Washington State Court Improvement Program 2020 Annual Self-Assessment Report

This self-assessment is intended as an opportunity for Court Improvement Programs (CIPs) to review progress on required CIP projects, joint program planning and improvement efforts with the child welfare agency, and the ability to integrate CQI successfully into practice. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

> I.   **CQI Analyses of Required CIP Projects** (Joint Project with Agency, Hearing Quality Project) *It is ok to cut and paste responses from last year, but please update according to where you currently are in the process.*

In true CQI fashion, Washington's Joint Project with the child welfare agency has transformed into a new effort based on what we've learned. The Permanency Summits and Hearing Quality Project that we originally undertook, showed the importance of gathering multidisciplinary child welfare/court professionals at the local jurisdiction level to identify and work on issues. Through training and action planning at the Permanency Summits and judicial training, we learned that judicial officers and court partners were starting to use the Safety Guide to change practice.   We recognized through the Hearing Quality Project, the need for the court to conduct safety inquiries throughout the life of a case, including requiring the agency to articulate current safety threats and conditions for return, and to discuss how safety plans and case plans address the specific threats in a case.   At the same time that we had this realization, the results of the Child and Family Safety Review (CFSR) clearly indicated that safety assessment was an area in need of improvement for DCYF and would be incorporated into the Program Improvement Plan. For the past year, we have been working together to evolve these projects into a new joint project and hearing quality project. This report will address where we are with the new projects.

Joint Project with the Child Welfare Agency:

Provide a concise description of the joint project selected in your jurisdiction.

Identification of current safety threats and conditions for return home will be articulated in court hearings. Having this information will improve the court's ability to rule on issues including visitation, placement and progress toward case plan goals. Discussing safety threats and conditions for return will also provide clarity for parents about what needs to happen for reunification and dismissal of their case.

Working together, DCYF and CIP will develop a crosswalk between the American Bar Association's Guide to Child Safety and DCYF's safety framework to create agreed-upon language for court parties to use when talking about safety. In court, DCYF staff will provide assessments of safety based on current facts and, if children are placed out-of-home, describe conditions for return; the identification and implementation of services; and the development of individualized case plans in partnership with families. Judicial officers and attorneys will ask questions related to safety threats and conditions for return home and social workers will be able to explain their assessment of safety to families, courts, providers and other key stakeholders and will partner with families to identify services and resources that mitigate safety concerns.

Identify the specific safety, permanency, or well-being outcome(s) this project is intended to address.

Safety Outcome 2 – Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.
Permanency Outcome 1 – Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

Approximate date that the project began:

While some work has been completed during the transition phase, the official start date, according to the Program Improvement Plan is July 1, 2020

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?
Phase IV – Plan, prepare, and implement

How was the need for this project identified? (Phase I)

The need was identified through our Hearing Quality Project, which sought to apply the ABA Safety Guide to the context of Family Time (parent/child visit) decisions by courts. When introduced to the ABA framework for assessing safety, judicial officers found it useful and requested additional training for themselves and for court partners. The CFSR findings reflected a need for DCYF staff to improve their understanding and application of the department's safety framework, utilizing critical thinking and assessment to drive practice. During the last year, CIP, DCYF staff and the court system-focused PIP team reviewed the data and identified that inconsistent application of DCYF's safety framework impacts permanency decisions.

Root cause analysis of CFSR results determined that caseworkers do not have consistent support and oversight to complete required shared planning meetings and integrate the Safety Framework into practice. This results in an inability to clearly communicate safety threats to children,

parents, the court, and court partners and to create individualized case plans that accurately identify needed services to support timely permanency.

What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II) *If you do not yet have a theory of change and/or would like assistance, please indicate such in the space below.*

Child welfare/court professionals will be provided the guidance, tools and support needed to accurately assess child safety so that…

- Children are able to remain in the home when it is safe for them to do so, the conditions for return home are clearly articulated for parents, and services are accessible and available to mitigate identified needs so that…
- Children are able to remain home or achieve timely reunification or other forms of permanency if the safety concerns are unable to be resolved.

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it? (Phase III)

CFSR Program Improvement Plan:

Strategy 4.2: DCYF staff and court partners will develop, understand, and articulate consistent language regarding DCYF's Safety Framework and implement changes in caseworker and court practice related to the Safety Framework.

