection to implement their "Child Safety for Lawyers and Judges" curriculum in regional trainings to be conducted beginning in 2011.

Goal 2: Ensuring that every court appearance is meaningful by supporting thorough permanency hearings, including meaningful inquiry into the health, mental health and educational needs of children in foster care and ensuring practitioners are on-time and prepared for court

Action steps taken during the year to accomplish goal:

- Each county was surveyed to determine both the community's capacity to collaborate and individual professional's perceptions as to what degree their work is respected by other's in the child welfare and/or legal system and how each person understands the respective roles and responsibilities of other system players;

- The Colorado Court Improvement Project presented to our Statewide Interdisciplinary Collaboration Group on their "Roles and Responsibilities in the Child Welfare System" curriculum (with an eye towards possible replication in New York);

- Training programs on well-being and child participation in permanency hearings were conducted throughout the state;

- ACS and other LDSS have made commitments to practice improvements such as ensuring required reports are submitted to court timely;

- Some courts are increasing their use of "well-being" checklists to ensure meaningful inquiry into the health, mental health and educational needs of children;

- Some courts have developed protocols regarding child participation; and

- Cross-site visits were conducted to Los Angeles (New York City team) and Miami (Outside NYC team) to examine practices in those model courts in support of timeliness and well being initiatives (co-funded by Casey Family Programs and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges);

- CWCIP provided ongoing support for CASA Programs

- CWCIP provided funding support for an Educational Advocacy Pilot Project in the Westchester Family Court through a contract with the Center for Court Innovation (CCI). The Westchester Education Advocacy Project served 80 children in 2010, twenty more than required under the contract. In each of these cases, the Court reached out to the advocates to resolve knotty problems facing foster children in the educational system: lost paperwork, missed deadlines, undelivered services, children falling through the cracks between districts. Supervising Judge Davidson, the advocates, and CCI supervisors have regular meetings to track program numbers and outcomes. Judge Davidson continues to be very pleased and supportive of the program and the staff.

Goal 3: Assisting families to engage in problem-solving by expanding the use of ADR options and enhancing participation of children and youth in permanency hearings

Action steps taken during the year to accomplish goal:

- CWCIP provided ongoing support for permanency mediation programs in New York City and in the 5th Judicial District.

- A statewide permanency mediation curriculum was developed and piloted at a full week training held in Buffalo in November.

- A formal evaluation of the mediation project in the New York City Family Court is being conducted by Nancy Theonnes of the Center for Policy Research. The report of this evaluation will be completed sometime in 2011.

Goal 4: Reducing the disproportionate representation of minorities in the foster care population.

Action steps taken during the year to accomplish goal:

- Pilot Sites were established in Westchester, Bronx and Erie counties to implement "Courts Catalyzing Change;"

- A Judicial Training program held at the State Judicial Institute for judges from the three Courts Catalyzing Change pilot sites as well as judges in counties participating in OCFS-sponsored DMR initiatives;

- Large scale community-wide kick off events were held in each of the 3 pilot counties. These programs included consciousness raising activities designed to allow leaders to safely engage in difficult conversations around race to prepare them to plan for activities designed to reduce DMR.

- A contract with Hunter College School of Social Work was executed to allow research in Westchester County around important "decision points" that impact DMR.

5. Improving our capacity to collect and analyze data to monitor improvement efforts.

Action steps taken during the year to accomplish goal:

- Ongoing work to develop Child Welfare Court Data Metrics initial report.

- Ongoing work to coordinate with the OCA Division of Technology to implement Business Intelligence Software for future promulgation of data.

- Ongoing work with the New York City Family Court, ACS and the UCS Division of Technology to implement a data sharing project (see Appendix D for description of technical work performed by DoT)

- Collaborative distribution of OCFS Foster Care Data Packets to all Family Courts

- Support of research assistance services for several data collection project related to the NYC Family Court Child Protective Initiative (Appendix E).

- Support of consultant services to provide enhanced user documentation for the Universal Case Management System to improve quality data input

Basic Grant Initiatives

Supporting Collaboration: CWCIP work with OCFS for the Child and Family Services Review

A hallmark of the CWCIP approach is collaboration between the courts, child welfare agencies and other key stakeholders. As part of the state's Program Improvement Plan, developed in response to the most recent federal Child and Family Services Review, OCA and OCFS have formed a statewide committee which brings stakeholders from the court and legal community together with social service district staff and OCFS regional office staff. This group's mission is to "improve child welfare outcomes for children and families in New York State by supporting and encouraging effective collaborations between local family courts and the social services districts in those counties with the highest foster care populations in the state and by enhancing court and child welfare system practices at the State and local level through data sharing, cross-systems training, onsite technical assistance and other joint initiatives".

Support for Child Welfare Improvement Efforts/Enhancing Court Practices

The CWCIP is providing ongoing support to a major child protective reform initiative in the New York City Family Court. The initiative's objectives include: earlier permanency for children, ensuring all court appearances are meaningful, fewer adjournments, continuous trials, and expanded participation of children in their permanency hearings. The initiative provides that Family Courts will implement a broad array of "best practices" including frequent and in-depth court oversight of cases during their pendency through enhanced conferencing protocols and expanded use of mediation; the use of tools and checklists to enhance the court's inquiry into the safety, permanency, health and well-being of children, improved calendaring procedures, and the expanded use of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).

Much of the work of the New York City Initiative will be accomplished by borough-based collaborative "stakeholder" groups chaired by the respective Supervising Family Court Judge for each jurisdiction (Kings/Richmond, Queens, New York, and Bronx Counties). In the first half of 2010, in collaboration with the Office of New York City Family Court Administrative Judge Richardson-Mendelson, the CIP added four additional CWCIP liaison staff assigned to the Supervising Judges in the New York City boroughs to support judicial leadership in implementing recommended reforms. These positions will replicate the CWCIP Liaison approach that has been successfully implemented in districts outside New York City.

In 2009 the CWCIP launched a major initiative to enhance court practices around the state with an emphasis on those jurisdictions outside of New York City with the largest foster care population. During 2010 this initiative became fully operational with a major "kick-off" conference (described under training grant initiatives below) as well as support for local strategic planning efforts.

CWCIP views the work outside and within New York City as one integrated effort at improving court practices involving child welfare matters statewide.

Courts Catalyzing Change Initiative

In collaboration with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Permanency Planning for Children Department's Child Victims Act Model Courts project, the CWCIP took steps to support the implementation of the *Courts Catalyzing Change: Achieving Equity and Fairness in Foster Care* initiative in three pilot sites: Erie, Westchester and New York City. The goal of the initiative is to reduce racial disproportionality and disparities in the foster care system.

CWCIP Work with Native American Groups

The CWCIP continues to actively work with Native American groups, engaging them in the child welfare process for the benefit of their children. Some of the specific initiatives include:

Addition of St. Regis/Mohawk Tribal Court to the Enhanced Interdisciplinary Practices Initiative

During 2010 preliminary discussions began with Judge Peter Herne of the St. Regis/Mohawk Tribal Court to determine how the CWCIP might provide support for their expansion of their tribal court to handle child welfare matters.

Collaboration of the Eighth Judicial District and the Peacemaker Courts of the Seneca Nation of Indians

CWCIP staff participates in an ongoing collaboration between the courts of the Eighth Judicial District and the Cattaraugus and Allegany Peacemaker courts of the Seneca Nation. Examples of ongoing action items include the development of an inter-jurisdictional protocol and a tribal CASA program. Technical assistance is being provided to the Nation in the development of a program to assign attorneys to children.

Collaboration of the Niagara County Family Court and Chiefs and Clan Mothers of the Tuscarora Nation

CWCIP staff facilitates ongoing dialogue between the Judges of the Niagara County Family Court, attorneys representing children and parents and the Niagara County Family Court. This group meets to discuss their decision-making processes, facilitate communication and provide culturally competent training.

Collaboration of the Genesee County Family Court and the Tonawanda Seneca Band of Indians

CWCIP staff participates in a series of meetings between the Genesee County Family Court Judge, the Chief Clerk of the Court and Chiefs for the Tonawanda Seneca Band of Indians. These meetings resulted in an informal protocol for native children at risk of out-of-home placement.

NYS Federal State Tribal Courts Forum

CWCIP staff participates in quarterly meetings of the Forum—whose purpose "is to share information about the different justice systems [NYS and Tribal] in order to minimize and prevent conflict"[1]—and work with the training workgroup from the Forum to address issues concerning children in the child welfare system and the NYS courts.

National Adoption Day Activities

CWCIP staff participates in or organize National Adoption Day activities throughout New York State.

Adoption Panel Reviews & Permanency Panel Reviews

Across the State, CWCIP staff participates in adoption panel reviews with OCFS and County local child welfare agencies. These reviews have been ongoing for several years. In 2010, additional reviews were added as a requirement by the State OCFS for local social services districts. These are Permanency Reviews. The Permanency Reviews are held for every County twice a year to review the permanency status of a selection of children within a given County who have not reached permanency and who have been in care for over 1 year. Through the review process, CWCIP are able to identify system gaps and barriers preventing children from

Child Permanency Mediation Projects

The CWCIP supports permanency mediation projects in New York City and two District Wide programs in the 5th and 8th Judicial Districts. These court based programs use rosters of consultant mediators who are paid an hourly rate. All referrals come from the court and the CWCIP staff administers the project.

In the fall 2008, Nancy Theonnes of The Center for Policy Research was hired to conduct an evaluation of the NYC Permanency Mediation Program. This evaluation will study the impact of the permanency mediation program operating in the New York City Family Court. The research is intended to provide information that will help to answer the question "does mediation work?" Different professionals in the child welfare system may have different ideas about what mediation needs to accomplish. The definition of "working" may also change over time, as cases progress through the dependency system. As a result, we are proposing to consider a variety of outcomes that are of interest, such as, of the percentage of the cases sent to mediation, how many are able to produce an agreement? Does participation in mediation reduce the number of contested hearings experienced during the life of a case? Or even, does mediation help cases to reach permanency in less time than traditional court interventions? This work is ongoing and expected to be completed in 2011. reaching permanency in a timely manner.

Court Appointed Special Advocates Assistance Program

The CASA Assistance Program was created within the CWCIP to oversee grant administration and provide programmatic support to local CASA programs. NYS Unified Court System state

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1 UCS Benchmarks. New York State Unified Court System. 02 Jan 2009 <http://www.courts.state.ny.us/publications/benchmarks/issue3/listening.shtml>.

funding of CASA Programs has grown from the fiscal year ‘05 allocation of $750,000 to its current level of $1,037,328.

Training Grant Initiatives

Darlene Ward, has been named Training Manager for the Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CWCIP). This position will be fully funded with state funds. Prior to this appointment Ms. Ward was the Project Manager for the CASA Assistance Project. While Darlene will remain the primary contract manager for several of the CASA programs, the majority of local programs will be reassigned to the CWCIP Liaison assigned to the family court served by the respective CASA programs. Local CASA programs were recently notified of this change.

We believe decentralizing the technical assistance provided to CASA programs and tightly integrating those functions into our broader efforts to enhance court practices and promote interdisciplinary collaboration will have a positive impact on our capacity to support the important role CASA plays in child welfare proceedings.

In her new role, Darlene will coordinate training programs that target legal, judicial and child welfare professionals including CASA staff and volunteers. She will continue to be a resource to the CWCIP liaisons and CASA programs, albeit less directly than in the past. CIP Coordinator Frank Woods and Assistant Coordinator Christine Kiesel will be the primary contacts for issues related to our partnership with the state and national CASA organizations.

In March 2010 the CIP hosted a major conference to kick off the Enhanced Interdisciplinary Practices Initiative. Modeled upon the NCJFCJ's All-sites conference, the Conference, entitled "**Ready…Set…Go!:** ***Enhancing Court Practices in Child Welfare"*** brought together teams of 10 professionals from each of the 5 boroughs of New York City and the 17 largest counties outside New York City. On the afternoon of March 9, 2010 we also hosted a pre-conference seminar, facilitated by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, for lead and supervising judges, on the topic of judicial leadership and their role in leading local collaborative improvement efforts.

The CWCIP training grant supports training for judges, referees, court attorneys, court managers and staff and cross-system training for child welfare and legal professionals to improve court practice and legal representation in child welfare cases. The CWCIP is partnering with the Judicial Institute on training programs for judges, court attorneys, court attorney referees and JHO's; with the Attorney for the Child Program for training of attorneys representing children and with the Court Appointed Special Advocates Assistance Program provides training for CASA program staff and volunteers.

New York State Partnership for Family Recovery

The Partnership for Family Recovery is an inter-branch collaborative whose membership includes the court system, OCFS, New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS), and OASAS. With technical assistance provided by the National Resource Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare the partnership's training sub-committee recommended that staff in each system be trained to increase their respective understanding of the practices and operations of the other two systems. As part of this process, the CWCIP finalized curriculum on the basics of family court for substance abuse professionals: "Basic Court Information for the Substance Abuse Professional: What You Always Wanted to Know About the Child Welfare System."

The Lawyer's Guide to Agency Adoptions

In 2009 a collaborative publication was completed: “The Lawyer’s Guide to Agency Adoptions.” The publication is the result of the Permanency Now Statewide Workgroup whose membership includes representation from state and local child welfare personnel as well as local court and OCA staff. The goal of producing and distributing this treatise on agency adoptions is to reduce delays in adoption proceedings by training attorneys on the detailed and specific requirements of agency adoptions in New York State. During 2010 curriculum was developed with the assistance of consultant Margaret Burt and a pilot training was conducted for attorneys in two counties in the 8th Judicial District. The pilot training was subsequently modified and a Train the Trainer event was held in the fall in Syracuse where 7 attorneys were trained to provide this training as it rolls out statewide in 2011.

Local Multidisciplinary Trainings to address Best Practice Topics

CWCIP has designed and delivered presentations for many different audiences including: attorneys representing children in child welfare proceedings, judges and judicial officers, caseworkers, service providers, other child welfare attorneys, foster parents and court staff. In 2009, some of these topics include: children’s mental health, ICWA, court procedure, trauma informed decision making, neurodevelopment: judgment and adolescents , relative resources, grief and loss, the presence of the child in the child’s permanency hearing and training relative to the New York State court data collection system (UCMS). CWCIP staff is involved in the coordination of many other local training programs and is actively involved in a number of planning groups and committees related to the court and child welfare system’s efforts to improve our capacity to provide quality training.

Court Appointed Special Advocates Assistance Program

CWCIP supported trainings for the CASA network on such topics as permanency planning, adolescent advocacy, board development, the over-representation of children of color in care, family treatment court, the needs of lesbian, gay and transgender youth in care, grant writing, individual donor cultivation, volunteer recruitment, court rules and family substance abuse.

Data Collection and Analysis Projects

The CWCIP data collection and analysis grant supports several projects through its funding of three positions in the Office of Court Administration's Division of Technology, a position in the Division of Court Operations, and thorough contracts with technical assistance organizations. Additionally CWCIP staff is actively involved in a number of planning groups and committees related to the court system's efforts to improve our capacity to collect and analyze child welfare data.

Sharing data between the courts and child welfare system has specific potential benefits:

1. System interoperability: Interoperability means direct communication between individual agencies' electronic case management systems in a way that is mutually beneficial. System interoperability supports enhanced operational efficiency, decreased data entry, faster service delivery, improved communication, standardized practice and improved data validity.

2. Increased capacity for evidence-based evaluation and enhanced decision making: Data sharing will benefit both the courts and child welfare agencies in their efforts to evaluate performance and monitor improvement efforts. With combined data, agencies can adopt a common outcome-oriented focus.

3. Reinforced partnerships between the courts and child welfare agencies: Through the interagency collaboration necessary to implement a data share, enhanced agency partnerships can emerge. Oftentimes, agencies work at cross-purposes unaware of the other's activities. Through the process of collaborating on data-share projects, agencies will be more likely to align resources and develop a sense of shared responsibility for the safety, permanency and well-being of New York State's children in foster care.

System Interoperability

A promising pilot project has been initiated in New York City known as the "Legal Tracking System/Universal Case Management System/CONNECTIONS" or "LUC" data share project. This interagency system interoperability project has the goal of streamlining the process of filing child protective petitions and permanency hearing reports, and synchronizing the legal case information between the court and child welfare agency data systems. Achieving these objectives will both improve efficiency and enhance the reliability and validity of the respective data sets. To date, the project workgroup has defined the business requirements and developed a multi-phased project plan to implement the project in four stages or "builds" throughout 2008-2010.

Evidence-Based Evaluation and Enhanced Decision Making

In 2011, The CWCIP, with the assistance of the Center for Court Innovation and Chapin Hall Center for Children, will release a report to introduce a statewide set of child welfare court data metrics. Based on emerging national standards, the metrics are designed to assess court performance in child welfare cases within a child outcomes framework. The report integrates child welfare court data with the OCFS Foster Care Profile data. Using metrics from both court

and agency data sets provides an up-to-date, comprehensive view of the status of New York State's child welfare system from removal to permanency. Eventually this data will be promulgated via a web-accessible, "executive dashboard" user interface. This will provide a user-friendly method of retrieving and displaying critical child welfare data in an organized fashion. This interface will provide significant insight into both short term operational effectiveness and long term trends to serve as the basis of policy development.

Conclusion

In the last fifteen years the Court Improvement Project has made significant contributions towards improving the court's capacity to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of children in the child welfare system. Quality improvement, however, is a continuous process. CWCIP funding provides an opportunity to sustain momentum for improvement efforts already underway and to reinforce the already strong partnership between the courts and the child welfare system. The funding and a carefully developed strategic plan will certainly lead to innovative approaches that improve our capacity to monitor performance and implement necessary reforms. As detailed herein, efforts undertaken by CWCIP staff in 2010 built significantly on the existing 2006-2010 strategic plan and past CWCIP legacy. In addition, funds were used to aid several local child welfare initiatives outside the scope of the strategic plan that allow local courts and corresponding agencies to address the unique child welfare challenges in their specific areas.

Appendix A

An Operational Review of Child Welfare Case Processing in NYC Family Courts (Draft)

November 2010

Executive Summary

In 2008, 11,330 new child abuse and neglect cases were filed in New York City's Family Courts. These cases often take too long to complete, resulting in harm to children and parents who are in limbo, less effective systems, and unnecessary taxpayer expenditures. Over the past decade Office of Court Administration (OCA), New York City Administration for Children Services (ACS), New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and other agencies have led multiple initiatives to improve the processes that guide child protective proceedings in New York City (NYC) Family Courts with positive results. However, the system, stressed with heavy judicial caseload, continues to struggle with protracted case processing timelines and delayed permanency outcomes for children.

To accelerate case processing timelines and reduce time in care for children placed in foster care, the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) has collaborated with the New York City Family Court and ACS to conduct an operational review of the child abuse and neglect case process flow from *filing a petition* to *achieving permanency*. The review is being conducted at two Family Courts sites in New York City – Queens and the Bronx. Vera will: a) establish a working group to engage local stakeholders; b) leverage the site-specific quantitative data analysis conducted by ACS and OCA; c) conduct observations and interviews at each site; and d) map the current process from petition to permanency to identify factors that may impede case flow.

