

Washington Court Improvement Program 2024

Annual Self-Assessment Report

This self-assessment is intended as an opportunity for Court Improvement Programs (CIPs) to review progress on CIP projects, joint program planning and improvement efforts with the child welfare agency, and the ability to integrate CQI successfully into practice. The self-assessment process is designed to help shape and inform ongoing strategic planning and should include meaningful discussion with the multi-disciplinary task force and candid reflection of key CIP staff. The self-assessment primarily focused on assessing efforts undertaken to date while the strategic plan maps out efforts going forward in more detail. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

I. CQI Analysis of Required Projects

Joint Project with Child Welfare Agency

1. Project Title

Safety Summit Project

Project Category

Safety

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

The Safety Summit Project is the result of a training partnership between the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Originating from a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) strategy initiative (Strategy 4.2), Safety Summits have been held in eight Washington counties: [King County](#), [Kitsap County](#), [Pierce County](#), [Chelan County](#), and [Mason County](#) in 2021, [Spokane County](#) and [Grays Harbor County](#) in 2022, and [Snohomish County](#) in 2024.

Safety Summits provide local court jurisdictions with high-quality training on safety framework practices within the context of a guided change management process that includes organization, planning, action, and evaluation phases. Safety Summits revolve around a half-day training event that focuses on helping local dependency court systems develop a shared understanding of how to assess and talk about child safety. Using a crosswalk of the ABA Child Safety Guide (Safety Framework) and the DCYF Child Safety Framework, this training teaches systems how to effectively apply the safety framework to crucial aspects (safety assessment, safety planning, conditions for return, family time, and case planning) of cases in tangible ways that ultimately result in a more effective dependency system and better outcomes for families. Importantly, the Safety Summit event is delivered by a cross-system team of trainers, including the CIP, DCYF, Office of Public Defense, and Washington Association of Child Advocate Programs.

The final hour of the Safety Summit involved action planning sessions where summit attendees are guided through two breakout room activities (one mixed-discipline; one discipline-specific). Using the information gathered from the action planning, CIP worked with each site to create a Strategic Plan that included the shared system vision, discipline group action steps, and the support available through CIP to assist in implementing the plan and supporting any resulting projects. Sites are at various stages in working through their strategic plans. New, creative innovations for practice change are already emerging from multiple sites and can be viewed in the [Innovations in Safety Showcase](#). The training materials, video recording, and strategic plans for all Safety Summit sites can be found in each site's respective [online HUB](#).

As part of our cross-system child safety training initiative with DCYF, Dr. Alicia Summers and the national Capacity Building Center for Courts conducted the [2021 Washington Baseline Safety Hearing Quality Report](#) in seven court communities across the state. The findings from this evaluation are being used to identify opportunities for increasing shared understanding of safety and encouraging improvements in practice, along with providing baseline data to measure changes in process and outcomes associated with the Safety Summits. Four sites that held Safety Summits in 2021 were evaluated 3-5 months post-training to compare practice to the baseline hearing quality assessment. This hearing quality evaluation report by Dr. Alicia Summers from the Capacity Building Center for Courts presents the methods and findings from that pre-post safety framework training evaluation in the [2022 Washington Safety Decision-Making Hearing Quality Evaluation Report](#), which is publicly available. The findings of the evaluation were also sent to all participating sites, DCYF leadership, and other statewide partner agencies. **The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee closely reviewed the findings of the pre-post hearing quality study to identify areas of positive practice change and opportunities for enhanced efforts (see Phase IV below).**

3. Identify the specific safety, permanency, or well-being outcome(s) this project is intended to address. If this effort is linked to any agency measures, e.g. CFSR measures, please note those.

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.

Cross-system safety training was a Washington State DCYF Program Improvement Plan (PIP) strategy initiative (Strategy 4.2).

As a result of cross-disciplinary training and coaching, court partners and DCYF staff will understand and articulate consistent child safety language in court hearings, including:

- the current assessment of safety in the home (safety threats, child vulnerability, and parent protective capacity);
- safety planning;
- conditions of return;
- supervision and plan for family time; and
- case plan, including requirements to dismiss the case.

Caseworkers will submit a current DCYF Safety Assessment/Safety Plan with their standard court report.

4. Approximate date that the project began:

July 1, 2020

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

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment

6. 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 2020, 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.

At the request of Washington State CIP, the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) conducted a baseline evaluation of safety decision making practices of seven courts in Washington State. The following themes emerged:

- vulnerabilities, protective capacities, and conditions for return are rarely discussed at hearings;
- safety analysis and discussions of safety planning rarely occur in court;
- safety-related justifications for supervised family time were rarely articulated;

- need for child welfare and court professionals to better understand and be able to articulate how case plan progress relates to safety.