4.2.1 Establish a short-term multi-disciplinary workgroup of IDCC subgroup members, FJCIP coordinators, field AGO, HQ program managers, DCYF field, Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA), the Alliance, and other identified stakeholders to:

- Develop a crosswalk of DCYF Safety Framework, safety principles and existing court safety-related training and guidance.
- Identify impacted/related procedures and forms.
- Identify supportive resources available (i.e. safety framework posters for courtrooms)
- Make revisions (as needed) to current judicial/multi-disciplinary Child Safety Framework training as determined through the crosswalk including guidance for judges on specific questions related to safety threats and conditions for return home to be addressed at every court hearing.

4.2.3 Implement training, post-training supports such as peer exchanges and coaching, and supportive resources (including handouts, tools, and posters) in FJCIP jurisdictions to include:

- Providing information on updates to safety training (as a result of 4.2.1) and schedule of available trainings at the annual dependency training for judicial officers and FJCIP Coordinators

- Providing training to judges, multi-disciplinary partners, AGOs, and DCYF staff in FJCIP jurisdictions that have not completed the training, that identify safety principles that will be discussed at every Court hearing.
- Providing supportive resources to those who have already been trained per any changes or adjustments to the training curriculum.

4.2.4 Once the training is completed, incorporation of the concepts learned and practiced in the training will occur including:
- Judges asking questions related to safety threats and conditions for return home
- Attorneys asking questions within the Safety Framework
- Caseworkers submitting with their Court Report an updated safety assessment with the current active safety threat(s) clearly articulated. The Court Report will include conditions for return home, which clearly delineate what behavioral change, and supports are necessary to achieve reunification.

What has been done to implement the project? (Phase IV)

Multidisciplinary training has occurred in a few local jurisdictions, and safety guide training has been incorporated into the annual judicial dependency training conducted by the Court Improvement Training Academy. The PIP activities listed above are just beginning.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V). *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) or data efforts you have in place or plan to have in place to assess your efforts. If you have already evaluated your effort, how did you use these data to modify or expand the project?*

The project will be monitored through the PIP as follows:

4.2.5 AAs and supervisors, with support from HQ and regional QA/CQI staff, PFD1 grant staff, and other designated regional staff, will complete semi-annual, office-based targeted case reviews that will include review of Court Reports and Safety Assessments for documentation of current safety concerns, conditions of return home, and permanency planning. Review results will be presented to all staff and used to identify areas for practice focus and system improvements. Individualized feedback will be provided to the primary caseworker and supervisor regarding strengths and areas of improvement for each case reviewed. Case review results will be included in the Hearing Quality Project evaluation as identified in 4.2.4.

4.2.6
Information obtained from the Hearing Quality Project evaluation will be used to determine improvement in outcomes related to the application of the Safety Framework in the Courts and to

develop a plan to follow-up with additional support for areas that are not showing improvement in outcomes or fidelity to the application of the Safety Framework.

What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or the Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?

We may request assistance with developing the crosswalk between the ABA Safety Guide and the department's Safety Framework.

Hearing Quality Project:

Provide a concise description of the hearing quality project selected in your jurisdiction.

An evaluation comparing dependency hearings pre and post activities in the joint project described above. It is expected that judicial officers and attorneys will ask questions regarding safety threats and conditions for return home, and that caseworkers will be prepared and able to clearly articulate current active safety threats and the conditions for return home.

Approximate date that the project began:

July 1, 2020

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?

Phase III Develop or select solutions

How was the need for this project identified? (Phase I)

As part of the CQI process, it is important to know if the training provided in the joint project described above is reflected in the discussions that are happening in court hearings. During PIP planning it was decided to include this hearing quality project as part of the PIP.

What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II) *If you do not yet have a theory of change and/or would like assistance, please indicate such in the space below.*

The following theory of change was discussed at our Hearing Quality Workshop meeting in May, however, it has not been finalized:

Create a shared understanding and language of safety SO THAT sufficient information is collected SO THAT threats of danger are identified and protective capacities are accurately assessed throughout the life of a case SO THAT effective safety plans are created AND effective case plans are created SO THAT conditions for return are identified AND appropriate family time is ordered SO THAT all parties and legal are clear about what needs to happen before child is returned and what strategies and services will get us there SO THAT more timely permanency is achieved.