This operational review will identify specific actions that different agencies involved in the abuse and neglect proceedings in New York City can take to reduce processing times for abuse and neglect cases in Family Court. The operational review will be conducted over a period of one year and will cost approximately $533,000. Vera has secured funding from ACS ($385,000) and Casey Family Programs ($37,000) and is seeking additional funding of $111,000 to close the budget gap.

DRAFT

Ongoing Initiatives: Child Protective Proceedings

In 1999, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) designated the NYC Family Court as a Model Court site with two specific goals: to develop strategies to meet the requirements of the child welfare laws and to expedite and monitor child protective cases more effectively. Over the last decade, ACS, OCA, OCFS and other agencies have worked on several initiatives to further reform and improve the processes that guide the child protective proceedings in NYC Family Courts. Some of the current initiatives are highlighted below.

NYC Family Courts have adopted the *Child Protective Plan* that includes three parallel initiatives to enhance the processing of child protective proceedings. These include: a *case management committee* to establish protocol on mandatory court conferences; a *compliance committee* to engage stakeholders and seek accountability for actions that might be delaying the process; and a *metrics committee* to establish a baseline and outline a set of performance indicators that will be periodically tracked and monitored.

An interagency initiative known as the LUC data share project (Legal Tracking System/Universal Case Management System/CONNECTIONS) aims to synchronize the legal case information between the data system of OCFS (CONNECTIONS), OCA (Universal Case Management System) and ACS (Legal Tracking System) and streamline the process of filing child protective petitions. LUC has enabled ACS to file electronic petitions and already reduced the time to get a petition into a courtroom (from the time the ACS case worker first meets with the agency lawyer to draw up the papers until the petition reaches the court intake) from 3.5 hours to 1.5 hours on average. As of October 2010, NYC Family Court is electronically transmitting case outcome information to ACS. The project team is also working to enable electronic transmission of approved permanency hearing reports and court orders between agencies.

OCA has collaborated with the Center for Court Innovation (CCI) to develop child welfare court data measures. These measures are leveraged by the judges to enhance the management of child welfare cases and include metrics such as time to permanency hearings, time to disposition, types of disposition delivered and number of kids placed in foster care. Based on the recommendations proposed by NCJFCJ, OCA has also collaborated with Chapin Hall and CCI to develop 12 key measures for counties across the state to provide a comprehensive view of the New York State's child welfare system from removal to permanency. The data will provide trends over time as well as comparative analysis between counties.

Furthermore, NYC Family Courts have implemented time-certain scheduling for conferences and trials to manage court calendars. In addition, court administration has also organized *Adoption Day* and *Teen Day* to expedite the adoptions of children in foster care and engage teenagers in their permanency hearings, respectively.

ACS implemented an initiative known as the *Improved Outcomes for Children* in 2009, which uses innovative accountability measures and family team conferencing (involving parents and foster youth) to guide the decision-making process in the child welfare system. To focus attention on those children who stay in care beyond the first two years, ACS and its provider agencies have embarked on a joint campaign for permanency named *One Year Home*. The program rolled out in summer of 2010 and will strive to achieve permanency outcomes for children entering care within one year—through safe return home or placement with a family willing to make a permanent commitment to them if they become available for adoption.

The aforementioned initiatives and other efforts by OCA, ACS and OCFS indicate the commitment of these agencies to lead change that has resulted in a positive impact on the child welfare system. However, the system continues to be plagued with long case processing timelines and delayed permanency outcomes. Although it draws on date from two years ago, the March 2009 report released by the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families points to areas in need of further work.

The report indicates that New York State did not meet the national standards pertaining to the timeliness and permanency of reunification, the timeliness of adoption and achieving permanency for children in foster care for extended periods of time. It identified court-related and agency-related factors - such as high judicial caseloads, crowded court dockets, and delay in providing necessary reports to the court in advance - that delay reunification, setting permanency goal for children and achieving adoption in a timely manner.

Proposed Project and Methodology

To accelerate case processing timelines from *filing a petition* to *achieving permanency outcomes*, Vera is reviewing the child abuse and neglect case process flows at two Family Courts sites - Queens and the Bronx. The end to-end process review will identify specific actions that different agencies involved in the abuse and neglect proceedings in NYC can take to complement the existing system-improvement efforts, accelerate case processing timelines and therefore reduce the length of time children stay in foster care while their case proceeds in the Family Court.

The operational review will examine the processes of the multiple agencies involved in child protective proceedings, including foster care providers, respondents' attorneys and OCFS, as well as ACS and OCA. It will focus on the transition points when a case is handed-off between agencies and identify inter-agency factors that may be delaying permanency timelines. Vera will work collaboratively with all of these stakeholders to identify sticking points and develop feasible options for addressing challenges.

Each family court in NYC has a unique culture and administrative structure, a distinct case processing system, and a unique set of parameters, such as volume and case types. Therefore, Vera proposes to review the two sites independently and develop site-specific recommendations (although some recommendations may apply to both boroughs and some may apply citywide). The proposed project is divided into four stages, as illustrated below.

Project Kick-off	Quantitative Data Analysis*	Process Mapping/ Qualitative Analysis	Findings & Recommendations
• Establish a working group of justice participants/stake holders • Schedule kick-off meeting • Develop project plan	• Acquire data from agency databases • Analyze indicators such as timelines, # adjournments for different allegations, and case disposition outcomes • Establish system dependencies	• Observe sub-processes and conduct detailed interviews across agencies/stakeholders • Develop & validate process flow maps from filing a petition to achieving permanency	• Document the system baseline • Identify alternative policies/best practices • Develop recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative analysis
Output – Detailed project plan	Output –Site-specific data analysis	Output – Site-specific process maps	Output – Proposed recommendations

** It is our understanding that OCA and ACS are already leading quantitative data analysis for NYC Family Courts. The project team will leverage their site-specific analysis specific to child protective cases.*

Project Kick-off

1. <u>Establish site-specific working groups</u>

   Multiple stakeholders and agencies manage different aspects of the child welfare system and share responsibility for the system-wide results. We will engage stakeholders to establish an accurate baseline of the process, to validate the feasibility of proposed recommendations, and to build buy-in and support for proposed changes.

   Vera has established a steering committee comprising of citywide stakeholders. This group includes senior executives from OCA, ACS, OCFS, the Mayor's office, Legal Aid Society and other agencies involved in child protective proceedings. Vera staff will meet with the steering committee on a regular basis to review progress on the work plan, draft process maps, preliminary findings, and preliminary recommendations.

   In addition, in each borough we are studying, there will be a local working group of representatives from key agencies. Stakeholders in the working group might include ACS, judiciary, court staff, the Legal Aid Society, the Center for Family Representation, OCFS,

and foster care agencies. Each agency to be represented in the working group will be asked to identify a contact person for the purposes of information sharing and validation at each court site. These representatives will meet periodically to review data and findings, identify and address issues, and provide feedback as the project progresses. The Vera project team will work with OCA and ACS to identify any additional participants that may need to be engaged or apprised of project progress and will arrange to meet with them as necessary.

2. Schedule kick-off meeting

   The Vera project team convened the first steering committee meeting on November 8, 2010. The steering committee members were given a brief overview of the project and asked to brainstorm operational factors that may be delaying the processing of child abuse and neglect cases.

3. Develop project plan

   The project team has developed a project plan that highlights critical tasks, project milestones, and target dates.

Output: Detailed project plan

Quantitative Data Analysis (Led by OCA and ACS)

It is our understanding that ACS and OCA will lead and conduct the quantitative data analysis for child abuse and neglect cases since they have already done bulk of the groundwork. It will be crucial that analyses is conducted in a timely manner (i.e. prior to the on-site observations) to ensure the success of the project.

Through the data analysis we will identify stages in the process where delay seems to be occurring. We will also determine whether there are subsets of the population whose cases take especially long. Finally, in discussions with the working group, we will develop hypotheses about reasons for delay at various points or for various groups, which we will then explore through observations and further analysis.

Output: Site-specific data analysis (provided by ACS and OCA)

Qualitative Analysis/Process Mapping

1. Observe sub-processes across system and agencies

   Many spatially and temporally dispersed activities collectively comprise the petition to permanency process in the child welfare system. Project staff will collaborate with the court

and agencies at each site to systematically observe the petition to permanency process to develop a qualitative understanding of the activities and issues that underlie the functioning of the entire system. The observations will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Court- room proceedings. For example, initial court appearances, fact-finding hearings, permanency hearings and dispositional hearings for different cases.
- Sub-processes internal to petitioning agency, OCA, agencies representing respondents, and foster care agencies. For example – we will observe the intake process of the Permanency Planning Unit at OCA to understand the case queuing process at different times of the day. An examination of permanency proceedings will complement ACS's One Year Home effort and will include observations of the steps foster care agencies take to prepare for permanency hearings and the flow of information between agencies.

The goal of these observations will be to map the process flow and not to collect numerical data or establish trends. In addition to the process flow, observations will allow the team to identify system nuances such as: process management at the two sites, actors required to move cases forward such as case workers and interpreters, and possible reasons for delay at various stages.

2. Interview stakeholders

The project team will interview or conduct focus groups with staff from each of the agencies, including: attorneys for children and attorneys for respondents, ACS, OCA, OCFS and foster care agencies. The discussion will focus on process flow, bottlenecks in the current process, internal best practices, and opportunities for improvement.

3. Conduct interviews with parents/families

We recognize that parents/guardians of children involved in child welfare proceedings interact with the system at multiple points. They will have useful insights on the inefficiencies in the current process and opportunities for improvement. Vera will endeavor to interview or conduct focus groups with respondents in child protective cases.

4. Develop and validate case process flow maps from petition to permanency

The project team will compile the information obtained from interviews and observations to develop detailed process maps for the two sites. There will be one map for each site. These maps will be far more detailed than the system flow charts that already exist: they will focus on operational steps that occur between court appearances, including decision-making points, paper flow, and movement of people.

The project team will ask all the participating agencies to review the information carefully to ensure that the process maps accurately capture the current process flow.

Output: Site-specific process maps

Findings and Recommendations

1. Develop a list of findings from the review

Vera will work with the working groups and other key stakeholders to develop a preliminary list of findings from the review. Some preliminary findings may require additional research. In addition, some findings may be better supported by data and evidence than others, which may be more anecdotal. We will be inclusive in our list of findings, but will note the strength of each finding.

2. Identify alternative policies

The project team will consult with an expert in operations management to examine best practices in managing flow of cases and scheduling trials that might apply to the court process.

It has been widely reported that the child welfare system is under-resourced with an increasing workload for all players including the judges, lawyers and caseworkers. Our review of published reports and informal discussions with agency representatives suggest that, despite the introduction of time certain scheduling, scheduling of court appearances remains a challenge. Creating an optimum scheduling system is a complicated undertaking given the large number of parties whose schedules need to be coordinated. Management of court calendar is further complicated by the fact that the majority of the cases settle days before trial, making it impossible to recycle the available court time. To help address this challenge, Vera will collaborate with operations management expert to design an effective trial-scheduling system. This might include reviewing best practices from other sectors such as scheduling system used in hospitals and procedure rooms that share similar resource constraints as faced by the Family Court.

Also, it is our understanding that ACS is working with Annie E. Casey foundation to review literature and scan other jurisdictions to identify exemplary practices in analogous court processes. The project team will leverage this jurisdictional scan and combine interview findings to identify good practices and alternative policies that could be adapted by agencies involved in the abuse and neglect proceedings in NYC.

3. Conduct a cost analysis

The project team will leverage the expertise of the Cost Benefit Analysis Unit at Vera to arrive at the economic implications of the delays in the system. The team will rely on publicly available budget data as well as information provided by ACS, OMB, and the

Unified Court System's Division of Financial Management. The cost analysis will provide policymakers with an approximate estimate of the potential cost-avoidance that may be achieved with reduced case-processing timelines. For example, we will calculate the unit cost of a court appearance and extrapolate the savings achieved from the reduced number of appearances into potential productivity savings, which means that caseworkers and attorneys will have additional time to focus their efforts on fewer cases.

4. Develop a set of proposals to decrease case processing times

Based on the findings and the alternative policies and practices explored, Vera will develop a preliminary list of potential actions to reduce case processing times for each site. Some actions will apply to one borough and some will apply to both boroughs and potentially to the entire city. For each proposed action, we will include an order-of-magnitude estimate of the impact on case processing times and costs. We will review these ideas with the steering committee and with the working groups for their likely effectiveness and feasibility and will revise the list to incorporate feedback. (The recommendations will be presented at an operational level and not at a resource level.)

Output: Findings and proposals to reduce case processing times

This project will outline a set of specific actions that different agencies involved in the abuse and neglect proceedings in NYC can take to reduce processing times for abuse and neglect cases in Family Court.[1] Reducing case processing times will result in a) improved outcomes for children and families; b) financial gains with reduced number of appearances and reduced stay in foster care (where applicable); and c) more efficient and productive child protective system.

Vera is well positioned to successfully complete the operational review. Vera's unique composition of the project team, our preliminary efforts to get buy-in from relevant stakeholders, and our extensive experience in the child welfare and justice system give us a unique vantage point. Please see the attached document - *Vera's Capacity_Ops Review*.pdf – for details on our specific experience and our staffing plan.

[1] We expect this analysis to produce several feasible options to reduce court processing times. However, if the working group so decides, a second phase can be planned and executed to develop simulation models and further investigate the process flow of identified sub-systems.

Appendix B

CHILD WELFARE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
NEW YORK STATE UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM • DIVISION OF COURT OPERATIONS
OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Ready…Set…Go! ***Enhancing Court Practices in Child Welfare Proceedings***

March 10, 2010

Agenda

March 9, 2010

Conference Registration Table Open: 6:00 PM -8:00 PM

March 10, 2010

7:30 – 8:30 Registration/Continental Breakfast

8:30 – 8:45 **Introduction by Conference Emcee**

Hon. Stephen Rubin
Superior Court, Juvenile Division
Pima County, AZ

Welcoming Remarks

Hon. Michael Coccoma
Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside NYC
New York State Unified Court System

Laura Velez
Deputy Commissioner
New York State Office of Children and Family Services,
Division of Child Welfare & Community Services

8:45 – 9:15 **The Bench, Bar and Child Welfare Agencies Working Together to Improve Outcomes for Children**

Hon. James Payne
Director Indiana Department of Child Services

9:15 – 10:15 **Child Welfare and the Courts: An Exploratory Study of the Relationship between Two Complex Systems**

Sarah Carnochan, Ph. D, MSW, JD
Research Director
Bay Area Social Services Consortium
School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley

CHILD WELFARE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
NEW YORK STATE UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM • DIVISION OF COURT OPERATIONS
OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Ready…Set…Go! ***Enhancing Court Practices in Child Welfare Proceedings***

March 10, 2010

Agenda

10:15 – 10:30 BREAK

10:30 – 11:15 **The New York State Child Welfare Court Data Metrics Project**

Frank Woods, M.S.W.
Coordinator
Child Welfare Court Improvement Project

Fred Wulczyn, PhD., M.S.W.
Research Fellow
Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

11:15 – 12:15 **County Team Time: Review and Discuss Data**

12:15 – 1:15 **Lunch**

KEYNOTE: **Permanence – Who *Wouldn't* Want a Family?**
Sue Badeau
Director, Knowledge Management
Casey Family Programs

1:15 – 2:15 **The New York City Family Court Child Protection Plan and the New York City Administration for Children's Services One Year Home Campaign**

Hon. Edwina Richardson-Mendelson
Administrative Judge
New York City Family Court

John Mattingly
Commissioner
New York City Administration for Children's Services

Gilbert Taylor, Esq.
Deputy Commissioner, Family Court Legal Services
New York City Administration for Children's Services

Michele Cortese, Esq.
Deputy Director
Center for Family Representation

Ready…Set…Go! ***Enhancing Court Practices in Child Welfare Proceedings***

March 10, 2010

Agenda

Tamara Steckler, Esq.
Attorney-in-Charge
New York Legal Aid Society, Juvenile Rights Practice

2:15 – 2:30 BREAK

2:30 – 3:15 **Lessons Learned from the Federal Child and Family Services Review: Legal/Judicial Practices to Improve Child Outcomes**

Nancy Miller
Director
Permanency Planning for Children Department
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Bill Stanton
Consultant
U.S. Department of Human Services
Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau

3:15 – 4:15 **County Team Time: Planning to Plan**

4:15 – 4:30 **Go Forth Message**

Hon. Sharon Townsend
Vice Dean for Family & Matrimonial Matters
New York State Judicial Institute

Appendix C

CHILD WELFARE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
NEW YORK STATE UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM • DIVISION OF COURT OPERATIONS
OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Ready…Set…Go! *Enhancing Court Practices in Child Welfare Proceedings*

Judicial Leadership Pre-Conference Seminar

March 9, 2010

Agenda

11:00 – 12:00	Registration
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch - Provided
12:30 – 12:45	**Welcoming Remarks** Hon. Michael Coccoma Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside NYC New York State Unified Court System Hon. Sharon Townsend Vice Dean for Family & Matrimonial Matters New York State Judicial Institute
12:45 – 1:30	**The Role of the Judge in Promoting Systems Change** Hon. James Payne Director Indiana Department of Child Services
1:30 – 2:50	**Characteristics of Effective Leadership** Hon. Stephen Rubin Superior Court, Juvenile Division Pima County, AZ Nancy Miller Director Permanency Planning for Children Department National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
2:50 – 3:05	BREAK
3:05 – 4:25	**Transformational Leadership & Effective Systems Change** Hon. Stephen Rubin and Nancy Miller
6:00	Dinner – Provided

Appendix D

2010 CIP Grant Work – UCMS-FC

Committee Involvement

Permanency Planning Committee

- Ordered Report Functionality is being modified to track reports that can be associated to multiple dockets. Currently, each docket receives a unique ordered report record. For Permanency Planning reports, UCMS will need to assign one report for a child that crosses multiple dockets. This analysis will be necessary before a Permanency Planning Report timeliness study can be implemented.
- Child Completely Freed logic in UCMS Court Activity is in the testing phase of implementation. This new logic requires the courts to record when the child in a child welfare proceeding has been completely freed, and adjust the milestone calculations accordingly to ensure the proper and timely scheduling of future permanency planning hearings.
- Committee completed analysis of Court Activity Summary Report Redesign. Development has begun to include the new template options in UCMS for the early 2011 build.
- New PH tab enhancements were identified and underwent analysis. To enhance data accuracy and reliability related to the collection of permanency hearing outcomes, new validation logic and cleaned up outcome choices will be implemented in this tab.

Permanency Module Outcome Review Committee

- A thorough vetting process and final list of cleaned up outcome options for permanency case types in UCMS has taken place and will be implemented in early 2011. The work of this committee will be reflected in increased data accuracy and capturing of activity in child welfare cases, as well as allow for greater ease of interoperability in future data shares with outside agencies.