The author of the evaluation, Dr. Alicia Summers, provided the following suggestions for improvement:

- enhance understanding of all stakeholders through multidisciplinary trainings;
- engage parents to better understand concepts and language regarding safety considerations;
- enhance training of professionals around safety planning, conditions for return home, and case planning;
- enhance training to ensure knowledge translates to behavior change, where practice aligns with understanding of safety training concepts.

In the most current iteration of the Program Improvement Plan (PIP), the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) identifies the below root cause in Goal Area 4: Permanency. DCYF collaborated with the courts and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of PIP strategies to address this need:

“The lack of consistent support and oversight for caseworkers to complete ongoing shared planning meetings and integrate the Safety Framework into practice 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.”

7. What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II)

Deliver interdisciplinary safety guide training:

SO THAT a shared understanding and language of safety is created;

SO THAT sufficient information is collected;

SO THAT threats of danger are identified and protective capacities are accurately assessed throughout the life of the case;

AND THAT the likely harms of removal for each child are assessed;

SO THAT effective safety plans and case plans are created;

SO THAT a child remains in the home whenever possible;

OR THAT if a child is placed out-of-home, appropriate family time is ordered and conditions of return home are identified and understood;

SO THAT at all parties are clear as to what strategies and services are necessary to achieve permanency;

SO THAT safe and lasting permanency is achieved in each and every case.

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

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, CIP, 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.

CIP created a state-level, cross-system Safety Summit State Advisory Committee (SSSAC) to guide the development and delivery of a cross-system safety framework training program that would result in individual court systems being able to make real practice change in safety practices which was named the “Safety Summit Project”. The team adapted the existing Safety Framework training curriculum (from the [ABA Child Safety Guide](#)) to include a crosswalk of the safety assessment and planning practices used by DCYF. This work guided the half-day cross system Safety Summit curriculum and local cross-system teams in planning the summit and enacting their strategic plans.

CIP provides general organization, coordination, tracking, monitoring of the Safety Summit Project, which includes the following:

- Serves as point-of-contact for all inquiries related to Safety Summits, including receiving and coordinating requests from interested sites;
- Convenes SSAC and facilitates SSAC meetings;
- Leads updates of training curriculum including updates to content, graphics, and practice activities;
- Works with local court sites and systems partners to fulfill pre-requisite requirements;
- Guides local sites through the three-phase process of Safety Summit participation;
- Facilitates site Planning Team meetings (2);
- Provide facilitation and technology support for Safety Summit training events (two staff);
- Utilizes information collected at Safety Summit training event to create a draft of a Strategic Plan for sites;
- Assist sites in finalizing their Strategic Plan; and
- Support sites in implementing action plan items contained in the Strategic Plan (e.g., additional training; developing resources/tools; providing funding for product development).

8a. If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).

Safety Summits revolve around a half-day virtual training event that focuses on helping local dependency court systems develop a shared understanding of how safety is assessed. Within the context of a crosswalk of the ABA Child Safety Guide (“Safety Framework”) and DCYF’s Child Safety practice, this training shows systems how to effectively apply the Safety Framework to crucial aspects of cases in tangible ways that ultimately result in a more effective dependency system and better outcomes for families. The final hour of the Safety Summit involved action planning sessions where summit attendees were guided through two breakout room activities (one mixed-discipline; one discipline-specific). FYJP used the action planning information generated at the summits to create drafts of Strategic Plans for each of the counties participating in the project. Safety Summit sites received a strategic plan that contained the shared process and outcome visions for the system, defined action steps for discipline groups, and support available from FYJP to implement system improvements at the local level.

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

Safety Summits were held in five Washington counties in 2021 ([King County](#), [Kitsap County](#), [Pierce County](#), [Chelan County](#), and [Mason County](#)), two counties in 2022 ([Spokane County](#) and [Grays Harbor County](#)), and one county in 2024 ([Snohomish County](#)). Each site formed a cross-system planning team and held at least one CIP-facilitated planning meeting in advance of the summit event. Depending on when the summit was held and the capacity of the system, sites are in various stages of the post-summit system improvement process. CIP provides technical assistance and project management support to sites in the implementation of their plans (e.g., facilitating post-summit strategic planning meetings; hearing timing; funding printing/laminating produced resources).

| County | Event Date | Attendees |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| King County | October 4, 2021 | 107 |
| Kitsap County | October 20, 2021 | 107 |
| Pierce County | October 27, 2021 | 188 |
| Chelan County | December 8, 2021 | 64 |
| Mason County | December 9, 2021 | 67 |
| Spokane County | February 10, 2022 | 163 |
| Grays Harbor County | May 6, 2022 | 49 |
| Snohomish County | April 19, 2024 | 127 |

Over the past reporting year, the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee utilized the findings to revise the Safety Summit training curriculum (Safety Summit 1.0) and begin creation of more advanced cross-system training opportunities that examine areas of the Safety Framework in greater depth and application in dependency law (Safety Summit 2.0).