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it? (Phase III)

The following PIP activities have been identified:

4.2.2 With support from the Capacity Building Center for Courts, a multidisciplinary group including CIP, DCYF, AGO, the Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA), and the Office of Public Defense (OPD) will develop an evaluation action plan for a Hearing Quality Project related to the application of the Safety Framework in court hearings including, but not limited to:

- Baseline assessment of current court practice, specific to discussions of safety and family time.
- Implementation assessment of how judges/multidisciplinary court teams have made changes to practices based on prior safety guide trainings.
- Assessment of how current practice is related to specific CFSR outcomes of interest in a sub sample of sites.
- A structured evaluation process that includes professional services, parent surveys, court observation, court case file review, and administrative data.

4.2.4 Once the training is completed, incorporation of the concepts learned and practiced in the training will occur including:

- Judges asking questions related to safety threats and conditions for return home
- Attorneys asking questions within the Safety Framework
- Caseworkers submitting with their Court Report an updated safety assessment with the current active safety threat(s) clearly articulated. The Court Report will include conditions for return home, which clearly delineate what behavioral change, and supports are necessary to achieve reunification.

What has been done to implement the project? (Phase IV)

Still in the planning phase.

Participated in the Hearing Quality Workshop in May 2020.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V) *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) or data efforts you have in place or plan to have in place to assess your efforts. If you have already evaluated your effort, how did you use these data to modify or expand the project?*

What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or the Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?

Continued support from Dr. Summers, Jennifer Renne, and CBCC liaison.

II. Trainings, Projects, and Activities For questions 1-12, provide a *concise* description of work completed or underway to date in FY 2020 (October 2019-June 2020) in the below topical subcategories. For question 1, focus on significant training events or initiatives held or developed in FY 2020.

1. Trainings

Topical Area	Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?	Who was the target audience?	How many persons attended?	What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)	What were the intended training outcomes?	What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes
Data	☐Yes ☒No					☐S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Hearing quality	☒Yes ☐No	See Dependency Court Practice Below				☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Improving timeliness/ permanency	☒Yes ☐No	Judicial Officers, Attorneys, CASAs, Social Workers	200	2 one-day Permanency Summits	Create champions for permanency and to reduce time to permanency	☐S ☐L ☐B ☒O ☐N/A
Quality legal representation	☒Yes ☐No	Defense attorneys	60	Washington Defender Association conference	Build race equity and leadership skills for defense bar to improve legal practice	☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Engagement & participation of parties	☒Yes ☐No	See Dependency Court Practice Below				☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Well-being	☒Yes ☐No	See Dependency Court Practice Below				☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
ICWA/Tribal collaboration	☒Yes ☐No	See Dependency Court Practice Below				☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Sex Trafficking	☒Yes ☐No	See Dependency Court Practice Below				☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A

Topical Area	Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?	Who was the target audience?	How many persons attended?	What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)	What were the intended training outcomes?	What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes
Normalcy/R. Prudent Parent	☒Yes ☐No	See Dependency Court Practice Below				☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Prevention	☒Yes ☐No	See Dependency Court Practice Below				☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Safety	☒Yes ☐No	See Dependency Court Practice Below and CASA volunteers/staff	50	CASA Conference	ABA Safety Guide and practice applying safety analysis with case examples	☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Other: Dependency Court Practice for Judicial Officers	☒Yes ☐No	State and Tribal Court Judicial Officers and FJCIP Coordinators	53	3-day Training Curriculum Program	Basic Dependency training on all areas listed above, plus judicial leadership and ABA safety guide training.	☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Other: Resources for Family Time in the COVID-19 Era	☒Yes ☐No	Multidisciplinary	Approx. 1200	4 Webinars Recorded webinars and materials can be found at this link: https://www.wacita.org/category/library/	Resources, support and coaching for virtual family time and moving back to in-person visits	☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A
Other: Congressional Listening Tour (Partnered with UW Partners for Our Children)	☒Yes ☐No	Federal and State Representatives and multidisciplinary stakeholders	85	In-person all-day event	Parent engagement, youth voice, prevention (FIRST program)	☒S ☐L ☐B ☐O ☐N/A

On average, how many training events do you hold per year? 10

What is your best prediction for the number of attorneys and judges that will participate in a training annually? 550

The Family First Prevention Services Act amends the Social Security Act adding an eligibility criterion for the training of judges and attorneys on the congregate care provisions of the Act. See the highlighted portion below.