Court Metrics Committee

- Analysis to begin work on recommendations for enhancement of UCMS data validity/reliability based on Court Metrics committee work. For example, validations will be added to the way that courts are recording their Permanency Planning hearings in the UCMS permanency tab.

Projects/Activities

LUC Project

- The latest LUC build including the Permanency Hearing Report message and the Next Scheduled Hearing Date message went into effect the weekend of Sept 11, 2010. In the first two "live" business days following the build, there were 695 PH reports sent to the court with an extremely high success rate. Also with a very high success rate (more than 90%), 2657 hearing messages were exchanged with ACS and attached to LTS (the remaining 10% were largely due to B dockets included in the count that were not a planned part of the build exchange).
- Analysis for the next build, which will include an exchange of Hearing Outcomes, Amended Permanency Hearing Reports, and freed child data, has begun and will continue into 2011.
- A post-implementation study of the LUC process was completed and distributed as well as a baseline study of the interface prior to the exchange of messages included in the September build.

24-7 Hotline

- Ongoing upkeep, off hours standby for operational questions, and regular updating of the forms, templates, and manual for the 24-7 Access to Children hotline, where a caseworker can call a judge for an order after hours if she/he is being denied access to a child.

2010 CIP Grant Work – UCMS-FC

2010 Family Court Clerks Association Conference

- Presented two sessions at the annual Family Court Clerks Conference: UCMS 2010 update & permanency module enhancements, as well as provided onsite availability for technical questions, operational support, and suggestions for enhancements.

Adhoc Reporting

- Ongoing analysis and programming to complete requests for adhoc data.
- The development and exploration of business intelligence software to ease the currently manual process of extracting adhoc data is underway.

Legislative Changes

Forms Revisions

- For 2010 there were 241 family court promulgated forms requiring language changes in UCMS. Work is underway to update these forms macros as they exist in UCMS while concurrent work to create a new forms process that is much easier to maintain in terms of revisions is also being undertaken.

- Term “Law guardian” was changed to “Attorney for the Child” throughout UCMS and all generated documents.

Appendix E

Time Certain Appearances in NYC Family Court: Summary Report

Data Committee, Child Protective Plan, Hon. Paula J. Hepner, Chair

October 20, 2010

FINAL DRAFT

Data were collected describing practices in the New York City Family Courts with respect to time-certain appearances during the latter part of 2009. This report compares practices across specialties and identifies and quantifies factors impacting delay and attainment of goals.

This study was conducted to inform the ongoing work of The Child Protective Plan, chaired by Hon. Edwina Richardson Mendelson, Administrative Judge, New York City Family Court

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Members of the Data Committee

Hon. Paula J. Hepner, Chair, Kings County Family Court

Mike Ciluffo, New York City Family Court Administration

Joseph Comisi, New York City Family Court Administration

Terrell Evans, Administration for Children's Services

Karen Freedman, Lawyers for Children

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Toni Lang, Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children

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Bobette Masson-Churin, The Legal-Aid Society, Juvenile Rights Practice

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Nancy Thomson, Administration for Children's Services

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Research assistance for this study was supported by the Federal Court Improvement Project Grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau.

Preface

In early 2009, the Office of Court Administration together with the New York City Family Court convened members of the Family Court community to discuss shared goals and action steps to improve child protective proceedings. A Court Metrics subcommittee was formed to recommend how best to measure the effectiveness of the new Child Protective Plan (CPP.)

The CPP calls for both an increase in the use of time certain / time ending scheduling of cases, and a decrease in the number of adjournments. These two critical areas were chosen to survey. The study which follows is a seminal look at court scheduling practices at that time and reasons why cases are adjourned.

The study included many perspectives. It surveyed judges, referees, court attorneys, parent's attorneys, attorneys for the children, caseworkers and petitioning attorneys, and asked them to answer the following questions for each case: What was the purpose for the appearance? Was the goal accomplished? At what time did the case start and end?

The study notes differences between what the court reported and what the practitioners reported. It found surprising agreement on the subject of goals accomplished.

Some of the major findings:

- A little more than two thirds of all appearances accomplish their goals.
- Time certain scheduling is now routine in the Child Protective Specialty and to a somewhat lesser extent in the other specialties.
- Appearances are most frequently allotted one half hour.
- Some commonly held beliefs about causes of delay are not necessarily true.

Perhaps the most significant finding is the clear picture the study offers of the critical interdependence of the Family Court and those who practice and appear there every day. The importance of this cannot be understated, for it means that every institution, agency and individual practitioner must work together for there to be real and lasting improvement.

This report is a clarion call for all to work together to raise our expectations in defining what the terms "meaningful appearance" and "goals met" really mean. The finding that a little more than two thirds of all appearances accomplish their objectives, while about one third do not - a 68% pass rate for getting something done - is just not good enough.

When we learn 25% of appearances start more than 16 minutes late, and half of *those* start more than 30 minutes late, we have to ask: what does it mean for the other cases on the calendar? What does it mean for attorneys who have cases in other parts? What does it mean

for caseworkers for whom a court appearance is only part of their job? What does it mean for the parents who must take off from work? What does it mean for the children whose cases seem to last forever? And what does it mean for other jurists whose calendars are disrupted waiting for attorneys to come from parts which are running late?

It is time to face the reality that lateness of attorneys is all too often a function of court delay in other parts. Conversely, court delay is a function of attorneys not showing up on time because they are being held in other parts, or who have over-booked their time due to the pressing needs of the court and the litigants. These latenesses are two sides of the same coin.

Historically, the Family Court has operated in a culture of lateness and unpreparedness where goals are not accomplished in 1 out of 3 cases. This is unacceptable.

Each jurist must not only schedule an achievable goal within a time certain appearance, but must release those appearing on the case at the conclusion of the time certain so that other parts may achieve their scheduled goals. Attorneys must ensure that they, as well as their witnesses, are on time and prepared for each appearance. This is the real path to reducing adjournments in Family Court.

Although interdependent, everyone in the Family Court community must address that which is under their respective control in order to achieve the scheduled goals. It is the court that can re-design how cases are calendared and heard. It is the attorneys who can set parameters for interviewing clients and preparing their cases. It is the caseworkers and their agencies that can make the required referrals, interview their clients and prepare court ordered reports. And it is the institutional agencies that can assist their attorneys with trial readiness.

If each group attends to its own business, then we will have truly taken the first step toward changing the culture of Family Court.

The Child Protective Plan Court Metrics Committee

Introduction and Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Data Committee of the Child Protection Plan, the Office of Court Research studied time-certain appearances of all types in all specialties in the New York City Family Court. This study was conducted in Kings County in September 2009 and in the other four boroughs in December 2009. Judges, court attorneys, and referees were asked to complete a survey card for each time-certain appearance during a two-week data collection period. In addition, institutional and court appointed attorneys were invited to participate as were ACS and provider agency case workers. This is a report of data collected in the study. The data are reported without stating opinions about the reasons or causes for the results found. The study results reveal some successes in the courts while helping to highlight some factors that may contribute to inefficiency in family court case processing.

During studies such as these, participants may bend over backwards to be on time. There have been anecdotal reports that delays increased when no study was in progress. The data show more on-time appearances than would be expected based on anecdotal accounts; they also show that more than one-quarter of appearances were substantially delayed. Thus, the data reflect a minimum or baseline of what court participants can accomplish when it comes to timeliness – with clear room for improvement. If in the future, data such as start and end times and timeliness are captured in UCMS these analyses can be performed in the blind without asking individuals to complete cards by hand.

This study was made possible by the willing assistance of scores of judges, court attorneys, referees, and attorneys and caseworkers practicing in Family Court who included completing data collection cards in their already busy schedules. In particular, court attorneys in the supervising judges' offices collected and scanned thousands of completed forms to the Office of Court Research; personnel at various agencies who participated made a similar contribution.

Most important, the 18 members of the Data Committee truly worked long and hard to make this project a success. At our 12 meetings over two years time, committee members always came prepared to participate, gave thoughtful suggestions, and raised important and valuable questions about how to collect data and approach analysis. This committee was unique in its constructive and collaborative approach to its work.

Executive Summary – Major Findings[1]

This study identifies both strengths and weaknesses in the court's case processing practices. The strengths can be applauded at the same time as the court seeks solutions for the weaknesses. Critically examining the areas of weakness the court arrives at a decision crossroads: when it comes to accomplishing goals, what is the level of success in meeting goals that the court wants to achieve as its operating standard?

- **Goals are met in 68% of appearances and not met in 32% of appearances.**

- **Key participant delay, lateness, and absence are the most common reasons goals are not met.**
  - Either the court was delayed or an attorney was late or absent in more than half the appearances.
  - In 35% of appearances study participant said court was delayed.[2]
    - "Prior matter ran over" was the most frequently mentioned reason for court delay.
  - In 33% of appearances an attorney was reported absent and/or late.
  - In 23% of appearances a party was reported late/absent.
  - In 46% of the 273 appearances requiring an interpreter, the interpreter was reported late/absent.
  - In one out of five (21%) of appearances where a caseworker was required, the caseworker was reported late/absent.
  - In 33% of appearances where reports were required they were not timely.

- **Significant progress has been made in reducing general-call scheduling.**
  - Time-certain appearances are scheduled throughout the day.
  - Nearly two thirds of appearances included beginning and ending times.

- **A majority of appearances start on time.**
  - 52% of appearances start within five minutes of scheduled start time.
  - 22% of appearances start between six and 15 minutes late.
  - 26% are more than 15 minutes delayed.

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[1] Study participants included court personnel (judges, court attorney referees and court attorneys) and non-court personnel (attorneys and case workers) who reported on more than 6,000 appearances: 47% from court personnel, 41% by non-court personnel and 11% could not be identified. Responses to most questions by court and non-court personnel demonstrated general agreement between them.

[2] "Court" referred to whoever was conducting the appearance: judge, court attorney or referee.

- **Regardless of specialty or purpose, appearances are most frequently allotted thirty (30) minutes.**[3]
    - Actual appearance duration is nearly always shorter than scheduled duration.
    - Average scheduled duration – 43 minutes; average actual duration – 23 minutes.
    - Median scheduled duration – 30 minutes; median actual duration – 16 minutes.[4]

- **Some common assumptions about causes of delay are misplaced**.
    - Emergency hearings rarely cause delays in other parts.
    - Attorneys are sometimes absent or late – but no particular attorney group is substantially more likely than others to be absent or late.
    - Settlement conferences, bench conferences, and court conferences (judge conferring with court attorney or referee) rarely cause court delays.
    - Probation officers are rarely late or absent; out of 126 reported appearances where a probation officer was expected to appear, 10 were reported late or absent.
    - Building issues (such as elevator delays and lines at the magnetometers) are problematic when they occur but were reported as the cause of delay in only 2% of instances where the court was reported delayed.

[3] 30 minutes is the "mode" – the most common amount of time allotted. Median is the mid-point; the number at which half the sample is above that number and half is below.

Executive Summary – Recommendations

Judicial Officers

- **Improve calendar and time management to minimize the probability of delay and to anticipate unavoidable delay.**
    - Allot the amount of time needed to accomplish the expected appearance goals; taking into account issues expected to be covered at the appearance, whether there will be reports for review, witnesses and how long their testimony will last, argument, etc.
    - Honor time certain beginnings and endings.
    - Consider the use of telephone appearances to improve caseworker participation.
    - Calendar "catch up time" for completing matters that run over.

- **Minimize practices that assume that delay is inevitable or that build in delay.**
    - Avoid using "default" time slots. Though 30 minutes is the most commonly used appearance time slot, appearances rarely use 30 minutes.
    - Avoid overbooking and double-booking and asking attorneys to do so.
    - Respect attorneys' need to have time to consult with clients and to get from one appearance to another by not expecting them to schedule immediate consecutive appearances.
    - Schedule time-certain appearances throughout the day without overemphasizing the 9:00 AM – 11:00 time slot.
    - Reduce reliance on court officer/clerk communication concerning delays.
        - Make direct contact with colleagues when key participants are delayed.
        - Use Electronic Check-in Part Report as a tool for locating attorneys.
        - Direct contact between judicial officers sends a message about the importance of honoring other parts' schedules.

Family Court Administration

Some examples of administrative changes aimed at facilitating these recommendations include:

- Improve interpreter assignment and scheduling practices to eliminate frequent interpreter absence and delay.
- Provide judicial officers with resources and training for improving time management skills.
- Consider adopting a court wide policy of scheduling "catch up time" in judges' daily calendars, to handle appearances that run over allotted time.

- Make mandatory the use of Electronic Attorney Check-In including use by parts and part staff of the available daily reports summarizing attorneys' schedules.
- Expand use of UCMS as a management tool
    - Capture in UCMS beginning and end times for all on-the-record appearances (FTR) thereby facilitating future case processing analysis.
    - UCMS next-available scheduling feature can allow more efficient scheduling.
    - Include details about attendance and availability of reports that will improve data analysis for future timing study reports.

Attorneys

- **Attorneys can minimize their contribution to court delays by:**
    - Using electronic check-in
        - Making it easier for the court to locate an attorney who is absent or late and to identify reasons for absence or lateness.
        - Avoiding wasting time "showing up" at each part
        - Enabling 9:00 AM and 9:30 AM appearances to begin on time.
    - Taking into account the need to consult with clients when scheduling appearances.
    - Building time into their schedules to get from one court room to another.
    - Avoiding over-booking, double booking, or booking immediate consecutive appearances.
    - Realistically assessing the time needed to complete an appearance and requesting an appropriate amount of time for the appearance.
    - Assuring that clients and witnesses are reminded about appearances and the need to arrive at the court 30 minutes early in order to be in the part on time.

ACS and Provider Agencies

- Improve caseworker scheduling and reporting practices.
- Assure that caseworkers are present for appearances at the time those appearances are scheduled.
- Assure that reports are timely provided to the court and to counsel for the parties.

Study Methodology and Sample

Each study participant completed one survey card per time-certain appearance. The card is reproduced in Appendix A. It covers the following issues:

- **Who conducted the appearance:** purpose and scheduled and actual start and end times
- **Whether the court was delayed:** if so, causes of the delay
- **Whether required reports were submitted on time**
- **Absence/lateness of key participants** including attorneys, case workers, parties, interpreters, probation officers, or other witnesses
- **Whether appearance goals were met** and if not, why not

The study started in Kings in September, 2009 and completed in the other four boroughs in December, 2009. After data were collected in Kings, there was some minor re-design of the data collection card to improve comprehension and clarity.

- **6,083 cards were completed: 47% by court personnel and 41% by non-court personnel.**[5] **Each card describes a time-certain Family Court appearance.**
    - 18b, Family Court Legal Services, and Legal Aid attorneys were the major non-court personnel contributing (Bronx Defenders, Children's Law Center, Lawyers for Children, Center for Family Representation, and caseworkers also participated).
    - Study participants reporting on CP appearances were equally divided between court and non-court personnel. Court personnel were the clear majority among those reporting on CVO and JD appearances.

Study Participants			
Specialty	**CP**	**CVO**	**JD**
Sample Size	**4,975**	**710**	**358**
Court	**46%**	**63%**	**75%**
Non-court	**43%**	**21%**	**18%**
***Totals do not equal 100 due to missing data.**			

[5] Because of inconsistencies in the ways in which study participants reported docket numbers it is impossible to ascertain exactly how many unique appearances are in the sample. However, comparison of court and non-court personnel responses (discussed below) reflect substantial agreement between the two groups.

- The sample well represents all counties, all appearance purposes and all specialties.

- The sample size for each specialty is large enough to reach conclusions about that specialty and to make comparisons across specialties.

- The distribution of who conducted appearances in each specialty is consistent with what would be expected.

Who conducted appearances included in the study?			
Specialty	**CP**	**CVO**	**JD**
Judge	**34%**	**44%**	**92%**
Court Attorney	**20%**	**22%**	**7%**
Referee	**45%**	**35%**	**<1%**

- **Court and non-court personnel agree on most issues studied.**
    - Court personnel are more likely to report attorneys are late (difference of 4%).
    - Non-court personnel are more likely to report court was delayed (difference 8%).
    - There is agreement between court and non-court personnel on other issues.

Compare Court and Non-Court Responses		
	Court	**Non-Court**
Court Delayed	**31%**	**39%**
Attorney Absent /Late	**35%**	**31%**
Appearance Goals		
Met	69%	69%
Not Met	**31%**	**31%**

Discussion – Meeting Appearance Goals

- **Appearance goals are met in 68% of appearances and not met in 32%.**
  - Emergency Hearings are most likely to meet goals (79%); Fact Findings least likely to meet goals (63%).
  - Longer lasting appearances are more likely to meet goals.
    - In 78% of appearances lasting more than 20 minutes goals were met.
    - In appearances lasting up to 20 minutes, 64% met goals.

- **Appearance goals are less likely met when a key participant is delayed, absent or late.**
  - When court is delayed 42% do not meet goals.
  - When an attorney is absent or late 46% do not meet goals.
  - When a caseworker is reported late/absent >50% do not meet goals.

- **Goals were not met in 1,768 appearances.**
  - In 44% of appearances where goals were not met – 811 of the 1,768 – a key participant was not present. When a key participant was not present:
    - An attorney was absent or late in 51%
    - A party was late/absent in 40%
  - In 18% of appearances where goals were not met paperwork was not timely.
  - In 8% of appearances where goals were not met a party was not ready or compliant.

- **Delay between scheduled and actual start time has no effect on meeting goals.**
  - Only in fact findings and hearings did some delay seem to contribute to meeting goals.
  - Where fact-finding or hearing start time was delayed 16 – 30 minutes, goals were more likely to be met.

Discussion – Appearance Timing

Participants indicated scheduled and actual start and end times on the data collection card.

Scheduling and Duration of Appearances

- **Time-certain appearances are scheduled throughout the day, across counties and across specialties**.
  - 43% of appearances are scheduled between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM, 29% between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM and 25% between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM.

- **Start and end times were included on the cards for 61% of appearances.**
  - Start and end times were more commonly reported in CP and JD than in CVO.

- **Scheduling continuous trials continues to be unusual.**
  - Most CP fact findings are scheduled for less than two hours;
  - CVO fact findings were more frequently scheduled for more than two hours.

- **30 minutes is the most common scheduled appearance duration.**

- **Actual time spent on appearances is consistently less than amount of time scheduled**.

Scheduled and Actual Appearance Duration: In Minutes by Specialty				
	Average		Median	
	Scheduled	Actual	Schedule	Actual
Total	43	23	43	30
CP	41	22	30	17
CVO	62	28	30	15
JD	45	24	30	15

Delay Between Scheduled and Actual Start Times

- The majority of appearances start on time.