Safety Summit 1.0 refers to the basic safety training administered to cross-system court communities at Safety Summit events. The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee worked over the past reporting year to redesign the training curriculum that is delivered at Safety Summits (i.e., crosswalk training of safety frameworks). The need for redesign was driven by a need to align with the new statutory provisions contained in the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227), which became effective July 1, 2023. HB 1227 significantly changed how courts are required to consider safety-related information at the front-end of cases. Notably, HB 1227 added a requirement that judicial officers consider the likely harms a child will experience as a result of removal when determining if out-of-home placement is necessary, which is not an included element in the [ABA Child Safety Guide](#). The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee worked to revise the previous curriculum to include content around these changes, along with general updates to bring the training into alignment with Washington law and practice. CIP created an [Introduction Packet](#) for court communities who are interested in holding a Safety Summit. This packet contains general information, requirements, expectations and pre-requisite requirements for participating sites. Interested sites are also able to submit basic information needed for planning the summit event. The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee also worked to create template examples of a “[Walk-Away Information Form](#)” that court systems can utilize as a tool for clearly communicating important information, including conditions for return, to parents.

Finally, CIP continues to advocate for statewide adoption of the DCYF policy requiring caseworkers to attach the most current Safety Assessment/Plan to Court Reports throughout the life of a case. This practice change was a cornerstone element of the project and has been made a pre-requisite requirement for court communities participating in the Safety Summit Project. At the time of this report, only one of the six DCYF regions (Region 3) had committed to adopting this practice change so that their court communities could participate in the Safety Summit Project. Region 3 encompasses Snohomish County, Skagit County, Whatcom County, San Juan County, and Island County.

Safety Summit 2.0: The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee has started to create advanced training opportunities for court communities that have completed the Safety Summit 1.0. These targeted training opportunities will provide deep dives into the different aspects of the Safety Framework and will help participants develop a practical understanding of the application of the Safety Framework in dependency cases. A workshop on harm of removal has already been created and is available to court communities. The [Understanding the Harm of Removal in Child Welfare Training](#) helps courts and system partners better identify, assess, and respond to the short-term and long-term detrimental impacts of forcible family separation by child welfare. This workshop includes training on use of the [Harm of Removal Map](#), a CIP-created tool that has quickly gained notoriety across the state as the primary resource for assessing harm of removal to children. In response to recent state legislation that requires courts to give “great weight” to the presence of fentanyl in the home when making removal and placement decisions ([SB 6109](#)), the Safety Summit

State Advisory Committee is currently working on creating training opportunities that build local court capacity to effectively assess and plan for child safety in cases involving parental use of high potency synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl.

10. How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V)

In 2020, Dr. Alicia Summers and the Capacity Building Center for Courts conducted hearing quality evaluations in seven court communities across the state (which included all of the 2021 Safety Summit sites). The evaluation employed a multi-method approach (hearing observation, case file review, and stakeholder interviews) to assess current practice related to safety decision-making in child welfare. Findings overall indicated that court systems, even those that demonstrated high understanding of the safety framework, were not applying the safety framework in practice. This was indicated by a lack of discussion about safety-related issues in hearings, including: ongoing assessments of safety, safety-related justifications for supervised family time, and how the case plan is intended to address safety threats. This evaluation provided the baseline data for the Safety Summit project. Dr. Summers conducted the second round of hearing quality evaluations in February and March of 2022. The [2022 Washington Safety Decision-Making Hearing Quality Evaluation Report](#) by Dr. Summers presents the methods and findings from that pre-post Safety Summit training evaluation. In addition, a summary infographic was created to summarize the most significant findings of the evaluation (see [Top Findings Infographic](#)).

Results of the evaluation showed statistically significant findings across multiple safety-related measures at the Shelter Care Hearing. Overall, there was a significant increase in discussion of safety assessment factors, including a 32% increase in discussion of specific safety threats and a 35% increase in discussion of efforts to prevent removal. A 16% increase in discussion of safety planning was also observed. In addition, there was a 21% increase in discussion regarding why supervision is needed during family time visitation to ensure safety. Findings also showed that after the Safety Summit, there was an increase in judicial inquiries into agency efforts to prevent removal and verbal reasonable efforts findings. Judicial officers were also more likely to inquire into the vulnerabilities of the child and family time visitation post-Safety Summit. Finally, the evaluation found a 35% increase in the number of documents submitted prior to the hearing that contained a safety analysis, including reference to protective capacity (31%), vulnerabilities (39%), and conditions for return (34%). More documents contained contextual safety information about the parent's overall parenting practice. In fact, 100% of post-summit shelter care documentation included an analysis of safety and addressed specific safety threats. The hearing quality evaluation also identified areas where change had been expected but was not observed, indicating where enhanced efforts are needed in future learning opportunities. Most significantly, findings showed that judicial officers rarely inquired about safety planning and conditions for return. In addition, judicial officers rarely made active inquiry into contextual safety factors (e.g., nature and extent of maltreatment; circumstances related to maltreatment; child's functioning).