(1)[1] IN GENERAL.— In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a highest State court shall have in effect a rule requiring State courts to ensure that foster parents, pre- adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of a child in foster care under the responsibility of the State are notified of any proceeding to be held with respect to the child, *shall provide for the training of judges, attorneys, and other legal personnel in child welfare cases on Federal child welfare policies and payment limitations with respect to children in foster care who are placed in settings that are not a foster family home*, and shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such form, and including such information and assurances as the Secretary may require, including–

States have an option to delay implementation of the congregate care provisions by two years. The decision will have a direct impact on when judicial determinations and CIP training requirements must begin.

Do you know when your state plans to implement Family First? ☒ Yes   ☐ No
    If yes, when? October 1, 2019

Have you been involved in planning with the agency on implementing Family First? ☒ Yes   ☐ No
    If yes, please describe how the CIP has been involved.

    The CIP Director and the Child Welfare Programs Division Director have been in communication regarding FFPSA implementation and have included FFPSA in the work plan for the CIP multidisciplinary task force, the Innovative Dependency Court Collaborative.   Washington State House Bill 1900 regarding FFPSA includes changes to statutes regarding the court's oversight of quality residential treatment placement (QRTP). Implementation also included changes in pattern court forms for dependency hearings.

Have you been developing your Family First judicial training plan? ☒ Yes   ☐ No
    If yes, please describe what you have done.

    To help courts implement the QRTP requirements, the Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA) - in partnership with DCYF, the AG's Office, and OCLA - recorded a short, 35 minute training webinar that covers the law, DCYF's process for assessing and treating youth, and

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[1] Sec. 50741(c) of P.L. 115-123 revised sec. 438(b)(1) to add language regarding training. Effective as if enacted on 1/1/18 (sec. 50746(a)(1) of P.L. 115-123).

the new court forms and procedures. You can access the webinar here: http://aoceccl.adobeconnect.com/p3u73nfia1v5/. September 2019 a dependency practice tip was emailed to all Superior Court judicial officers and administrators, and to dependency court partners that included the links above, as well as the following links:

> FFPSA - https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/practice/practice-improvement/ffpsa
> QRTP - https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/practice/practice-improvement/ffpsa/residential/qrtp

A follow-up FAQ was developed and is available at the QRTP link above.

2. **Data Projects**. Data projects include any work with administrative data sets (e.g, AFCARS, CCWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity?   ☒ Yes   ☐ No (skip to #3)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
WA Dependency Data Share Efforts - Child data is extracted from the DCYF FAMLINK data system. This data is then used to match back to WA Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) case file data.	Agency Data Sharing Efforts	Evaluation/Assessment
WA Annual Dependency Timeliness Report to the Legislature – Provides annual analyses of dependency court operations with respect to statutorily mandated timelines. Click here to find the 2019 Annual Report.	Case management systems	Evaluation/Assessment
WA Dependency Data Dashboards/Reports - Interactive reports use Microsoft Excel pivot tables that allow the user to view state and individual county data for broad comparisons or person/case-specific information. A public facing Dependency Dashboard was created in November 2017 using Tableau software. The dashboard is updated monthly with court data and quarterly with agency data. Click here to access the dashboard.	Data dashboards	Evaluation/Assessment

(a)   Do you have data reports that you consistently view? ☒ Yes   ☐ No

(b)   How are these reports used to support your work?

Reports are used to assist in determining which jurisdictions may need some assistance in focusing their efforts on certain aspects of their dependency practice, as well as observing jurisdictions with high performance measures to determine what is working well that may be shared with others. Reports are shared with child welfare stakeholders.

3. **Hearing Quality.** Hearing quality projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of dependency hearings, including court observation/assessment projects, process improvements, specialty/pilot court projects, projects related to court orders or title IV-E determinations, mediation, or appeals.