Reported Delay Between Scheduled and Actual Appearance Start Time	
Starts within	
5 minutes of scheduled time	**52%**
6 – 15 minutes of scheduled time	**22%**
16 – 30 minutes of scheduled time	**12%**
>30 minutes after scheduled time	**14%**

- The most common delay between scheduled and actual start time is 0. [6] Average delay between scheduled and actual start time is 15 minutes; median delay is 5 minutes.

- Referee appearances and permanency planning hearings had the shortest delays between scheduled and actual start times: average 9 minutes, median 3 minutes.

- In 37% of the appearances, the court was not delayed and no attorney was reported late/absent. In 19% of appearances, both the court was reported delayed and attorney was reported later or absent.

Court Delayed		No	Yes	Total
Attorney Late/Absent	No	37%	30%	67%
	Yes	14%	19%	33%
Total		51%	49%	100%

[6] 0 is the "mode" for delay between scheduled and actual – i.e., the most common number.

Delays in Start Time and Delayed End Times

- Scheduled and actual end times were supplied for 3,373 appearances. Of those, 54% ended early (before scheduled end time) and 25% ended more than 15 minutes after scheduled end time.

- To see the impact of start time delays, it's necessary to look at appearances where all four times were reported: scheduled and actual, start and end times. The sample included 1,086 appearances meeting these criteria.

    - Two thirds of appearances that start early or on time, end early.
    - Nearly two thirds of appearances that start more than an hour later than the scheduled start time, end more than thirty minutes later than scheduled end time.
    - Overall patterns:
        - amount of time used for the appearance is the same whether it starts early or on time or it starts late.
        - the more delayed the start time, the more delayed the end time.

Appearances Scheduled for 30 Minutes Where Data Includes Scheduled and Actual Start and End Times					
Start Time Delay	**Up to 5 minutes**	**6 - 15 minutes**	**16 - 30 minutes**	**> 30 minutes**	**Total**
Number of Appearances	338	416	205	127	1086
End Time					
Up to 15 minutes early	66%	47%	18%		42%
On time or up to 5 minutes late	27%	34%	40%	1%	29%
6 - 30 minutes late	6%	17%	38%	39%	19%
>30 minutes late	1%	1%	5%	61%	10%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Factors Affecting Delay: Compare less than 30 minutes with 30 minutes or more

- **There is little difference in the incidence of factors that might affect delay when comparing these appearances that start within 30 minutes of scheduled start time and those that start 30 minutes or later than scheduled start time.**

  The table below compares appearances that started within 30 minutes of scheduled start time with appearances that started at least 30 minutes after scheduled start time and shows the percentage of each group for each factor affecting delay. Thus, for example an attorney was reported absent or late in 33% of appearances that started within 30 minutes of scheduled start time and in 35% of appearances that started 30 minutes or more after scheduled start time.

  The factors affecting delay showing the most notable difference between these two groups is "court delayed," where 72% of the appearances starting 30 minutes or more late also reported that the court was delayed, and only 30% reported court was delayed where start time was less than 30 minutes delayed.

Factors Affecting Delay Between Scheduled and Actual Start Time Percent of Entire Sample		
	Amount of Delay	
	< 30 Minutes	30 Minutes or more
Court Delayed	30%	72%
Attorney Absent and/or Late	33%	35%
ACS CW Late/Absent	9%	6%
Agcy CW Late/Absent	12%	9%
Reports Late	13%	7%
Party Late/Absent	23%	22%
Other Witness Late/Absent	2%	2%
Interpreter Late/Absent	2%	2%
Probation Late/Absent	<1%	<1%

Discussion - Delay, Absence, Lateness

The Court: Judge, Court Attorney, or Referee

The data collection card asked whether the court was delayed. Study participants were instructed that "court" referred to the judicial officer conducting the appearance. If the court was delayed, three choices were offered for reasons that might explain the delay; in addition there was an "other" category.

- **In 35% of appearances, participants reported that the court was delayed.**[7] Court participants reported court delay in 31% of appearances; non-court participants reported court delay in 39% of appearances.[8]

- **Analysis of reasons for court delay was divided between those things that the court can control and those that are not within the court's control.**[9]

  - **Delays within the court's control:**
    - 37% Prior matter ran over[10]
    - 13% Double booking or calendar confusion
    - 3% Off-the-record or settlement conferences. In only 39 instances was the judge conferring with a court attorney or referee
    - 10% Court late, not available, or in a meeting

  - **Delays outside the court's control:**
    - 25% Key participant was in another part. Only 35 delays were attributed to an emergency hearing: 31 in CP parts; 24 in Kings County.
    - 5% Lateness or absence of a party, caseworker, or other witness
    - 2% Building issues - elevator delays, court house lines, fire drills, etc.

[7] Court delay was reported in 2,116 of the 6,083 appearances. This question was not answered on 308 cards.
[8] These differences were not statistically significant.
[9] Total does not equal 100% because 5% were other, miscellaneous or illegible.
[10] Of the 2,116 reports that the court was delayed, 716 indicated that the prior matter ran over.

Attorney Absence and/or Lateness

Participants were asked to indicate if an attorney was absent and, if so, to indicate the attorney's affiliation. This was followed by questions concerning whether an attorney was late and, if so, the attorney's affiliation.

- One or more attorneys were reported absent and/or late in one-third of appearances overall, slightly less (27%) in JD appearances.

- Court and non-court personnel report similar levels of attorney absence/lateness.

Attorney Lateness and/or Absence			
	Total	Court	Non-Court
Absent	**14%**	**17%**	**14%**
Late	**22%**	**29%**	**24%**
Absent and/or Late	**33%**	**35%**	**31%**

- Distribution of attorney absence and/or lateness is the same as distribution of attorneys by agency or institution and by county.
    - No particular provider group is any more likely than others to be absent or late.
    - Attorney lateness is slightly more frequent in New York County (36%) and slightly less frequent in Richmond (24%).
    - Combined absence and/or lateness is almost the same in CVO parts (33%) as it is in CP parts (31%); and slightly less frequent in JD parts (27%).

- When an attorney is absent or late, the percentage of appearances where goals are not met increases from 32% overall to 41%.

- Attorneys are slightly more likely to be late for court attorney appearances (26%) and referee appearances (23%) than for judge appearances (20%).

Combined Impact of Court Delay and Attorney Lateness/Absence

- Neither the court nor an attorney was reported delayed/late/absent in 41% of appearances; 80% of these appearances started on time.

- Both the court and attorney were reported delayed/late/absent in 12% of appearances.

    - 11% of these appearances started on time.

    - 66% start more than 30 minutes later than scheduled appearance time.

Caseworker Lateness/Absence

For caseworkers, the card made no distinction between absence and lateness. Participants could choose late/absent or on time. The data reported below are based on the total number of appearances (cards) where one or the other response was checked (assuming that where neither was checked, no caseworker was expected to appear).

- ACS caseworker was reported late/absent in 20% of 2,172 appearances where attendance was noted.

- Agency caseworker was reported late/absent in 24% of 2,522 appearances where attendance was noted.

- When a caseworker was reported late/absent the percentage of appearances where goals were not met was greater than 50%.

Timeliness of Reports

Participants were asked to indicate whether reports were required for the appearance and if so, whether they were submitted on time.

- Reports were required in 2,402 appearances in Bronx, NY, Queens and Richmond.[11]
- For 2,108, timeliness was reported: 67% were on time, 33% were not on time.
- 1,941 were required in CP cases: 68% were on time, 32% were not on time.
- Untimely paperwork was a reason goals were not met in 17% (296) of the 1,768 appearances where goals were not met.

Parties, Interpreters, Probation Officers, Other Witnesses

- Party was reported late/absent in 48% of the 2,837 appearances where a party's presence/absence was reported.
- In nearly half (46%) of the 273 appearances where an interpreter was expected to appear the interpreter was reported late/absent.
- Probation officers were only rarely reported late/absent: 10 of the 126 appearances where they were expected to appear.
- Other witnesses were reported late/absent in 30% of the appearances where they were expected.

Timeliness of Other Participants				
	Timeliness Reported	Late/Absent	% Late/Absent	% of total
Party	2,837	1,378	49%	23%
Interpreters	273	126	46%	2%
Probation Officers	126	10	8%	0%
Other Witness	328	98	30%	2%

[11] These data were not collected for Kings County.

CVO Specialty

- **Attorney absence /lateness are almost the same in CVO parts (33%) as in CP parts (31%).** [12] **Attorney absence was slightly more likely in CVO than other specialties.**

Attorney Absence/Lateness by Specialty			
Attorney Reported…	**CP**	**CVO**	**JD**
Absent	**15%**	**23%**	**16%**
Late	**27%**	**30%**	**20%**
Absent and/or Late	**33%**	**31%**	**27%**

- **18b attorneys are no more likely to be absent or late for CVO appearances than for other appearances.**
  - An 18b attorney was reported late in 77 CVO appearances (11%) and 453 CP appearances (9%).
  - CVO appearances make up 13% of the total sample and 12% of the appearances where 18b attorneys were reported absent or late.

- **A clear majority (63%) of CVO appearances were reported on by court personnel.**
  - In 38% of CVO appearances goals were not met as compared to 32% for CP and 33% for JD.
  - The court was reported delayed in 45% of the CVO appearances as compared to 33% in CP and 35% in JD; 46% of court personnel and 50% of non-court personnel reported that the court was delayed.
    - A scheduling or time conflict with another part was reported in 10% (68) of the appearances where court delay was reported.
    - Among the 68 where a key participant was reported to be in another part 41 identified the specialty where the missing participant was and of those 21 were in CP parts.

- **Party lateness/absence is more often reported in CVO than in other specialties.**
  When a party's timeliness was reported, 56% were reported as late/absent; that is 27% of CVO appearances in this study as contrasted with 21% of CP appearances where a party was reported late/absent.

[12] Attorney absence/lateness is lowest in JD parts (27%). There were only 260 JD appearances in which attorney attendance was reported.

Appendix A: Sample Data Collection Card

BRONX COUNTY
FAMILY COURT TIMING CARD

PART:
DATE:
DOCKET #:

CONDUCTED BY.. ☐-Judge ☐-Ct Atty ☐-Referee
PURPOSE..... ☐-Fact Finding/Trial ☐-Conference ☐-PPH
☐-Emergency Hearing ☐-Other, explain:_____

SCHEDULED Start Time: _____:_____
End Time: _____:_____ ☐ None

ACTUAL Start Time: _____:_____
End Time: _____:_____

COURT DELAYED? ..... ☐-No ☐-Yes, *Reasons:*
☐-Ct Atty or ref conferring with judge ☐-Double booking by court
☐-Prior matter ran over ☐-Other, explain:_____

Was appearance delayed because a key participant was in another part? ☐-No ☐-Yes, *Specify:*
☐-Support ☐-CP ☐-CVO ☐-JD ☐-Emergency Hearing?

Were REPORTS required for this appearance? ☐-No ☐-Yes, *Specify:* ☐-PHR ☐-Other
Were required reports supplied on time? ☐-No ☐-Yes

KEY PARTICIPANTS
ATTORNEY absent? ..... ☐-No ☐-Yes, *Specify:*
☐-BxD ☐-CC ☐-CLC ☐-FCLS ☐-LAS ☐-18B ☐-Pvt
ATTORNEY late? ..... ☐-No ☐-Yes, *Specify:*
☐-BxD ☐-CC ☐-CLC ☐-FCLS ☐-LAS ☐-18B ☐-Pvt

CASE WORKER-ACS: ☐-Late/Absent ☐-On time
AGENCY: ☐-Late/Absent ☐-On time
INTERPRETER ..... ☐-Late/Absent ☐-On time
PROBATION... ☐-Late/Absent ☐-On time
PARTY ..... ☐-Late/Absent ☐-On time
WITNESS ..... ☐-Late/Absent ☐-On time

WERE THE GOALS FOR THIS APPEARANCE MET?.. ☐-Yes ☐-No, *Why not? Check all that apply.*
☐-Calendar confusion
☐-Key participant not present. *Who? Position, not name:*_____
☐-Paperwork not timely *(Includes late or incomplete reports or discovery.)*
☐-Parties agreed to settle before appearing
☐-Party not produced. *Who? Party, not name:* _____
☐-Party not ready/compliant
☐-Party not served
☐-Other, explain:_____

CARD COMPLETED BY ☐-Judge ☐-Ct Atty ☐-Referee ☐-Other, *Specify Agency:*_____
SCAN COMPLETED CARDS TO: mpatten@nycourts.gov

12.02.09

Appendix F

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
Goal 1: All relevant administrative units of the Unified Court System collaborate to promote best court practices in child welfare cases.	**Objective 1.1:** Maintain and enhance existing strategic partnerships with relevant units within the Unified Court System. 1. Participate in ongoing meetings and collaborative projects that promote child welfare court best practices with other UCS entities including, but not limited to the following: • Office of the Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Court Operations and Planning (Family Treatment Courts) • Office of the Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Court's Outside New York City • Office of the New York City Family Court Administrative Judge • Offices of the Judicial District Administrative Judges throughout the state (including FC Supervising Judges) • OCA Division of Court Operations o Trial Court Operations Unit (TCI) o Court Interpreters Unit o Court Security Administration Unit o Records Management Unit • OCA Division of Technology (DoT) • OCA Division of Financial Management • Judicial Training Institute (JI)	CIP, OCFS, Office of Alcoholism and Substance Services (OASAS)	Ongoing	Meet with stakeholder groups to design protocols	1. Statewide Project Manager meets regularly with the staff of Deputy Chief A.J. for court Operations and Planning on joint initiative with State Social Services Agency and State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. Created and disseminated the following publications for alcohol/substance abuse procedures in child welfare proceedings in family court: a. "Gearing Up To Improve Outcomes for Families: New York State Collaborative Practice Guide for Managers and Supervisors in Child Welfare Chemical Dependency Services, and Court Systems" b. "Collaborative Practice Desk Guide	1) • Ongoing • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed • In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	• Counsel's Office • Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee • Appellate Division Law Guardian Programs		Ongoing		for Family Court Practionners" c. "Collaborative Practice Desk Guide for Judges and Judicial Officers" CIP staff named to Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee Assistant Coordinator and Statewide Project Manager met with 5th, 7th, & 9th Judicial District Supervising Judges of the Family Courts individually. In 2008, additional meetings with the 10th, 5th, 6th, 8th and NYC occurred. Staff hired in both TCI and DoT to support CIP goals from an operational and technology perspective. All grant-supported staff have collaborated with CIP on multiple data-related projects. NYC Family Court Administrative	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					Judge added as a member of the CIP executive and advisory committee, providing ongoing counsel and collaboration on CIP NYC-related initiatives. CIP funded positions in the court's DoT that enable the development of software cupporting CIP goals (i.e. LUC project). CIP staff coordinated with JI staff to implement the NCJFCJ's CANI in October 2009,as well as judicial trainings in the summer of 2008 and judge/referee training referenced in Section 3.2 below. The relationship between the JI and the CIP was solidified in 2009 with the appointment of CIP Advisory Chair, Hon. Sharon Townsend,	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					as the Vice Dean of the J.I. for family and matrimonial matters. 2009 established ongoing relationship with Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for courts outside of New York City and will meet with him alternate months on child welfare matters. Statewide Project Manager met with Law Guardian Program Directors at a meeting which convenes all Directors and is establishing relationships. 2010:	
	Objective 1.2: Maintain the relationship between Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children (PJCJC) and the CIP in recognition of the PJCJC's role in providing leadership in child welfare court reform initiatives. <u>Activities</u>	CIP, PJCJC	2008-2009	Meeting to establish funding requirements, CIP Staff asked to review and edit publication CIP collaborate	CIP funded the development of the following PJCJC information products to increase child participation in family court procedures: a. Video: "Hear Me!	1.2) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	1. CIP Staff will provide regular updates to PJCJC. 2. CIP Working Group (Sub committee of the PJCJC) will act as a formal advisory group for the CIP. 3. CIP Coordinator will participate in PJCJC meetings. 4. CIP staff will participate in PJCJC initiatives that intersect with CIP mission.		Ongoing	on curriculum development on an ongoing basis	Hear Me! Hear Me!" b. Book: "Tools for Engaging Children in Their Court Proceedings" c. Training for Judgesheld in Summer of 2008 . 2. CIP formed a PJCJC advisory group chaired by the Hon. Sharon Townsend. The group met twice in 2008 to review CIP goals and to offer guidance for upcoming initiatives	4)Completed
	Objective 1.3: Increase communication among CIP staff. <u>Activities</u> 1. Host annual action planning meetings to evaluate progress, and refine objectives and activities (including key partners). 2. Convene monthly CIP staff meetings. 3. Create a medium for CIP staff to post news items (i.e. blog). 4. Arrange for presentations on various topics to build the teams' skill set around common areas of responsibility such as: i. Goal Setting Workshop ii. Coaching Workshop	CIP	Ongoing	Plan staff meetings Planning for CIP liaison staff training	1, 2. CIP staff engaged in two staff meetings for all statewide staff in 2008 with external stakeholder participation. CIP reviewed strategic plan and evaluated progress with partners.CIP staff convened at the annual Sharing Success conference in fall 2008. CIP staff attended a training in NYC provided by the NCJFCJ in March	1.3) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	iii. Leadership Trainings				2009. Staff meet telephonically twice each month. 3. All statewide staff provided access to a shared network drive. Potential plans for newer collaboration software being explored. 4. Agenda created for CIP staff training on best practices. 2007: CIP staff participated in coaching seminar to enhance collaborationa and interpersonal skills. 2009: training received by the NCJFCJ on leadership around Model Court best practices.	
	Objective 1.4: Increase awareness and understanding of child welfare court reform activities among OCA Divisions, Family Court Judges and Referees, court managers, staff and other relevant entities of the UCS. <u>Activities</u>	CIP	Ongoing		1. Annual report distributed in 2007 and 2008. In 2009, report produced and disseminated to newly appointed Administrative Judge of the New York City Family	1.4) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	1. Issue annual reports summarizing the prior year's child welfare court reform activities. 2. Issue periodic "Best Practice Bulletins" (via print and e-mail). 3. Make periodic presentations at Administrative Judge's and Family Court Supervising Judge's meetings. 4. Meet individually with Administrative Judges and Family Court Supervising Judges regarding CIP activities. 5. Make periodic presentations to Chief Clerks and Deputy Chief Clerks at annual meetings. 6. Make periodic presentations to OCA Executive Management team regarding CIP activities. 7. Make periodic presentations to local family court Judges and staff. 8. Make periodic presentations to the Family Court Judges Association 9. Meet and make presentations to the Appellate Divisions Law Guardian Programs.				Courts. 2. Three "Best Practice Bulletins" created and disseminated in 2008. One disseminated in 2009. 3. Meetings with administrative or supervising Family court judges concerning CIP goals and addressing local issues were held in all judicial districts except the 4th. 5. Presentation made in December 2007 to annual meeting of Chief Clerks and Deputy Chief Clerks Statewide about CIP as well as upcoming CFSR and a second presentation was made in October 2008 updating them on local CIP initiatives. In 2009, a presentation was made regarding the Enhanced Court Practices Initiative. 6. Ongoing	4)Completed 5)Completed 6)Completed 7)Completed 8) Completed 9)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					whenever opportunity exists. 7. Presentations about CIP and best practices made by CIP staff in the 5th, 6th ,7th, 8th Judicial Districts, conversations had concerning a similar presentation in the 3rd Judicial District. September of 2009 Enhanced Court Practices initiative rolled out with a webinar to lead judges about the project and CWCIP. 8. Statewide Project Manager established working relationship with former Association President in order to gain access for a presentation on CWCIP. 9. Statewide Project Manager involved in 2008 meeting with all Appellate Division Law Guardian Program Directors and is establishing	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					relationships. Ongoing relationship exists with Fourth Department Program. 2010: CIP prepared remarks for Chief Adm. Judge on data metrics at NYS Family Court Judges Association meeting	
Goal 2: A broad array of statewide stakeholders to engage in ongoing, meaningful inter-organizational collaboration to promote best court practices in child welfare cases throughout the state.	**Objective 2.1.** CIP Staff will participate on existing committees including but not limited to the following: • Statewide Permanency Planning Team • Adoption Now • PIP Strategy Groups • Partnership for Family Recovery (IDTA) • Family Treatment Court Advisory Committee • Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee • Workgroup to improve the educational well-being of children in foster care (McKinney-Vento)	CIP	Ongoing		CIP staff are members of all mentioned committees.	2.1) • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed • Completed
	Objective 2.2. Increase number and type of stakeholders involved in child welfare court reform initiatives	CIP	Ongoing		CIP staff are dramatically increasing stakeholder diversity in child	2.2)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					welfare reform areas, i.e. the New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative. 2009: As a part of the Enhanced Court Practices Initiave a form was developed by staff to assist lead judges in identifying appropriate stakeholders.	
	Objective 2.3. CIP Staff will participate on other committees which emerge and whose purpose is consistent with the CIP's mission. **<u>Activities</u>:** 1. Participate in and/or present at relevant symposiums, conferences and other events sponsored by existing and potential stakeholder systems (including but not limited to): a. Health b. Mental Health c. Education d. Substance Abuse e. Institutional legal service providers, Bar groups (LG's and Respondent's Counsel) f. Agency Attorneys (NYPWA) g. Mental Retardation	CIP	Ongoing	Identify committees that are aligned with the CIP mission	1. CIP staff became members of the "Permanency Now" committee in 2008. CIP staff prepared a presentation on the IDTA initiative and collaborative process between the courts, child welfare system and substance abuse for the NYPWA conference on 1/30/09. CIP staff Coordinat ed Court based substance abuse training with a consultant. It is a seven session lunch time training series	2.3) Activities: 1 a)In Progress b)Completed c)Completed d)Completed e)Completed f)Completed g)Completed 2a)Completed b)Completed c)Completed d)Completed e)Completed f)Completed g)Completed 3a)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	2. Invite representatives of the aforementioned groups to participate and/or present at CIP sponsored events. 3. Identify representatives from each of the aforementioned groups and set up individual meetings to inform them of CIP mission and initiatives and learn about their missions and initiatives.				entitled Chemical Dependency: Implication for the Child Welfare System. In 2009, CIP staff with the aid of a consultant developed curriculum for Substance Abuse Services Providers on the basics of family court. 2010: CWCIP finalized curriculum on the basics of family court for substance abuse professionals: "Basic Court Information for the Substance Abuse Professional: What You Always Wanted to Know About the Child Welfare System." With the NYS Partnership for Family Recovery. 2010: CIP staff engaged in meetings supporting the understanding of	b)Pending c)In Progress d)Completed e)In Progress f)In Progress g)Pending

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					the family court system by clients in the mental health system. Work regarding reforming legislation (leg. Ongoing). Staff trained by Casey on "Endless Dream" program designed to educate educators on the educational needs of children in foster care.—liaisons reaching out to local educators. 2. The CIP co-sponsored Sharing Success 2008 annual conference invited presentations from the mental health and health fields. In 2009, the Enhanced Court Practices Initiative was launched and member from each of these disciplines are encouraged to be a part of each local multi-	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					disciplinary team.	
	Objective 2.4: Engaging State Legislature in Child Welfare and CIP initiatives. **<u>Activities</u>:** 1. Support UCS efforts to educate Legislature concerning resource needs of the Family Courts. 2. Meet individually with legislators and staff to inform them of CIP mission and initiatives. 3. Invite representatives of the legislature to participate and/or present at CIP sponsored events. 4. Distribute Best Practices Bulletins to state legislators.	CIP	2009-beyond	Best Practice Bulletins created. Identify legislation impacting family court where CIP can play a role.	1. 2006-2010: Statewide Project Manager is a member of the Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee that issues and supports a legislative reform agenda each year.	2.4) Activities: 1-4. Ongoing.
	Objective 2.5: Increase representation of small counties and jurisdictions historically underrepresented in planning activities. **<u>Activities</u>:** a. Invite representatives of small and underrepresented jurisdictions to participate in CIP planning processes. b. Use distance technology (conference calls, video conferencing, and "meeting space" software) to facilitate participation from distant parts of the state. c. Develop an advisory group to focus on the special needs of small and underrepresented jurisdictions.	CIP	Ongoing	Identify underrepresented jurisdictions	a. CIP included family courts judges from the 7th JD (Ontario county) and the 6th JD (Tompkins county) in the CIP Advisory Committee. In 2009 in response to the recent CFSR, a PIP Strategy Group was established around court/agency collaboration. The members of that group represent the entire state and an	2.5) Activities a)Completed b)Completed c)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					effort was made to integrate normally underrepresented counties. b. Online conferencing used to reach distant counties in CASA conferences. September 2009 webinar technology used to launch enhanced court practices initiative with 17 lead judges around the state. In 2009 distance learning began to be explored both through the 7th JDs Babies Can't Wait, Teens Won't Wait series and other learning topics. c. A pilot group exists in the 7th Judicial District to address child welfare concerns and how to improve court practice and outcomes for children and families in smaller jurisdictions.	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
Goal 3: In every county of the state, a broad array of local stakeholders engage in ongoing, meaningful collaboration to promote best court practices in child welfare cases in their respective communities.	**Objective 3.1:** Increase the number of court staff positions dedicated to coordinating child welfare court reform initiatives and supporting Family Court Judges at the local level. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1.Work with OCA Division of Human Resources to identify an appropriate title series. 2.Create additional positions in key jurisdictions in consultation with Judicial districts/NYC FC 3.Existing CIP staff provide mentoring and training to newly hired staff.	CIP	2008	Work with HR to post CIP Liaison positions	1. The liaisons are in the court analyst title series. 2. In 2008, CIP hired two new Liaison positions to represent the 6th, 3rd and 9th JDs. In 2009 a liaison was replaced in the 8th JD. In 2009 conversations occurred to solidify hiring 4 new staff liaisons in New York City. It is anticipated that these staff will be on board in the spring of 2010. 3. Mentoring and training is provided though bi-monthly liaison meetings and in person staff development meetings.	3.1) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed
	Objective 3.2: Increase the number of counties with active stakeholder groups to promote system-wide implementation of best practices. **<u>Activities</u>:** a. Develop a "Child Welfare Court Improvement Plan" template for use by local courts.	CIP	Ongoing		a. Implementation Plan developed in 2009 to launch enhanced court practices initiative. b. CIP staff provide ongoing assistance in counties where best practices and	3.2) Activities a)Completed b)Completed c)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	b. CIP Liaisons provide direct technical assistance to counties during the start-up phase. c. Provide data synopsis to counties to encourage reform (Demographics, comparison to similar counties, local numbers vs. benchmarks, etc.). d. Conduct "process mapping" and file reviews to identify potential areas of improvement. e. Conduct regional cross system trainings on the process of developing local "best practice" collaborative groups. f. Invite multi-disciplinary attendance at presentations of case-reviews of children who grew up in and aged out of foster care. g. Roll out training of piloted "Substance Abuse Basics" statewide and encourage multi-disciplinary attendance.				Model Court procedures and stakeholder groups are exercised: Erie, Niagara, Monroe, Westchester, Nassau, Oneida, Onondaga, Chemung, and Albany. In addition, CIP personnel are staffing stakeholder groups in the five boroughs of NYC. In 2009 17 counties outside of NYC with the highest foster care population and the five boroughs of NYC were identified to receive targeted technical assistance in order to enhance court practices in child welfare matters. c. CIP dissiminated county-based data reports in 2007 and 2008. In 2010, county based data metrics reports will be distributed. 2010: CIP staff	d)In Progress e)Completed f)In Progress g)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					disseminated county-based data reports to all 62 counties in NYS and liaisons reviewed the data with county stakeholder groups. d. CIP staff involved in New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative. This project will re-engineer many of the city's child protective proceedings. 2009: work ongoing by staff as a part of the enhanced court practices initiative. 2010: CIP supporting Vera study in Bronx and Queens counties that analyzes case processing timelines to improve operational efficiency. e. CIP staff	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					coordinated training on judicial best practices for judges by bringing CANI to New York in October, 2009. In 2008, the topic of system collaboration was addressed to county teams during Sharing Success VI. f. Sharing Success VI in November 2008 featured "Why Urgency Matters: An Illustrated Timeline of One child's Experience in Foster Care". This was attended by a multi-disciplinary audience—Office of Court Admin, Family Court, OCFS, several local DSS agencies, etc. g. CIP staff coordinated pilot for a court based substance abuse training with consultant Naomi Weinstein. The	

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					Kings County Series began on December 5th 2007 and was completed in May 2008. Video tapes are being made for a train the trainer statewide initiative. In 2009 the series was integrated into a broad category f trainings designed to support systems collaboration between social services districts, family courts and substance abuse providers. 2010: CWCIP finalized curriculum on the basics of family court for substance abuse professionals: "Basic Court Information for the Substance Abuse Professional: What You Always Wanted to Know About the Child Welfare System." With the NYS Partnership for Family Recovery	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	Objective 3.3: Increase number and type of stakeholders involved in local child welfare court reform initiatives. **<u>Activities</u>:** 1. Encourage statewide agency partners to provide information to their local partners regarding the importance of participation on local court reform groups. 2. CIP Liaisons assist local stakeholder groups to identify potential representatives and set up individual meetings to inform them of the purpose of the local court reform initiative. 3. Conduct a local cross-disciplinary training on CIP basics and showcasing other successful collaboratives as a first step. 4. Invite potential partners to tour the court and meet with Judges and Court Managers.	CIP	Ongoing	Development of an action plan that includes recommended stakeholders	1. Through the ongoing work of the CFSR PIP workgroup on court/agency collaboration, statewide partners are supporting collaboration at the local level. There is a subcommittee specifically named supporting local collaboration. Group began meeting in 2009. In 2009 as a part of the enhanced court practices initiative leaders from the state OCFS collaborated with CIP in drafting a letter to go from local county lead judge to local social services commissioner inviting co-facilitation of the stakeholder group. 2. 2009: As a part of the Enhanced Court Practices Initiative a form was developed by staff to assist	3.3) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					lead judges in identifying appropriate stakeholders. 3. In the 5th JD, an attorney training sponsored by Monroe county DSS, CIP, and Monroe Family Court was held to review 2005 permanency law and Model Court procedures. Each county engaged in the enhanced court practices work has scheduled a kick-off meeting for January or February of 2010. 4. 7th JD: CIP staff involved with a Court Orientation Program for foster parents/caregivers for children in placement. The program provides information about the basic permanency hearing court process. 2010: Pediatric rotation in 7th JD:	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					physicians brought in to view court proceedings and meet with court Judges, personnel. Ongoing Enhanced Inter-disciplinary committees—provide opportunities to bring in partners and meet with court personnel.	
	Objective 3.4: Encourage local court leadership surrounding child welfare initiatives. **<u>Activities</u>:** 1. Facilitate multi-disciplinary team visits to model court jurisdictions around the state and in other states. 2. Provide information to clarify ethics questions regarding judicial participation in cross-system reform efforts. 3. Provide opportunities for local judges to attend the National Council on Juvenile and Family Court Judges Child Abuse and Neglect Institute and/or contract with NCJFCJ to provide a training in-state.	CIP	Ongoing	Identify key jurisdictions	1. CIP staff coordinated training for Nassau County Court Attorney Referee. Training included spending two days with a Court Attorney Referee in Erie County in February, 2008. In March of 2009 a team from Oneida County presented to stakeholders and systems workers in Oswego, Onondaga Dutchess, and Jefferson counties.	3.4) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					2010: Cross-site visits were conducted to Los Angeles (New York City team) and Miami (Outside NYC team) to examine practices in those model courts in support of timeliness and well being initiatives (co-funded by Casey Family Programs and National Council). 2010: A kick off conference in support of our Enhanced Interdisciplinary Practices Initiative was held in March of 2010. CIP liaisons were assigned to work with 22 jurisdictions on topics such as improving system practices and process flow. These groups are modeled after NCJFCJ model courts.	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					2. 2008: Judge Len Edwards brought in to discuss best practices/judicial leadership at summer judicial seminar series. 2009: The issue of judicial ethics in multi-disciplinary collaborative work was discussed during the lead judge webinar in September of 2009. 2010: Judicial leadership curriculum (included discussion on ethics) presented at Ready Set Go 3. CIP sent ten NYS judges to attend the CANI training in 2008. In 2009, New York State hosted the first regional CANI and invited 30 New York State Judges.	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
Goal 4: Every participant in child welfare court proceedings is afforded due process, procedural fairness and timely resolution.	**Objective 4.1:** Increase the percentage of non-respondent parents who are personally served with any initial petition alleging abuse/neglect or petition seeking approval of a voluntary placement instrument. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Survey Counties to determine current practice of notifying non-respondent parents of the existence of a child welfare proceeding involving their children. 2. Perform a randomized statewide file review to determine what percentage of non-respondent parents are notified and attend child welfare cases involving their children. 3. Work with OCFS to determine impact on personally serving all parents via personal service/publication. 4. Work with UCS Counsel's office and the Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee on developing statutory and rule modification to provide for personal service of non-respondent parents in child welfare cases.	CIP	2009-2010		1-4. 2009-Present: Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee child welfare subcommittee looking at legislative reform around non-respondent parents. Work continuing into 2010.	4.1) Activities 1-4: In Progress
	Objective 4.2: Increase compliance with requirements that permanency reports be submitted 14 days in advance of the permanency hearing. **<u>Activities:</u>**	CIP, OCFS, ACS	Ongoing	Draft feasibility report Define Business requirements for UCS/ACS data share.	1. CIP arranged several meetings to engage OCFS personnel on the importance of inter-agency data share. This meeting was	4.2) Activities 1)In Progress 2)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	1. Work with key UCS, OCFS & ACS partners to enhance automation of case processing and interoperability between UCS and Child Welfare IT systems. 2. Continue support of the NYC Family Court/ACS (Legal Tracking System/UCMS/Connections) data share project to allow for electronic filing and dissemination of permanency reports. 3. Develop feasibility study regarding statewide interoperability between UCMS and OCFS systems to replicate NYC pilot statewide. 4. Train caseworkers in the operations and dynamics of Family Court and necessity of the timely submission of information to the Court and parties				incorporated into the periodic LUC governance meeting. 2010: CIP staff attended LUC governance meetings throughout the year and supports ongoing staff and consultants to implement the project in NYC. 2. CIP participating in LUC project and funding an additional project analyst for ACS. 3. OCA/OCFS data share white paper created and disseminated in March, 2008. 4.2009 in Erie County a presentation developed and delivered by staff around engagement and best practices related to permanency	3)Completed 4)Pending

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					hearings.	
	Objective 4.3: Increase percentage of cases in which relative resources are identified and served notice of the proceedings where required. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Provide training to Judges and Court Attorney Referees surrounding kinship options. 2. Implement standardized checklist of preliminary inquiries from the bench surrounding relative/kinship resources. 3. Issue Best Practice Bulletin to outline statutory relative provisions and best practice principles. 4. Provide training to the bench and bar concerning relative issues in Family Court and the dynamics and interplay between them all. 5. Develop and distribute a simplified desk aid to all counties & courts explaining kinship care options.	CIP, OCFS	Ongoing	Draft publications created.	1. & 4. 2009: Staff working with the 5th and 6th JDs in collaboration with OCFS region 3 representatives jointly sponsored "The Race for Relatives" presented as a full day training with Margaret Burt, Esq. as the trainer. Training was open to all Judges, CARs and child welfare professionals in the 14 county reach. 2. CIP staff created the following publications: a. "Post Dispositional Review Checklist". This has been developed and disseminated b. "Preliminary Conference Checklist" has been developed and disseminated. 3. A Best Practice	4.3 Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)Completed 5) Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					Bulletin has been created and disseminated in 2008 covering relative topics. 2010-2011: 1-4: "Frontloading without Railroading" curriculum was developed and presented in Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester counties (rolled out to 22 ECP counties in 2011) that provides information to court, caseworkers, attorneys on roles of judicial and child welfare personnel. 2010: Relative handbook developed by OCFS. CIP staff distributed the link to invitees at Frontloading without Railroading conference in 2011 and at new judges training seminar.	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	Objective 4.4: Increase the percentage of permanency hearings held within statutory timeframes. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Continue to Support the work of OCFS regional office staff in conducting IV-E mock audits. 2. Work with Counties to establish multi-disciplinary groups to review internally court orders for compliance with IV-E and include compliance with the statutory mandates of the permanency law. 3. Encourage the use statewide of case conferencing techniques in order to minimize contentious issues during permanency hearings, thus minimizing the need for continuances. 4. Provide training for judges and court staff surrounding elements of an effective permanency hearing and need for timeliness utilizing Freed Child Permanency Video made by OCFS. 5. Implement a continuous hearing mandate for all permanency hearings. 6. Assess judicial and court attorney referee caseload and effect on timely permanency hearings.	CIP, OCFS	Ongoing	Identify counties where permanency hearings are not held within statutory guidelines	1. CIP staff participated in periodic IV-E mock audits in 2007, 2008 and 2009. 2. Two examples of CIP work in statutory compliance: a. In the 7th JD, an attorney training sponsored by Monroe county DSS, CIP, and Monroe Family Court was held to review 2005 permanency law and Model Court procedures. b. "Best Practices Permanency - Focus on Child Protective Cases". Training held for the 7th District chief clerks. Three different sessions; Permanency, Support, and Judicial a combination of best practices theory and hands on UCMS. In	4.4) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)Completed 5)Pending 6)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					2009 a Best Practices Bulletin issued that outlines procedures for establishing a Title IV-E review group. 3. CIP staff involved in the New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative that includes identifying checklists, protocols, and form orders for many types of conferences. 2010: Distributed preliminary conferencing checklists at Frontloading without Railroading conference. Settlement, post-dispositional review checklist will be distributed at 2011	