   Do you have a hearing quality project/activity?   ☒ Yes   ☐ No (skip to #4)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
An evaluation comparing dependency hearings pre and post activities in the joint project regarding safety assessment. It is expected that judicial officers and attorneys will ask questions regarding safety threats and conditions for return home, and that caseworkers will be able to clearly articulate current active safety threats.	Process Improvements	Selecting Solution
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

4. **Improving Timeliness of Hearings or Permanency Outcomes.** Timeliness and permanency projects include any activities or projects meant to improve the timeliness of case processing or achievement of timely permanency. This could include general timeliness, focus on continuances or appeals, working on permanency goals other than APPLA, or focus on APPLA and older youth.

   Do you have a timeliness or permanency project/activity?   ☒ Yes   ☐ No (skip to #5)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Assist dependency courts with recovery due to COVID-19 restrictions. Assessed and continue to assess technology needs for virtual court hearings. Work with stakeholders to create guidelines for conducting virtual and in-person hearings. *Developed Resuming Dependency Fact Finding and Termination of Parental Rights Trials in Washington State.* Provide funding, training, and other resources as needed.	Continuances	Selecting Solution
Local Permanency Summits designed to increase collaboration among dependency court partners, review data, identify barriers to permanency, and create action plans.	General/ASFA	Evaluation/Assessment

5. **Quality of Legal Representation.** Quality of legal representation projects may include any activities/efforts related to improvement of representation for parents, youth, or the agency. This might include assessments or analyzing current practice, implementing new practice models, working with law school clinics, or other activities in this area.

Do you have a quality legal representation project/activity?   ☒ Yes   ☐ No (skip to #6)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
CIP worked with DCYF, OPD and OCLA to implement IV-E reimbursement for expenses related to parent and child representation. Next looking at process for reimbursement for parent allies and OPD social workers as part of the legal team for parents.	Other	Evaluation/Assessment
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

6. **Engagement & Participation of Parties.** Engagement and participation of parties includes any efforts centered around youth, parent, foster family, or caregiver engagement, as well as projects related to notice to relatives, limited English proficiency, or other efforts to increase presence and engagement at the hearing.

Do you have an engagement or participation of parties project/activity?   ☒ Yes   ☐ No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Supporting Parents for Parents (P4P) program implementation statewide.	Parent Engagement	Implementation
Continuing to monitor data and educate attorneys and clerks to document whether adequate notice was provided for caregivers and if a caregiver report was provided to the court.	Caregiver Engagement	Evaluation/Assessment

7. **Well-Being.** Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, psychotropic medication, LGBTQ+ youth, trauma, racial disproportionality/disparity, immigration, or other well-being related topics.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being? ☒ Yes   ☐ No (skip to #8)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Annual Youth Leadership Summit – Proposals addressing all topics listed above presented by the youth to the Commission on Children in Foster Care, legislators and other stakeholders.	Other	Evaluation/Assessment
Ongoing Family Time (visitation) training incorporates research and resources on the harm of removal and the developmental needs of young children	Early Childhood Development	Implementation
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

8. **ICWA/Tribal collaboration.** These projects could include any efforts to enhance state and tribal collaboration, state and tribal court agreements, data collection and analysis including of ICWA practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA or tribal collaboration? ☐ Yes   ☐ No (skip to #9)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Began discussion with DCYF regarding court requirements section of the 2019 Indian Child Welfare Case Review to perform root cause analysis and develop an action plan for courts.	Other	Planning
Increased efforts to invite tribal court judges to the annual Dependency Court Practice training resulting in 14 tribal court judges attending, which tripled our typical attendance.	Tribal Collaboration	Evaluation/Assessment
CITA is working with The Alliance to plan the Tribal Youth, Children and Families Summit to be held August 2020.	Tribal Collaboration	Planning

9. **Preventing Sex Trafficking.** These projects could include work around domestic child sex trafficking, a focus on runaway youth, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement these sections of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on preventing sex trafficking/runaways? ☐ Yes   ☒ No (skip to #10)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

10. Normalcy/Reasonable and Prudent Parent. These projects could include any work around normalcy or the reasonable and prudent parent standard or practices, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement these sections of the Preventing Sex and Strengthening Families Act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on normalcy/reasonable prudent parenting? ☐ Yes   ☒ No (skip to #11)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

11. Prevention. Prevention projects include work around preventing child maltreatment including primary prevention (preventing maltreatment from occurring in the first place), secondary, and tertiary prevention.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on prevention? ☒ Yes   ☐ No (skip to #12)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Support further development of Family Intervention Response to Stop Trauma (F.I.R.S.T.) Clinic in Snohomish County. This is a medical-legal partnership that provides pregnant women with legal advocacy and connection to services to prevent not only a removal now and future involvement with CPS as well. The team includes volunteer attorney, parent ally, community resource navigator and hospital staff. This project evolved out of the Snohomish County Permanency Summit workgroup on young children. We also highlighted his innovative legal representation model at the Congressional Listening Tour.	Primary prevention	Identifying/Assessing Needs
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

12. **Safety.** Safety projects are those that focus on decision-making around safety including decision-making practices in substantiation, removal, family time/visitation, and decisions about safety in out of home placements.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on safety? ☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to sec. III)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Identification of safety threats and conditions for return home will be emphasized in court hearings. A crosswalk between the American Bar Association Safety Guide and the child welfare safety framework to develop common language. Child welfare staff will provide accurate assessments of safety; identification and implementation of services and the development of individualized case plans in partnership with families. Judicial officers and attorneys will ask questions related to safety threats and conditions for return home and social workers will be able to articulate safety threats and risks to families, courts, providers and other key stakeholders and will partner with families to identify services and resources that mitigate safety concerns.	Removal/Return	Implementation
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

III. CIP Collaboration in Child Welfare Program Planning and Improvement Efforts

1. Please describe how the CIP was involved with the state's CFSP due June 30, 2019.
   a. Does the CFSP include any of the following:

   ☒ legal/judicial strategies

   ☒ the CIP/Agency Joint Project

   ☒ the CIP Hearing Quality Project

   If *yes*, please describe.

   The CFSP includes our two main CIP projects: the joint project regarding permanency summits, and the hearing quality project regarding family time. The agency plan also includes partnering through the Innovative Dependency Court Collaborative, which is our CIP multidisciplinary task force. Some of our other initiatives that are included in the CFSP are: multidisciplinary trainings to

increase staff knowledge, skills and improve practice; developing a common language and practice identified across child welfare systems, improving ICWA compliance, and supporting the Parents for Parents program

2. Please describe how the CIP was or will be involved in the most recent/upcoming title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review in your state.

CIP was informed of progress through the Permanency CQI Workgroup meetings. CIP participated in the interview process and also assisted with making connections with judicial officers to be interviewed. CIP was involved in PIP planning and worked with CFSR staff from DCYF to use our Permanency CQI Workgroup to perform some root cause analysis on our low permanency numbers and draft some solutions/action plans. Also, CIP connected DCYF CFSR staff with the FJCIP stakeholder groups to review the CFSR findings at a local level and perform root cause analysis and created possible solutions. CIP assisted DCYF with special court-related PIP two-day work session in December 2019 with judicial officers and other court stakeholders. Worked closely with lead DCYF CFSR staff to make sure court initiatives were included in the PIP.

3. Please describe how the CIP is or was involved in preparing and completing the latest round of the CFSR and PIP, if required, in your state. *Please check all the ways that the CIP or Court Personnel were involved (or plan to be involved) in the CFSR and PIP Process. Feel free to add additional narrative to explain your involvement in the process.*

☐   not involved at all
☐   involved in planning the statewide assessment
☐   CFSR reviewers
☒   interviewed for CFSR
☒   invited to the exit conference at the close of the CFSR review
☒   invited to the final CFSR results session at the conclusion of the report
☒   final CFSR report was shared with you
☐   final CFSR report shared with courts broadly across the state
☒   part of a large group of stakeholders engaged to assist in design of the PIP
☒   high level of inclusion during the entire PIP process
☒   made suggestions for inclusion in the PIP
☒   suggestions made by CIP for inclusion in the PIP were put forward by the child welfare agency
☒   had an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the PIP before it was submitted
☒   meet (or plan to meet) ongoing with the child welfare agency to monitor PIP Implementation

The current version of the PIP includes (check all that apply):

☒   court strategies
☒   court/agency shared strategies
☒   the court/agency joint project described above
☒   the CIP hearing quality project
☒   specific practice changes that judges will make
☒   specific practice changes that attorneys will make

4. What strategies or processes are in place in your state that you feel are particularly effective in supporting joint child welfare program planning and improvement?