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					a new judges training seminar. 2009: enhanced court practices initiative implementing the NCJFCJ Resource and Adoption and Permanency Guidelines. 2009: Court based permanency mediation program established in the 5th Judicial District. 2010: Court-based permanency mediation program established in the 8th Judicial District. 4. UCMS training provided in four districts. This training incorporates the Freed Child Permanency Video. In 2009 another 4	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					JDs were trained. Liaisons use the video to provide individual technical assistance with judges. 6. In 2010 NYC Family Court conducted a time card study that highlighted areas of improvement in areas of the bench. It was replicated in Oswego county	
	Objective 4.5: Increase the number of Native American families served by a culturally competent courtroom setting and ensuring compliance with ICWA mandates. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Support judicial training concerning Native American cultures and the Indian Child Welfare Act. 2. Develop and distribute signs for every State courtroom asking people of Native American ancestry to advise the Court. 3. Work with Indian Nations to identify representatives for participation in local stakeholder's groups. 4. Support the inclusion of Native American	CIP, CASA	Ongoing	Identify local stakeholders	1. 6. & 7. CIP Staff participated in an ongoing collaboration between the courts of the 8th JD and the Cattaraugus and Allegany Peacemaker courts of the Seneca Nation. 2009: ICWA training provided in Niagara and Genesee Counties. 2. CIP staff have designed signs. 1 County has independently implemented.	4.5) Activities 1)Completed 2)In Progress 3)Completed 4)Completed 5)In Progress 6)In Progress 7)Pending

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	representatives on appropriate stakeholder's groups. 5. Work with Law Guardian Programs to have ICWA as a core element of child welfare training. 6. Work with Nations on providing information to their tribes on child welfare court practice and procedures. 7. Work with other system partners to ensure that all systems are trained in the fundamentals of Native American cultures and ICWA.				2010: CIP began a relationship with the St. Regis Mohawk nation. Shinnecock nation attended All Sites conference and will be a member of our state advisory team. This provides CIP with information about tribes and they understand what CIP does. St. Regis Mohawk nation: ongoing discussions on having attorneys for children in their tribal courts. 3. CIP staff coordinating a collaboration of the Niagara County Family Court and Chiefs and Clan Mothers of the Tuscarora Nation – Ongoing projects are the development of a contact list, establishment of	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					regular meetings and ICWA training for Niagara County attorneys for children. 3. & 4. 2009: As a part of the enhanced court practices work, a tribal representative is encouraged to be a part of each local county collaborative. 7. See above training in Objective 4.5, #1. CASA presentation made to Tribal Courts Forum; and planning begun for regional 2011 training meetings for CASA on ICWA, tribal governance and culture.	
	Objective 4.6: Decrease the time it takes to place children across state lines in accordance with the Interstate Compact on Placement of Children and Safe & Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Solicit bids and Contract to provide	CIP	2008 and ongoing	Form committee to draft NYS assessment report	CIP staff to discuss implementing the recommendations in the above report in the Permanency Now sub-committee.	4.6) Activities 1)Completed 2)Pending 3)Pending

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	assessment of New York State's statutes, court rules, and regulations surrounding the interstate placement of children. 2. Encourage frequent reviews and status reports of out of state home study requests. 3. Support the enactment of the new ICPC legislation. 4. Provide training around the new legislation once adopted. 5. Issue a Best Practice Bulletin with suggestions for moving a case forward that appears to be stuck due to an out-of-state home study. 6. Convene a meeting with New York CIP and those in Florida, Pennsylvania and New Jersey (the three states most often sought for Interstate placement of New York's children) to discuss interstate challenges and procedures.					4)N/A 5)Pending 6)Pending
	Objective 4.7: Increase the number of fathers identified and involved in the court process and in service planning for their children. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Gather existing caseworker tools on identifying fathers. 2. Develop a tool that can be easily used by Judges and other Judicial Officers when facing a case where no father has been identified.	CIP, Office of Court Administratio n (OCA)	Ongoing	Raise involvement of fathers in child welfare proceedings as an issue in the court system.	3. CIP partnered with the Division of Technology to incorporate a prompt in the UCMS case management system to verify a father's legal status relative to the child during the TPR process.	4.7) Activities 1)Pending 2)Pending 3)Completed 4)Pending 5)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	3. Work with Division of Technology and UCMS Permanency Group to establish prompts, or other highlighting features, to remind court users of the necessity of identifying fathers. 4. Develop a cross-reference checklist for use by petition processors to assist in identifying fathers from related cases. 5. Conduct multi-disciplinary training on importance of early identification of fathers. 6. Develop and distribute best practice principles surrounding the identification and engagement of non-respondent fathers. 7. Coordinate efforts with TPR Barriers Workgroup. 8. Issue Best Practice Bulletin.				5. "Frontloading without Railroading" curriculum was developed and presented in Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester counties (rolled out to 22 ECP counties in 2011) that provides information to court, caseworkers, attorneys on roles of judicial and child welfare personnel. 6. See above note on Family Court rules committee on non-resp. parents… 7. CIP staff on the TPR Barriers committee have participated in proposing legislation addressing identified barriers.	6)Completed 7)Completed 8)Pending

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	Objective 4.8: Require attorneys to prepare and sign legal pleadings in family court proceedings **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Assess impact of pro se paperwork by conducting statewide randomized file review of both attorney drawn and pro se pleadings. 2. Work with Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee to establish new Family Court Rule to require attorneys to sign pleadings filed in Article 10 and termination of parental proceedings. 3. Issue Best Practice Bulletin surrounding need for attorney drawn pleadings. 4. Work with Trial Court Operations Office to establish conforming protocols for Family Court back office staff.	CIP, OCA counsel's office, Trial Court Operations	2008-2009	Draft new Family Court Rule language	2. CIP staff have joined the UCMS Forms committee. If appropriate, CIP will work with the committee to incorporate attorney signature on Article 10 and TPR proceeding forms.	4.8) Activities 1)Pending 2)Pending 3)Pending 4)Pending
	Objective 4.9: Support UCS Counsel's Office in continuing to make improvements to the timeliness of the appeal process for child welfare proceedings. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Undertake a study to determine length of time to decision on appeal. 2. Support development of protocols between trial courts and appellate divisions to improve appeal procedures				2006-Present: UCS Council's office monitors cases for timeliness of appeal process.	4.9) Activities 1)Ongoing 2)Pending

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Goal 5: Courts consistently conduct the highest quality child welfare proceedings to ensure that: 1) children are kept safe, are maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate; 2) children's length of stay in foster care is reduced; and 3) the health, mental health and educational needs of children are met.	**Objective 5.1:** Increase compliance with state and federal child welfare requirements through active engagement with the statewide Office of Children and Family Services. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Participate as consultant reviewers in other states when and if opportunities arise. 2. Participate in federal Title IV-E reviews of New York State and the development and implementation of any resulting program improvement plans giving priority to any legal or judicial issues identified in the review. 3. Participate in federal CFSR reviews of New York State including development of the state's self-assessment, active participation in the on-site review and the development and implementation of any resulting program improvement plans giving priority to any legal or judicial issues identified as a result of the review. 4. Issue a Best Practice Bulletin for Judicial Officers and Court Managers educating them on their role in federal reviews.	CIP, OCFS	2008, ongoing	Engage OCFS in discussions for CIP involvement in IV-E process.	1. CIP staff participated as consultant reviewer in CFSR review in 2007 in another state. 2. In the 7th JD, Title IVE Case Reviews – CIP partners with the BRO of OCFS to conduct monthly case file reviews for compliance with Title IVE standards in Erie County to prepare for the upcoming federal review. New York State passed Title IV-E reviews in 2006 and 2009 therefore no PIP resulted. 3. CIP staff participated in training program for onsite reviewers and onsite reviews for the 2008 CFSR of New York. CIP staff facilitated focus groups of Judges and Judicial Officers around the state to inform the self-assessment as well as authored a	5.1) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					portion of the assessment. CIP staff have been working closely with OCFS on PIP development and have had meetings where alignment of PIP and CIP goals were discussed. In 2009, a PIP strategy involving Court/agency collaboration was established with co-leads from CIP and OCFS. Group meets quarterly with 3 subcommittees that meet more regularly. 4. Best Practice Bulletin on the CFSR disseminated in 2008. Best Practice Bulletin on the Federal Title IV-E review disseminated in 2009.	
	Objective 5.2: Increase knowledge and skill of judicial officers (Judges and Referees) on child welfare related issues. **<u>Activities:</u>**	CIP, PJCJC	Ongoing	Develop training programs Engage the JI for program arrangements	1. CIP funded ten Family court judges/referees to attend CANI seminar in 2008 and 9 in 2007. In 2009,	5.2) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	1. Underwrite Judicial Officer participation in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judge's Child Abuse and Neglect Institute or have the program brought to New York State. 2. Develop a basic child welfare training program for all judicial officers who will hear child welfare matters and determine feasibility of mandating such training. The training to include but not be limited to: a. Best Practices and CIP Initiatives; b. Child Development; c. Having children present in the courtroom; d. Child welfare basics; e. The court's role in promoting child well being using existing PJCJC curriculum (education, healthy development and special developmental needs of infants); ICWA; f. Elements of case planning and role of the caseworker and corresponding regulations; and g. Needs of children aging out of the foster care system. 3. Develop a child welfare bench book to augment the child welfare training program. 4. Develop a Judicial mentorship program. 5. Develop a case review protocol for children who have aged out of the system as a self-assessment tool for improvement.				NY hosted the first regional CANI and invited 30 Judges from New York to attend. 2. CIP is in ongoing discussions with the NYS Judicial Institute concerning a new judge training as well as beginning stages of developing a training for child welfare referees. Each of these topics have been addressed in some form of training. See Training Grant Grid page 1. First Goal, 2nd strategy and related progress. 2010: Curriculum developed for a new judges seminar. A Judicial Training program held at the State Judicial Institute for judges from the three Courts Catalyzing Change pilot sites as well as judges in	3)In Progress 4)Completed 5)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					counties participating in OCFS-sponsored DMR initiatives. Planning has begun for CWCIP and OCFS to partner with ABA and National Resource Center on Child Protection to implement their "Child Safety for Lawyers and Judges" curriculum in regional trainings to be conducted beginning in 2011. 3. Staff currently engaged in developing a best practices bench book to assist judicial officers in handling child welfare cases. Additionally, a statutorily guided bench book is also in progress through the Judicial Institute. 4. October 2008 a contract was signed with retired NYC	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					Family Court Judge Sarah Schecter to develop a Judicial mentorship program. 5. Nassau County piloted a case file review of a child's timeline in foster care from the time they entered until they aged out and presented the results to the local Family Court Judges. This pilot was expanded and presented to a statewide multidisciplinary audience, "Why Urgency Matters: An Illustrated Timeline of One child's Experience in Foster Care" was presented at Sharing Success VI in November 2008 Next steps to engage OCFS in initiative to support local agency opening files for the review.	
	Objective 5.5: Improve the communication	CIP	2008-	Prepare agenda	1. 2010: Judicially	5.5)

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	between Referees and Judges on their child welfare caseloads to solidify a team approach. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Work with UCS Counsel's Office and Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee to establish clearer guidelines for referee activity. 2. Train judges and referees on the team model concept. 3. Provide training for referees in conjunction with the Judicial Institute specific to their caseloads. 4. Provide for regular meetings of child welfare referees statewide and consult judges and referees on issues to address.		2009	for NYS CANI conference	lead sub-committee formed to review the rules and authority of judges and court attorney referees. 2. CIP funded ten Family court judges/referees to attend CANI seminar in 2008 and 9 in 2007. CIP hosted a NCJFCJ co-sponsored CANI training in NYS in October 2009 wherein 30 New York Judges invited to attend. Ongoing work exists on an as needed basis by CIP staff where need exsits. 3. CIP is in ongoing discussions with the NYS Judicial Institute concerning a new judge training as well as beginning stages of developing	Activities 1) In Progress 2) Completed 3) In Progress 4) In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					a training for child welfare referees. 4. CIP staff involved in New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative. See Report Introduction for background information in the initiative.	
	Objective 5.6: Increase availability of Alternative Dispute Resolution services **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Maintain support for current child welfare mediation projects. 2. Expand child welfare mediation to additional counties. 3. Provide statewide training opportunities for additional child welfare mediators. 4. Participate in the national "Conflict Resolution in Child Welfare: Collecting the Wisdom of 25 Years of Experience" Symposium. 5. Provide training for Judges and Referees and	CIP, OCA	Ongoing	Identify ADR trainers	1. Currently fund four out of five original pilot permanency mediation programs. 2. Developed and implemented April 2009, the CWCIP Permanency Mediation Program in collaboration with the 5th Judicial District expanded mediation from one county in the 5th District to 6 counties. 3. September 2008	5.6) Activities 1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)Completed 5)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	child welfare attorneys on the applicability of mediation to child welfare matters.				a Child Welfare Permanency Mediation training was offered statewide to advanced mediators as well as those seeking to become a part of the new court roster to support the program in the 5th JD. 4. Assistant Coordinator attended in 2007 and 2009. CIP liaison attended in May 2008. 5. Statewide Manager and liaisons presented at the 5th Judicial District Judges Meeting. In 2009, CIP liaisons met with 5th District Judges individually and their stakeholders to ensure a smooth implementation and correct utilization of the program.	
	Objective 5.7: Increase the number of Counties utilizing conferencing models in their	CIP	Ongoing	Identify best practice	1. Implementation Plan developed in	5.7) Activities

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	courtrooms. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Develop a "Child Welfare Court Improvement Plan" template for use by local courts. 2. CIP Liaisons provide direct technical assistance to counties during the start-up phase. 3. Provide data synopsis to counties to encourage reform (Demographics, comparison to similar counties, local numbers vs. benchmarks, etc.). 4. Conduct "process mapping" and file reviews to identify potential areas of improvement. 5. Conduct regional cross-system trainings on the various conferencing models utilized statewide and nationally and the benefits to each. 6. Facilitate site visits between county teams who are interested in conferencing techniques and those who are successfully engaged in such techniques – both statewide and nationally. 7. Provide file reviews and courtroom assessments for interested counties to assess their child welfare practices and provide suggestions for improvement.			conference models.	2009 to launch enhanced court practices initiative. 2. CIP staff provide ongoing assistance in counties where best practices and Model Court procedures and stakeholder groups are exercised: Erie, Niagara, Monroe, Westchester, Nassau, Oneida, Onondaga, Chemung, and Albany. In addition, CIP personnel are staffing stakeholder groups in the five boroughs of NYC. In 2009 17 counties outside of NYC with the highest foster care population and the five boroughs of NYC were identified to receive targeted technical assistance in order to enhance court practices in child welfare matters. 3. CIP disseminated county-based data reports in 2007 and	1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)In Progress 5)Completed 6)In Progress 7)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					2008. In 2010, county based data metrics reports will be distributed. 4. CIP staff involved in New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative. This project will re-engineer many of the city's child protective proceedings. 2009: work ongoing by staff as a part of the enhanced court practices initiative. 5. CIP staff coordinated training on judicial best practices for judges by bringing CANI to New York in October, 2009. In 2008, the topic of system collaboration was addressed to county teams during Sharing Success VI. Meetings held to formulate template. Document expected to be finalized in	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					January, 2009. Template has changed and an implementation plan for the enhanced court practices initiative developed. 6.Nassau County Referee new to permanency part hosted by Erie County Referee as facilitated by CIP staff. In 2009 CIP staff facilitated a training for Oswego County new stakeholders by Oneida County existing stakeholders. Additionally, Oneida County Stakeholders spoke to Oswego, Onondaga and Jefferson County stakeholders concerning the use of permanency mediation. 7. In March 2009. CIP staff was trained in file reviews and courtroom	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					assessments by the NCJFCJ. As part of the enhanced court practice work, Liaisons will be reviewing files and assessing courtroom protocols and procedures in order to provide technical assistance.	
Goal 6: Courts consistently treat all participants in child welfare matters fairly and with consideration.	**Objective 6.1**: Maintain a culture of patience, dignity and courtesy in all aspects of court operations. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Conduct focus groups of court users including parents, youth and professionals. 2. Conduct multi-disciplinary trainings on topics to promote the objective (including but not limited to): Vicarious Trauma; Fostering meaningful participation in court proceedings; Cultural diversity; and Awareness of parties' perspective of court experience. 3. Develop a written guide and training module for court security personnel on the special nature of child welfare matters (calendar privacy, the role of foster/adoptive parents, etc.).	CIP, OCA	Ongoing	Identify cross-disciplinary topics and training documentation	2. 2008 Presentation completed in the 9th JD by CIP staff on Vicarious Trauma. CIP included a presentation on cultural compentancy as part of the Sharing Success conference in 2008. In 2009, three pilot sites are taking on the difficult issue of reducing overrepresentation of minority children in foster care and disparate treatment by engaging in The NCJFCJ's Courts Catalyzing Change Initiative.	6.1) Activities 1)Pending 2)In Progress 3)Pending 4)In Progress 5)In Progress 6)In Progress 7)Completed 8)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	4. Work with Court Interpreters Unit to ensure frequently used documents are translated and available to local courts for distribution. 5. Explore availability of interpreters for attorney/client interaction outside of court. 6. Develop publications and conduct in-service trainings to raise awareness of issues relating to the overrepresentation of children of color in care. 7. Support judicial training concerning Native American cultures and the Indian Child Welfare Act. 8. Collaborate with Office of Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives Juanita Bing-Newton on her advocacy efforts in ensuring racial and ethnic fairness in the Court System.				5. Pursuant to permanency mediation protocol established for the court based program operating in the 5th judicial district, mediators have been successful in working with the court to obtain interpreter services during permanency mediations. 6. CIP staff working with three pilot sites in Westchester County, Erie County and the Bronx to ensure racial and ethnic fairness in court proceedings. This pilot is based upon the NCJFCJ Courts Catalyzing Change Initiative and is being overseen by the CIP Advisory Committee Chairperson. 7. CIP Staff are facilitating an ongoing dialogue between the Judges of the Niagara	

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					County Family Court, attorneys representing children and parents and the Niagara County Family Court. The group has met to discuss the development of a contact list, establishment of regular meetings and ICWA training for Niagara County attorneys for children. In 2009 ICWA training was provided to multi-disciplinary audiences in Niagara and Genesee Counties. 8. Justice Bing-Newton is being fully apprised of the status of the Courts Catalyzing Change Initiative pilot sites by Hon. Sharon Townsend who is overseeing implementation in the pilot programs.	
	Objective 6.2: Increase the number of children who are present in the courtroom.	CIP, PJCJC	Ongoing	??	1. 3. & 5.& 6. See the progress note	6.2) Activities