The Innovative Dependency Court Collaborative, co-chaired by the CIP Director and Child Welfare Director, has a very diverse multi-disciplinary membership, to encourage, generate and support innovation with dependency court stakeholders and communities to empower and achieve justice for families. We are focusing our efforts in the field, rather than from a top-down approach. In response to COVID-19 issues, this group is meeting more frequently to assess what's happening in the field an address issues as they come up, providing a two-way communication system.

Also, leadership changes were made with the Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care, and the CIP Director now staffs the Commission, which is co-chaired by a current Supreme Court Justice and the Child Welfare Director. The Commission has been more involved in joint planning, especially addressing issues that have arisen due to COVID-19, and also interest in the State Team efforts. A workgroup was formed to produce guidance for resuming dependency fact finding and termination of parental rights trials, and another workgroup formed to address family time issues during COVID, including virtual visits and resuming in-person visits.

5. What barriers exist in your state that make effective joint child welfare program planning and improvement challenging?

While we have improved in our efforts to communicate between the agency and court partners, we still we lack effective mechanisms for communicating across disciplines in a way that informs practice and provides consistent and accurate information. This has become especially apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, when rapid changes to policies and practice have occurred and need to be conveyed to all participants in the system. The IDCC has been working on this and is continuing to address the effective dissemination of information. CITA is redesigning its website to include the Good Ideas Library and a COVID-19 information hub. It will go live in August. The strategies listed above should improve communication, which will also improve planning and implementation of improvement efforts. Another barrier is

limited CIP staff resources necessary for follow up and lack of ability to reach and work with all local jurisdictions on improving their dependency system. We get stretched too thin and have difficulty with follow up.

6. Does the state child welfare agency currently offer professional partner training to judges, attorneys, and court personnel as part of its Title IV-E Training Plan?
   If yes, please provide a brief description of what is provided and how.
   If no, have you met with child welfare agency leadership to discuss and explore utilizing professional partner training for judges, attorneys and court personnel?

   Yes and No. Child Advocate (voluntary guardian ad litem) training is included in the Title IV-E Training Plan and DCYF has a contract with CASA to reimburse training expenses. Several judicial officers attend the annual child advocate training conference. We are exploring options to expand beyond child advocate training and incorporate more holistic, multidisciplinary trainings into the Title IV-E Training Plan that include judicial officers, attorneys and court personnel to support initiatives addressed in the PIP and CFSP.

7. Have you talked with your agency about accessing Title IV-E funding for legal representation for parents or for children? Is your state currently planning to seek reimbursement? If yes, describe any plans, approaches, or models that are under consideration or underway.

   Yes. In January 2019, the CIP Director facilitated a meeting with the DCYF Budget Director, Office of Public Defense Director (parent representation program), and Office of Civil Legal Aid (child representation program), and the Co-Chair of the CIP Steering Committee, to talk about funding for legal representation for parents and children. The DCYF Budget Director brought the issue to DCYF leadership for their approval to move forward. OPD and OCLA have each negotiated a memorandum of understanding with DCYF and the IV-E reimbursements are occurring. The next step is to start discussions regarding reimbursement of expenses for OPD social workers and parent allies, who are part of the parent defense team and look at how to incorporate preventative representation for candidates of child welfare, which is part of our State Team Plan.

IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment
1. Has your ability to integrate CQI into practice changed this year? If yes, what do you attribute the increase in ability to?

   Yes. As we work more closely with the agency and are tied more directly with their CQI staff, we are integrating CQI into more of the work that we do—more stakeholder work on issues, including root cause analysis, theory of change, and evaluation.

2. Which of the following CBCC Events/Services have you/your staff engaged in in the 2020 Fiscal Year?
   - ☒ Judicial Academy
   - ☒ CQI Consult   (*Topic*: Hearing Quality)
   - ☒ Constituency Group - Hearing Quality
   - ☐ Constituency Group - CFSR
   - ☒ Constituency Group - ICWA
   - ☒ Constituency Group - New Directors
   - ☒ Constituency Group - Virtual Hearings/Court Processes
   - ☐ Constituency Group - Other _____
   - ☒ CIP All Call –- *What % of All Calls does your CIP participate in? _90___%*

3. Do you have any of the following resources to help you integrate CQI into practice?
   - ☒ CIP staff with CQI (e.g., data, evaluation) expertise
   - ☒ Consultants with CQI expertise
   - ☐ a University partnership
   - ☐ a statewide court case management system
   - ☐ Contracts with external individuals or organizations to assist with CQI efforts
   - ☒ Other resources: Almost statewide court case management system (working on a fix for that)

   3a. Do you <u>record</u> your child welfare court hearings? ☒ Yes   ☐ No

         If yes, are they ☒ audio   ☐ video

   3b. Can you remotely access your court case management system? *For example, Odyssey systems often allow remote access to case files.* ☒ Yes   ☒ No

   3c. What court case management software does your state use? If multiple, please indicate the most common:

         Odyssey, statewide with the exception of King and Pierce Counties.

   3d. Have you employed any new technology or applications to strengthen your work?

The use of Tableau software for our dependency data dashboard.

4. Consider the phases of change management and how you integrate these into practice. Are there phases of the process (e.g., Phase I-need assessment, Phase II-theory of change) that you struggle with integrating more than others?

Phase V-evaluation

5. Is there a topic or practice area that you would find useful from the Capacity Building Center for Courts? Be as specific as possible (e.g., data analysis, how to evaluate trainings, more information on research about quality legal representation, how to facilitate group meetings, etc.)

We can always use more information and practice on how to incorporate project evaluation into the planning process and best practices for evaluating different types of projects. Data collection is challenging due to staffing issues.

Self-Assessment – Capacity Continued

We would like you to assess your current capacities related to knowledge, skills, resources, and collaboration by responding to the following 2 sets of questions. In questions 6 and 7, we ask about CQI. When we say CQI we mean the entire change management process including root cause analysis, theory of change, strategy selection, implementation and evaluation.

6. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a good understanding of CQI.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
I understand how to integrate CQI into all our work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
I am familiar with the available data relevant to our work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
I understand how to interpret and apply the available data.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
The CIP and the state child welfare agency have shared goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
The CIP and the state child welfare agency collaborate around program planning and improvement efforts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
We have the resources we need to fully integrate CQI into practice.	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have staff, consultants, or partners who can answer my CQI questions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

7. How frequently do you engage in the following activities?

	Never	*Rarely*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
We use data to make decisions about where to focus our efforts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
We meet with representatives of the child welfare agency to engage in collaborative systems change efforts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
We create theories of change around systems change projects.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
We use evaluation/assessment findings to make changes to programs/practices.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
We evaluate (beyond monitoring outputs) our efforts.	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

Definitions of Evidence

Evidence-based practice – evidence-based practices are practice that have been empirically tested in a rigorous way (involving random assignment to groups), have demonstrated effectiveness related to specific outcomes, have been replicated in practice at least one, and have findings published in peer reviewed journal articles.

Empirically-supported- less rigorous than evidence-based practices are empirically-supported practices. To be empirically supported, a program must have been evaluated in some way and have demonstrated some relationship to a positive outcome. This may not meet the rigor of evidence-base, but still has some support for effectiveness.

Best-practices – best practices are often those widely accepted in the field as good practice. They may or may not have empirical support as to effectiveness, but are often derived from teams of experts in the field.

Definitions for Work Stages

Identifying and Assessing Needs – This phase is the earliest phase in the process, where you are identifying a need to be addressed. The assessing needs phase includes identifying the need, determining if there is available data demonstrating that this a problem, forming teams to address the issue.

Develop theory of change—This phase focuses on the theorizing the causes of a problem. In this phase you would identify what you think might be causing the problem and develop a "theory of change". The theory of change is essentially how you think your activities (or intervention) will improve outcomes.

Develop/select solution—This phase includes developing or selecting a solution. In this phase, you might be exploring potential best-practices or evidence-based practices that you may want to implement as a solution to the identified need. You might also be developing a specific training, program, or practice that you want to implement.

Implementation – the implementation phase of work is when an intervention is being piloted or tested. This includes adapting programs or practices to meet your needs, and developing implementation supports.

Evaluation/assessment – the evaluation and assessment phase includes any efforts to collect data about the fidelity (process measures: was it implemented as planned?) or effectiveness (outcome measures: is the intervention making a difference?) of the project. The evaluation assessment phase also includes post-evaluation efforts to apply findings, such as making changes to the program/practice and using the data to inform next steps.