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	Activities: 1. Support PJCJC's lead on project and actively participate in workgroup to be formed by PJCJC. 2. Work with OCA Counsel's Office and Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee to implement statute or court rule. 3. Provide training for all system users on child participation in court proceedings to include: a. Explanation of the benefits to the court and other stakeholders of youth presence and participation in permanency hearings; b. Explanation of the benefit to the children of youth participation in and presence at their permanency hearings; c. Behavioral expectations of children and youth based upon cognitive developmental stage; d. Age-appropriate questions and expectations for input from children and youth; e. Strategies to deal with emotional issues and outbursts; f. Restructuring or bifurcation of permanency hearings to permit younger children to participate;				for Objective 1.2. 2. & 4. Many discussions were had with the FCARC and focus groups were held of Judges at the 2009 summer judicial seminars. As a result, no statute or rule is being recommended at this time. 7. CIP staff supported Teen Days in NYC established and was modified and named "Empowering youth day" in Oneida County. Both continued to be held in 2009. 8. 8th JD: Erie County Adolescent Subcommittee – CIP staff works with Erie County collaborative committee dedicated to improving outcomes and process for adolescents in out-of-home placement.	1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)Completed 5)Completed 6)Completed 7)Completed 8)In Progress 9)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	g. Judicial role in encouraging active and meaningful children and youth participation in permanency hearings; h. Use of creative, time-specific scheduling to permit children and youth to attend without significant disruption of school attendance; i. Strategies to prepare a child or youth for effective participation; and j. Age appropriate expectations for input for children and youth. 4. Provide follow up forums for Judges to discuss concerns regarding youth participation in Court proceedings. 5. Develop a Judicial Handbook of age appropriate or developmental stage appropriate questions. 6. Include foster youth panels at relevant trainings/seminars/conferences. 7. Expand New York City's "Teen Days" project to assist foster youth in transitioning to adulthood. 8. Expand and refine "Benchmark Permanency Hearings" at critical stages of adolescent development. 9. Issue Best Practice Bulletin encouraging youth attendance at permanency hearings.				Committee has developed an Adolescent Checklist to be used with specialized adolescent reviews. The 7th JD has similarly engaged in an adolescent checklist to accompany their enhanced permanency hearings. Enhanced permanency hearings have replaced benchmark hearings in Monroe County and have been expanded to Orange County in 2009 as well. Work on improved hearings with adolescents will continue under the enhanced court practices initiative. 9. CIP staff have begun work on a fourth Best Practice Bulletin which addresses youth participation in permanency hearings among	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					other topics.	
	Objective 6.3: Decrease the length of time from filing to completion of various child welfare proceedings. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Evaluate and assess current length of time to completion of various child welfare proceedings, number of trial appearances and length of time between trial days. 2. Execute a feasibility study of conducting consecutive hearing days with statewide participation. 3. Select pilot sites for roll out of consecutive hearing dates. 4. Develop a best practice timeline for each type of child welfare proceeding with descriptions supporting each appearance. 5. Work with UCS Counsel's Office and the Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee on implementing statutory and rule changes. 6. Work with Supervising Judges and District Administrative Judges on understanding the necessity of timely resolution of child welfare proceedings.	CIP, OCA, DoT	Ongoing	Gather data reports that detail court proceeding statistics	1. CIP staff involved in New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative. See Report Introduction for background information in the initiative. Ongoing work of data metrics has set as a metric timeliness to adjudication and disposition for both neglect/abuse proceedings, as well as terminations of parental rights. Preliminary data has been reviewed in 2009. Final data to be released spring of 2010. 3. CIP staff have begun discussions in the 5th JD with Oneida Family Court for the roll out of consecutive hearing dates. In 2009 all liaisons are aware that this is a best practice to be	6.3) Activities 1)In Progress 2)Pending 3)In Progress 4)In Progress 5)Pending 6)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					explored with enhanced court practices counties. 4. CIP staff involved in New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative which is implementing a best practice process flow for child welfare proceedings. In 2009 Assistant Coordinator and Statewide Project Manager are creating a best practices time-line and case flow for child welfare cases that highlights the NCJFCJ Resource Guidelines standards of 60 days to adjudication and 90 days to disposition in both original neglect/abuse and termination cases. High level support has been achieved to support these timeframes.	

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					6. As part of the enhanced court practices rollout beginning in 2009, best practices resulting in the timely resolution of child welfare proceedings will be emphasized.	
	Objective 6.4: Increase the number of Family Courts using calendar management techniques to ensure appropriate attention to child welfare caseloads. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Convene a workgroup to identify within child welfare proceedings and specific appearance types, elements of the particular proceeding in order to determine a suggested length time for the court appearance. 2. Select pilot sites for implementation. 3. Develop benchmarks to reach by implementing date/time certain and varying durations of appearances. 4. Deliver training in conjunction with Trial Court Operations Unit to introduce date/time certain calendaring. 5. Provide CIP liaison staff to support court initiatives.	CIP, Trial Court Operations	Ongoing	Identify work group participants	1. CIP staff involved in New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative. See report Introduction section for background information on the initiative. 5. CIP staff are available in almost every judicial district in the state to support court initiatives.	6.4) Activities 1)Pending 2)Pending 3)Pending 4)Pending 5)In Progress
Goal 7: All	**Objective 7.1**: Adopt standards for	CIP	2010	Gather	CIP to address	7.1)

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
affected participants including but not limited to parents, children, local Departments of Social Services, current and potential relative and non-relative caregivers, and voluntary foster care agencies have ready access to quality representation and advocacy services.	representation for parents, agency/social services district attorneys and review standards for law guardians. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1.Work in partnership with State Bar Association to explore adoption/revision of Standards of Practice in child welfare matters: 2.Survey other states standards; review ABA model standards; 3.Propose standards; and Determine proper procedure for formal adoption of standards.			information on non-NYS state ABA model standards	based onpriority and as time permits in the latter half of the 2006-2010 strategic plan. 2009: CIP Staff participate in a Statewide CFSR PIP Workgroup on Court/Agency collaboration. Subcommittee on improving the quality of legal representation established to address these strategies/activities. Group began meeting in 2009. Locally, an attorney training on the basics of best practices in child welfare cases offered at two locations in 5th district in June 2008. In 2009 a collaborative publication was completed: "The Lawyer's Guide to Agency Adoptions." Curriculum is currently being developed to disseminate the guide. The goal is to reduce delays in adoption proceedings by training attorneys on the requirements of agency adoption. Preliminary	Activities 1)Pending 2)In Progress 3)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					conversations had with OCFS Counsel's Office who provide non-mandated training as well as counsel to The New York Public Welfare Association. Erie County in 2009 provided a training for system attorneys on advocating in a best practice part.	
	Objective 7.2: Increase knowledge and skills of attorneys engaged in child welfare practice. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1.Develop basic training curriculum for child welfare attorneys. 2.Conduct periodic training sessions for attorneys in the basics of child welfare practice. 3.Conduct periodic training sessions for attorneys on ethics in CW practice. 4.Explore requiring attorney mentoring/second chairing. 5.Develop pilot locations for the implementation of attorney mentoring. 6.Integrate mandatory training requirements into contracts with institutional legal service providers. 7.Conduct Law Guardian training on how to talk	CIP	2010	Identify attorneys for participation in curriculum development	1. CIP Staff participate in a Statewide CFSR PIP Workgroup on Court/Agency collaboration. Subcommittee on improving the quality of legal representation will explore a basics type of training. Group began meeting in 2009. 2. An attorney training on the basics of best practices in child welfare cases offered at two locations in 5th district in June 2008. In 2009 a collaborative publication was completed: "The Lawyer's Guide to Agency Adoptions." Curriculum is currently being developed to disseminate the guide. The goal is to reduce delays in adoption proceedings by training	7.2) Activities 1)In Progress 2)In Progress 3)Pending 4)Pending 5)Pending 6)Pending 7)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	to children at varying developmental stages.				attorneys on the requirements of agency adoption. 7. Based upon curriculum developed by the PJCJC on youth attending their court appearances, presentations have been given to several panels of attorneys for children in conjunction with the Fourth Department Appellate Division Law Guardian Program as well as to attorneys and other system partners in various counties (Oneida, Oswego, Monroe).	
	Objective 7.3: Increase relatives, caregivers & potential caregivers access to advocates at the earliest possible point in the process. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1.Convene focus groups to determine unmet needs of relatives/caregivers & potential caregivers. 2.Convene an informational session with various advocacy groups to determine resources for advocacy and local initiatives. 3.Develop a caregivers manual to outline relevant child welfare law, court process and various support services.	CIP	2010	Identify materials for focus groups and caregiver manual.	CIP to address based onpriority and as time permits in the latter half of the 2006-2010 strategic plan.	7.3 Activities 1)Pending 2)Pending 3)Completed 4)Pending 5)Pending 6)In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	4.Work with OCFS to develop advocacy positions in the largest districts. 5.Provide training or access to training, regionally or nationally, for local project advocates. 6.Encourage local stakeholder's groups to add this issue to their agendas.					
	Objective 7.4: Increase number of judges who are appointing counsel to relatives/caregivers in child welfare cases. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1.Perform feasibility study on impact of assigning counsel both on County finances and attorney workload. 2.Meet with various groups of legal aide, public defenders, 18B attorneys to explore with them representation of these groups of people. 3.Educate the Judges, attorneys and caseworkers surrounding the need for these individuals to be represented in child welfare proceeding including the publication of a Best Practice Bulletin. 4.Work with established stakeholder's groups to add the topic to their agenda. 5.Identify Counties who have regular representation for relatives/caregivers to	CIP	2010	Gather statistical reports to determine areas of the state where relative placement is low.	CIP to address based onpriority and as time permits in the latter half of the 2006-2010 strategic plan.	7.4) Activities 1)Pending 2)Pending 3)Pending 4)In Progress 5)Pending

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	determine if a model can emerge.					
	Objective 7.5: Increase the number of parties receiving continuous representation in child welfare proceedings where the representation is undertaken by an institutional provider. **<u>Activities:</u>** a. Evaluate the feasibility of continuous representation by a single attorney throughout the life of a case with various institutional providers (Legal Aide, Public Defenders, Conflict Defenders and Law Guardian Offices). b. Disseminate information about dedicated child welfare teams (Judge, DSS Attorney, Law Guardian(s), Respondent's counsel(s)). c. Work with FCARC to establish a rule that requires notice be given to Law Guardians for all agency adoption petitions filed. d. Educate law guardians about their role during the adoption proceeding.	CIP	2008-2010	Identify representitives for institutional provider groups. Develop presentation or educational material for institutional provider groups.	CIP to address based onpriority and as time permits in the latter half of the 2006-2010 strategic plan. b. CIP staff involved in New York City Reforming Child Protective Proceedings initiative. As part of this effort, cross-discplinary child welfare committees have been established to address continuous representation among other topics. d. The Lawyer's Guide to Agency Adoptions was finalized and printed. The Guide clearly reflects the role of the attorney for the child. Curriculum is currently being developed to disseminate the Guide.	7.5) Activities a) Pending b) In Progress c) Pending d) In Progress

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	Objective 7.6: Increase the frequency and availability, and improve the quality of CASA advocacy services for children. **<u>Activities:</u>** 1. Develop new CASA programs (three new counties by 2010). 2. Work with the Seneca Nation to develop the state's first Tribal CASA program. 3. Enhance capacity of existing CASA Programs. 4. Educate Judges and Referees on the appropriate use of CASAs. 5. Perform site visits to all CASA programs in the state to review case files as well as program and volunteer management. 6. Conduct annual trainings of all CASA directors on child welfare and court issues, such as substance abuse, developmental issues, and the impact of trauma. 7. Improve effective use of CASA Programs by Family Court Judges: a. Conduct survey of Family Court judges regarding quality of CASA reports and effectiveness in assisting prompt and stable placements of children. b. Conduct meetings with local Family Court judges to assess their awareness of CASA, its	CIP	Ongoing	Identify new areas for CASA expansion Develop fund raising training for CASA agencies	1. CIP staff met with Family Court Judges and agencies in three counties to discuss new CASA programs—although available financial resources limit expansion at this time. 2009:Schenectady County added as a CASA County 2. CIP staff have worked with the Seneca Nation to consider a CASA program. 3. CIP staff effort on enhancing program effectiveness: a. Establish workgroups to continue to develop a standardized CASA Program Manual. In 2009 chapters covering data management and collection and program development were completed b. Standardized data collection terms were distributed, and a workgroup is moving state network toward a web-based data collection mechanism in collaboration. c. Standardized court and program forms are being developed for CASA programs. In 2009 these forms were	7.6) Activities 1)In Progress; presentation on CASA made to Oswego stakeholders group 2)In Progress; presentation made to Tribal Courts Forum. 3)In Progress; two statewide training sessions held during 2010 and informational webinars 4)In Progress 5)Completed 6)Completed 7) a)Pending b)In Progress c)Completed

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
	roles, and appropriate case assignment. c. Conduct presentation at fall 2007 Family Court Judges Association statewide meeting on the CASA program and its use. 8. Conduct trainings on cultural competence. 9. Retain services of diversity consultant to develop intervention strategies for network.				distributed to the CASA network. d. CIP has provided regular information to CASA network about court-related initiatives through a newsletter entitled the Monday Morning Memo. 4. See # 7 below. 5. CIP staff conducting regular site visits. 6. CIP staff organized two program directors' meetings held in 2008, a cross-systems training on children impacted by familial substance abuse, and trainings on permanency planning, resource development and collaborative advocacy. In 2009 CIP staff organized 2 program directors' meetings presenting information on program management, volunteer training, children in court, kinship options, parent advocacy, conflict management and resource development. 7. a. CIP staff met with local judges as part of CASA program site visits. c. 2007: Conducted presentation at fall 2007 Family Court Judges Association	8)Completed; Train the Trainer on Cultural Humility offered in June 2010 9)Pending

Issue to be Addressed	Strategy / Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Progress to Date	Completion Status
					statewide meeting on the CASA program and its use. In 2009 a workgroup entitled "Pathways to Collaboration with CASA was convened. The group reviewed identified challenges to strengthening collaboration with CASA ane developed recommendations to meet each of those challenges. 8. CIP staff have conducted two cultural competancy trainings: Sullivan and Fulton/Montgomery Counties. In 2009 local presentations on disproportionate minority representation. 9. CIP worked to develop a 90-minute training for CASA staff and volunteers. The training was piloted in 2009 and rolled out to the remaining network following the pilot.	

Appendix G

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
Increase knowledge and skill of judicial officers (Judges and Referees) on child welfare related issues.	1) Underwrite Judicial Officer participation in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judge's Child Abuse and Neglect Institute. 2) Develop a basic child welfare training program for all judicial officers who hear child welfare matters and determine feasibility of mandating such training. Such training to include but not be limited to: a) Best Practices and CIP Initiatives; b) Child Development; c) Having children present in the courtroom; d) Child welfare basics; e) The court's role in promoting child well being using existing PJCJC curriculum (education, healthy development and special developmental needs of infants); f) ICWA; g) Elements of case planning and role of the caseworker and corresponding regulations; and h) Needs of children aging out of the foster care system. 3) Develop a child welfare bench book to augment the child welfare training program. 4) Develop a Judicial mentorship program.	CIP in consultation with Supervising Judges CIP staff in collaboration with PJCJC	Ongoing 2007-2010	8-10 Judges Participate in CANI seminar each year Planning group convened RFP for consultant curriculum development issued Consultant selected Curriculum Developed Trainers identified and recruited Training conducted annually Bench book published Mentoring program established	Quality of judicial decision making improved to support improvements in CFSR outcome measures: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate. Children have permanency and stability in their living situation; and The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children. Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs; Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	Improvements in CFSR and court performance indicators	1) Sent 10 Judicial officers (Judges and Referees) in June, 2008. Sent 9 in 2007. 1st Regional CANI in New York held October of 2009. Nine judicial officers were sent in 2010. 2) Established a working relationship with NYS Judicial Institute to develop collaborative trainings to deliver to Judges and Judicial Officers. Had input on Child welfare presentations at Summer 2008 Judicial Seminars. Partnered with the national Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the NYS Judicial Institute to bring the Child Abuse and Neglect Institute to New York State in October 2009. CWCIP and OCFS planning begun to partner with the ABA and National Resource Center to implement their Child Protection on a "Child safety for lawyers and judges"	1) Completed in each years 2006, 2007, 2008 October 2009, and October 2010 2)In Progress 3)In Progress 4)Completed

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							curriculum. 2) a) Best practices and CIP Initiatives presentation was given to 5th Judicial District Judges' Meeting, 7th Judicial District Judges' Meeting. Also to Administrative Judges and Supervising Judges. Additionally presented by liaison staff to local groups. b) & e) Healthy Development of Children in Foster Care Curriculum in development. Fall 2009 a mental health series was piloted in Nassau County. Four lunchtime modules: Mod 1: Early Childhood Mental Health, Mod 2: Mental Health issues for children ages 6 – 11; mod 3: Mental Health Issues in Early Adolescence; Mod 4: Mental Health Issues in Late Adolescence c) PJCJC lead on curriculum development. 3 phases: Phase 1: Developmental Issues – what to expect from children in court; Phase 2: Hearing Youth Voices;	

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							Phase 3: A Panel of Experts to discuss the pros and cons of children in the courtroom. “Hear Me! Hear Me! Hear Me!: Voices of Youth in Foster care Regarding their Court Proceedings” video created, produced and shared statewide at conferences including Sharing Success VI. “Tools for Engaging Children in Their Court Proceedings: A Guide for Judges, Advocates and Child Welfare Professionals” was created, produced and distributed. CIP staff worked with the PJCJC to develop curriculum for a children in court training which has been delivered regionally to attorneys for children in the Appellate Division 4th Department as well as locally to multi-disciplinary groups and to service providers. d) CWCIP entered into a training contract in 2009 with Margaret A. Burt, Esq. nationally known expert in child welfare matters to	

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							develop curriculum and deliver training on child welfare topics as the need arises. f) ICWA Conference November of 2007 held. Additionally, local training on ICWA provided to multi-disciplinary groups in Niagara and Genesee Counties in November of 2009. g)Curriculum developed through statewide workgroup receiving in-depth technical assistance from the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare in 2009. Pilt sites for delivery currently underway. h) Teen Days in NYC established and was modified and named "Empowering youth day" in Oneida County. Both continued in 2009. Monroe county piloted and continues to present a court orientation program to youth who are attending their permanency hearings for the first time. Monroe County also piloted, and Orange County	

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							adopted an Enhanced Permanency Hearing Pilot Project in 2009 which is a vehicle to engage youth in their court proceedings and also dedicate a longer amount of time to those hearings. In the 8th Judicial District work is underway to establish a checklist of IL skills to be utilized at permanency hearings 3) Staff currently engaged in developing a best practices bench book to assist judicial officers in handling child welfare cases. Additionally, a statutorily guided bench book is also in progress through the Judicial Institute. 4) October 2008 a contract was signed with retired NYC Family Court Judge Sarah Schecter to develop and implement a Judicial mentorship program.	

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
Encourage active participation of children and youth in court proceeding.	1) Provide training for all system users on child participation in court proceedings to include: a) Explanation of the benefits to the court and other stakeholders of youth presence and participation in permanency hearings; b) Explanation of the benefit to the children of youth participation in and presence at their permanency hearings; c) Behavioral expectations of children and youth based upon cognitive developmental stage; d) Age-appropriate questions and expectations for input from children and youth; e) Strategies to deal with emotional issues and outbursts; f) Restructuring or bifurcation of permanency hearings to permit younger children to participate; g) Judicial role in encouraging active and meaningful children and youth participation in permanency hearings; h) Use of creative, time-specific scheduling to permit children and youth to attend without significant disruption of school attendance; i) Strategies to prepare a child or youth for effective participation; and j) Age appropriate expectations for input for children and youth. 2) Develop a Judicial Handbook of age appropriate or developmental stage appropriate questions. 3) Include foster youth panels at relevant trainings/seminars/conferences.	PJCJC and senior CIP staff and consultants	2008	Planning group convened RFP for consultant curriculum development issued Consultant selected Curriculum developed Trainers identified and recruited Training conducted	Increased participation of youth n court proceedings	UCMS data indicator on youth attendance	1) "Hear Me! Hear Me! Hear Me!: Voices of Youth in Foster care Regarding their Court Proceedings" video created, produced and shared statewide at conferences including Sharing Success VI and the 2008 summer judicial seminars. "Tools for Engaging Children in Their Court Proceedings: A Guide for Judges, Advocates and Child Welfare Professionals" was created, produced and distributed. PJCJC continues to lead on curriculum development in 3 phases: Phase 1: Developmental Issues – what to expect from children in court; 1 c) d) e) j)Phase 2: Hearing Youth Voices; 1 b) h)Phase 3: A Panel of Experts to discuss the benefits of having children participate in their court proceedings and allow a forum for discussion about concerns. 1 a) b) g) h) i) CIP staff worked with the PJCJC to develop curriculum for a children in court	1)Completed

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							training and has delivered the training to various groups including attorneys for children, service providers, and local multi-disciplinary audiences. 1)CIP staff planned and facilitated a conference for child welfare professionals in Erie Co. in 2008 on overcoming barriers to finding permanency for older youth entitled “The Words of Permanency: Challenging Child Welfare Professionals to Find Permanency for Older Youth” 1 b) i) Monroe Co. created a Court Orientation Program offered every six months to youth in care due to neglect/abuse explaining the court process, roles and responsibilities of professionals in the court room and permanency hearings. In 2009, there was created a court orientation personalized Youth Court Booklet 2) “Hear Me! Hear Me! Hear Me!: Voices of Youth in Foster care Regarding their	

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							Court Proceedings" video created, produced and shared statewide at conferences including Sharing Success VI and the 2008 summer judicial seminars. "Tools for Engaging Children in Their Court Proceedings: A Guide for Judges, Advocates and Child Welfare Professionals" was created, produced and distributed. Local protocols have also been established for having children attend court in NYC, in Monroe and Albany Counties (2009) 3)NYS OCFS YIP (Youth in Progress) have been presenting at various law guardian training programs and were featured in the "Hear Me! Hear Me! Hear Me!" video. Youth were also featured at Sharing Success VI in November 2008 as the voices in "Why Urgency Matters: An Illustrated Timeline of One child's Experience in Foster Care". In 2009 Westchester County established a	

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							Youth Advisory Board to advise and weigh in on critical system decisions involving child welfare matters also to serve as mentors to other foster children.	
Increase judicial oversight of child and family service planning.	1) Collaborate with OCFS to provide training to Judicial Officers on the elements of case planning. 2) Conduct training for CASAs to enhance the court's ability to monitor child and family service plan implementation. 3) Conduct training for Law Guardians on existing well-being indicators and child development. 4) Educate Judicial Officers on the need to be informed regarding community services beyond those under contract with the local social service agency. 5) Provide technical assistance statewide to Judicial Officers regarding conducting meaningful permanency hearings and exploring all permanency options prior to approving an APPLA goal. 6) Utilize a case review of children who have aged out of the system after entering at a young age as a self-assessment/training tool.	CIP staff	Ongoing	Planning group convened RFP for consultant curriculum development issued Consultant selected Curriculum developed Trainers identified and recruited Training conducted	Improved service plans lead to enhanced family capacity, and improved CFSR outcomes	Formal evaluation of impact of judicial oversight in child and family service planning	1) Through the work with the In Depth Technical Assistance provided by the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare a Training Plan emerged with this element as part of the training initiative. In response, OCFS developed a training for the courts with elements of case planning and is selecting pilot sites. 2)"Collaborative Advocacy: It's a Plan Not an Argument" training offered regionally in August and September 2008 for CASA staff and volunteers on the use of active listening, problem solving and facilitating skills to advocate for children in collaboration with colleagues in child welfare. In 2009 a training was provided to the CASA Directors	1)Completed 2)In Progress 3)In Progress 4)In Progress 5)In Progress 6)In Progress

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							statewide on court procedure. 2010: CWCIP supported trainings for the CASA network on such topics as permanency planning, adolescent advocacy, the over-representation of children of color in care, family treatment court, the needs of lesbian, gay and transgender youth in care, court rules and family substance abuse. 3) Healthy Development Curriculum in development. Pilot of one module on incorporating healthy development into permanency hearings being piloted in March and April of 2008. Monroe County offers a monthly "Babies Can't Wait~Teens Won't Wait" court based educational series that CIP staff develops and is responsible for implementation. Relevant 2009 topics include: Trauma informed decision making in child welfare;	

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							neurodevelopment: judgment and adolescents. Also Fall 2009 a mental health series was piloted in Nassau County. Four lunchtime modules: Mod 1: Early Childhood Mental Health, Mod 2: Mental Health issues for children ages 6 – 11; mod 3: Mental Health Issues in Early Adolescence; Mod 4: Mental Health Issues in Late Adolescence. 4)Enhanced Court Practices initiative kick off in September of 2009 implementing NCJFCJ Resource and Adoption and Permanency Guidelines. Liaisons will work with localities on service identification and harness the work of the local family treatment courts regarding community mapping. 5) Relationship established with NYS Judicial Institute to discuss judicial training in the area of child welfare. CIP was consulted regarding Child Welfare	

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							presentations at the 2008 Judicial Summer Seminars. Additionally, CIP Liaison staff work to improve the quality of permanency hearings in each of the jurisdictions they serve. This will be a priority of the liaisons with the counties identified as a part of the enhanced court practices initiative which kicked off September of 2009. October 2009 "The Race for Relatives" was presented by Margaret A. Burt, Esq. to over 200 people on the topic of permanency planning and relatives. The audience included social services, courts, attorneys and service providers. 6) Nassau County piloted a case file review of a child's timeline in foster care from the time they entered until they aged out and presented the results to the local Family Court Judges. This pilot was expanded and presented to a statewide multidisciplinary audience, "Why Urgency Matters:	

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							An Illustrated Timeline of One child's Experience in Foster Care" was presented at Sharing Success VI in November 2008 Next steps to engage OCFS in initiative to support local agency opening files for the review.	
Improve the communication between Referees and Judges	1) Train judges and referees on the team model concept. 2) Provide training for referees in conjunction with the Judicial Institute specific to their caseloads.	Judicial Training Consultant	2009	Planning group convened RFP for consultant curriculum development issued Consultant selected Curriculum developed Trainers identified and recruited Training conducted	Increase judicial oversight of cases managed by referees	Formal evaluation of Judge/Referee team model	1) Ongoing work of the CIP Liaisons where the jurisdiction they serve utilizes referees. Continue to send Judges to the Child Abuse and Neglect Institute, 10 referees and judges sent in June 2008. 9 were sent in 2007. In 2009, a regional CANI was held in New York State and 30 Judges were invited. Many of those Judges work directly with Referees. Nine judicial officers were sent in 2010. A workshop on collaboration and the role of the Judge was offered at the 2008 Summer Judicial Seminars and presented by Honorable Len Edwards. CIP is currently working with the National	1)In Progress 2) In Progress

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the Judicial Institute on bringing the newest curriculum developed by the NCJFCJ on judicial leadership off the bench to New York State in collaboration with the Judicial Institute. 2) Relationship established with NYS Judicial Institute to discuss judicial officer training in the area of child welfare during the annual update trainings provided to legal series employees that includes referees. CIP, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the Judicial Institute brought the Child Abuse and Neglect Institute to New York State in October 2009. Referees have attended in the past and will be invited in upcoming years. Conferencing checklists are being developed by CIP staff to serve as a basis for a future training of child welfare Referees. 2010: A Judicial Training program	

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							held at the State Judicial Institute for judges from the three Courts Catalyzing Change pilot sites as well as judges in counties participating in OCFS-sponsored DMR initiatives.	
Increase awareness and understanding of child welfare court reform activities among OCA Divisions, Family Court Judges and Referees, court managers, staff and other relevant entities of the UCS	1) Issue periodic "Best Practice Bulletins" (via print and e-mail). 2) Make periodic presentations at Administrative Judge's and Family Court Supervising Judge's meetings. 3) Meet individually with Administrative Judges and Family Court Supervising Judges regarding CIP activities. 4) Make periodic presentations to Chief Clerks and Deputy Chief Clerks at annual meetings. 5) Make periodic presentations to OCA Executive Management team regarding CIP activities. 6) Make periodic presentations to local family court Judges and staff. 7) Make periodic presentations to the Family Court Judges Association 8) Meet and make presentations to the Appellate Divisions Law Guardian Programs.	CIP Staff	Ongoing	Requests for technical assistance increased Judicial leadership cultivated Participation in statewide and local planning efforts increased Traditionally underrepresented jurisdictions engaged	Court reform efforts more broadly deployed leading to increase in the number of counties with active stakeholder groups to promote system-wide implementation of best practices	Number of active stakeholder groups	1) Inaugural issue distributed January 2008, subsequent issues, Vol 1, Issue 2 & 3 were distributed in 2008. Vol 2, Issue 1 distributed in 2009. 2) Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator of CIP Office presented to annual meeting of Administrative Judges of the Judicial District and the Supervising Judges of the Family Courts January 2008. 3) Assistant Coordinator and Statewide Project Manager met with 5th, 7th, & 9th Judicial District Supervising Judges of the Family Courts individually. In 2008, additional meetings with the 10th, 5th, 6th, 8th and NYC occurred. 4) Presentation made in December 2007	1)Completed 2)Completed 3)Completed 4)Completed 5)Completed 6)Completed 7)In Progress 8)In Progress

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							to annual meeting of Chief Clerks and Deputy Chief Clerks Statewide about CIP as well as upcoming CFSR and a second presentation was made in October 2008 updating them on local CIP initiatives. Presentation made in May 2008 at the 6th District Managers Meeting. Presentation on Enhanced Court Practices Initiative presented in October of 2009. 5) Ongoing on a regular basis 6) Presentations about CIP and best practices made by CIP staff in the 5th, 6th ,7th, 8th Judicial Districts, conversations had concerning a similar presentation in the 3rd Judicial District. CIP created, developed and has provided a UCMS permanency module training for family court staff in the 3rd, 5th 6th, 7th, 8th 9th, 10th Nassau and 10th Suffolk Judicial districts. 7) Conversation occurred between Statewide Project Manager and President of	

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							Association. 8) Fourth Department Panel familiar and allows for regular presentations on the CIP and best practices at regional seminars. Statewide Project Manager meeting with other Law Guardian Program Directors at a meeting which convenes all Directors and is establishing relationships.	
Improve the quality of representation and advocacy in CW proceedings	1) Develop basic training curriculum for child welfare attorneys. 2) Conduct periodic training sessions for attorneys in the basics of child welfare practice. 3) Conduct periodic training sessions for attorneys on ethics in CW practice. 4) Explore feasibility of mandated training programs.	CIP and PJCJC in consultation with State Bar and Appellate Division Law Guardian programs	2009-Ongoing	Planning Group convened Needs assessment conducted Curriculum developed Trainers identified and recruited Trainings conducted	Increase knowledge and skills of attorneys engaged in CW practice	Pre and post tests required for CLE credit	1)& 2)CIP Staff participate in a Statewide CFSR PIP Workgroup on Court/Agency collaboration. Subcommittee on improving the quality of legal representation established to address these strategies/activities. Group began meeting in 2009. Locally, an attorney training on the basics of best practices in child welfare cases offered at two locations in 5th district in June 2008. In 2009 a collaborative publication was completed: "The Lawyer's Guide to Agency Adoptions." Curriculum is currently being developed to disseminate the	1)In Progress 2)In Progress 3)In Progress 4)Pending

To be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
							guide. The goal is to reduce delays in adoption proceedings by training attorneys on the requirements of agency adoption. 2010: a "Lawyer's Guide to Agency Adoptions." curriculum was developed and a pilot training was conducted for attorneys in two counties in the 8th Judicial District. The pilot training was subsequently modified and a Train the Trainer event was held in the fall in Syracuse where 7 attorneys were trained to provide this training as it rolls out statewide in 2011. 3) Preliminary conversations had with OCFS Counsel's Office who provide non-mandated training as well as counsel to The New York Public Welfare Association. Erie County in 2009 provided a training for system attorneys on advocating in a best practice part.	

Appendix H

Data Grant Strategic Plan

Issue to be addressed	Strategy/Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Interim Benchmark	Outcome	Indicator	Progress to Date	Completion Status
Improve efficiency of child welfare court case management practices	1. Support NYC Family Court/ACS (Legal Tracking System/UCMS/Connections—LUC) data share project to allow: a. Real Time data exchange of key fields b. Electronic filing and dissemination of petitions, permanency reports and Orders c. Development of "portals" and electronic notifications of events 2. Develop feasibility study regarding statewide interoperability between UCMS and OCFS systems to replicate NYC pilot statewide.	Division of Technology (DoT) in collaboration with NYC FC and ACS team with CIP data analyst support CIP Data Analyst/ OCFS Data Analyst	2008-2012 March 2009	Build 0: September 2009 Build 1: TBD Build 2: TBD Build 3: TBD Report Published	Reduced delays Increased compliance with requirement that permanency reports be submitted 14 days in advance of the permanency hearing Increased communication among professionals	Court statistics reflect permanency reports submitted on time.	1. 2008: UCS / ACS technical design has begun on nine inter-agency messages supporting the data share. Outreach delivered to five audiences garnering project support. 2009: Build 0 completed, project planning for Build 1 has begun. 2010: a. Build 1: completed: included electronic transmission of permanency planning report and "next scheduled hearing date" between UCS and ACS. b. Build 2: analysis has begun. 2. 2008: White paper published in March, 2008.	1) In Progress 2) Completed
Increase the capacity of the court system to disseminate data to court managers	1. Develop enhanced reporting functionality in UCMS Permanency Module 2. Conduct a train-the-trainer to inform child welfare (CIP, PJCJC) staff about existing UCMS reports to prepare	Division of Technology DoT/Trial Court Operations	Ongoing 2007	Determine requirements. Deploy updates. Training	Improved access to data.	Reports available in UCMS statewide.	1. 2007: several new reports promulgated. 2008: introduced new judge caseload report and DoT is	1) In Progress 2) Completed 3) In

Data Grant Strategic Plan

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and judicial decision makers	them to train court managers on accessing and interpreting reports. 3. Train court managers on accessing and interpreting child welfare data. 4. Develop a data warehouse/data store based on UCMS data to provide court users with ad hoc reporting capability. 5. Provide county-by-county "Data Snapshots" based on OCFS data to court managers on a regular basis. 6. Establish protocols for data access and authorization for external publication 7. Publish period updates to the Child in Child Welfare data book	CIP Liaisons/Trial Court Operations DoT CIP Data Analyst/OCFS Data Analyst DoT/Trial Court Operations PJCJC staff/Research and Stats Unit	2007-2008 2011 2007 2007 2009	Completed Data facility platform identified. Design initiated.	Increase access to data at the local level	Local courts generating reports.	now incorporating permanency hearings held into counted cases. 2009: reports updated or promulgated. 2010: general report functionality enhanced to provide tracking of children across dockets and a analysis of a permanency-related summary report. 2. 2007: Training of CIP Staff conducted Fall 2007 2009: Another training planned for 2010 to provide liaisons with information around court metrics in order to provide TA to the courts. 4. 2008: Initial data facility technical planning underway. 2009: Technical staff hired and design has begun. 2010: Initial database structure complete.	Progress 4) In Progress 5) Completed 6) Completed 7) Completed

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							5. 2007 to 2010: OCFS data packets disseminated annually. 6. 2007: AD Hoc report request forms promulgated and training of CIP staff completed. 7. 2008: As priority dictates, possible update in 2009. 2009: updates made to web site. 2010: web interface updated with 2009 data and report published.	
Improve consistency, reliability and validity of UCMS data	1. Review and prioritize current permanency module enhancement requests and implement enhancements 2. Review and update end-user documentation for UCMS permanency module 3. Provide training to court end-users	DoT/Trial Court Operations DoT/Trial Court Operations CIP Liaisons/Trial Court Operations	Ongoing 2010 Ongoing	Writer identifed; documentation created.	Improved training ability for end-users; more consistant data entry.	Decrease in identified data quality issues.	1. 2007-2010: Ongoing—UCMS enhancements identified through and priotized by UCMS Permanency Planning committee. 2010 enhancements include: a. Analysis complete for cleaned up outcome and permanency hearing choices.	1) In Progress 2) In Progress 3) Completed

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							b. Freed child logic enhanced. 2. 2008: Contracted with technical writer to create UCMS end-user documentation. Documentation has begun. 2009: Drafts of five out of eight UCMS modules completed, including permanency. 2010: Final draft of sixth module 50% complete. 3. 2008: CIP Liaisons conducted UCMS end-user training in four districts. 2009: another four Judicial Districts were trained.	

Data Grant Strategic Plan

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Improve the court system's capacity to analyze performance in promoting safety, and permanency of children who are the subject of child welfare proceedings	1. Establish a working group to study feasibility of implementing child welfare court performance measures. a. Review SANCA toolkit measures; b. Develop NY-Based "metrics" based on available data; c. Propose performance measures; and d. Determine proper procedure for formal adoption of performance measures. 2. Implement "Executive Dashboard" to display key performance measures in an easily digestible format.	CIP/PJCJC Research and Stats Unit / CIP Analyst	2009 2009-2010	Contractor identified Metrics identified	Evidenced-based planning Identification of best practices and areas of improvement. Ability to perform longitudinal analysis.	Metric utilization Local court program improvement plans. Planning reinforced by data.	1. 2008: CIP has contracted with two child welfare-based research organizations to provide the following services: a. identify NY metrics; b. obtain and analyze supporting data set; c. develop NY metrics; d. Publish and present final metrics statewide. 2009: data metrics were finalized and draft data has been reviewed by the group. Finalized data set to be released to counties March of 2010. 2010: Draft statewide performance measure report in process. Initial "data cube" developed. 2. 2008: Buy-in for concept / software platform obtained from Division of Technology. 2009: Software platform identified/purchased and a programmer was hired for	1) Completed 2) In Progress

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							infrastructure development. 2010: Initial charts for dashboard 50% complete.	