In addition to continued monitoring by the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee, CIP plans to utilize existing hearing quality observation efforts to provide ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Safety Summit Project. Over the past reporting year, CIP has partnered with the Washington Center for State Court Research (WSCCR) to develop a Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool. The tool was originally created as a mechanism for continuously assessing the impacts of the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227) on the dependency courts. This effort also includes a partnership with the University of Washington's School of Public Health which has supplied skilled graduate students to observe and code Shelter Care Hearings. Several of the safety measures utilized by Dr. Alicia Summers in her pre-post hearing quality study were included in this tool and

could be utilized to assess to impacts of future safety training efforts.

11. Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?

The Safety Summit Project has experienced significant delays over the past reporting year due to barriers created by the Department of Children, Youth, & Families (DCYF). A fundamental tenet of the Safety Summit Project is that child safety is fluid and constantly changes during a case depending on the circumstances of the family. Courts are able to engage in meaningful decision-making when they have access to current, accurate safety information. Further, other legal and system partners are best able to advocate for their clients (in and out of court) when they have updated safety information. The collective consensus that having updated safety information is paramount to ensuring procedural justice and improving outcomes for families was the driving force behind DCYF's agreement to attach the current assessment of safety (and safety plan for in-home cases) to every Court Report throughout the life of a case in the seven PIP sites. The Safety Summit 1.0 curriculum was built around this commitment to DCYF practice change.

Throughout the delivery of the Safety Summit Project to the seven PIP sites in 2021 and 2022, the CIP and Safety Summit State Advisory Committee was repeatedly told by DCYF program staff that the agency planned to roll out this practice change statewide after the conclusion of the PIP report, assuming the results of our pre-post hearing observation study were positive. Unsurprisingly, the success of the Safety Summit Project, as evidenced by the pre-post hearing quality observation study, resulted in other non-PIP counties requesting to hold the Safety Summit Project in their court communities during 2023. There was also a strong need from courts for safety training to prepare for the then-imminent enactment of the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227), which made significant changes to how dependency courts consider child safety.

When the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee started exploring holding Safety Summits in non-PIP sites, we discovered that DCYF's commitment to rolling out the practice change statewide had not been formalized or agreed upon by leadership. A request for changing the policy governing this practice was submitted by internal DCYF staff to DCYF leadership. When DCYF leadership eventually did consider this change in policy, it was rejected without any formal explanation provided. CIP's understanding of the reasoning behind this decision is that DCYF leadership thought that case workers were "already experiencing too much change". At that time, we were working with several non-PIP counties where every other pre-requisite was met, but we determined that we were ultimately unable to provide Safety Summits when the local DCYF leadership did not agree to the practice change. Therefore, we were not able to hold Safety Summits in 2023. Unfortunately, the stall in the project happened at the same time that the system was preparing to implement statutory changes required by HB 1227.

The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee is committed to continuing the Safety Summit Project and has been working with DCYF Regional Administrators and Area Administrators over the past year to secure DCYF commitment to practice change. DCYF Region 3 has committed to the practice change, which includes five counties (Snohomish County, Whatcom County, Skagit County, Island County, and San Juan County). Due to this regional agreement, we were able to hold our first non-PIP Safety Summit in Snohomish County on April 19, 2024. The counties in Region 4 (King County) and Region 5 (Pierce County and Kitsap County) were all PIP counties, and therefore have already committed to the practice change. The remaining 31 counties in Washington are contained in Regions 1, 2, and 6 – none of these regions have committed to the practice change.

The Safety Summit Project has been immensely successful and has benefited from the dedication and collaboration of the DCYF program staff on the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee. However, DCYF leadership has not facilitated the practice changes advocated by their own safety staff. CIP staff have attempted to impress the importance of this project on DCYF. CIP is hesitant to dedicate significant time and capacity to partner on the CFSR/PIP unless there are explicit, written responsibilities of the agency and external mechanisms to ensure accountability.

12. What assistance or support would be helpful from the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) or the Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?

Any support in working with DCYF leadership to revisit the statewide practice of attaching current safety assessments/plans to court reports throughout the life of a case would be helpful.

Hearing Quality Project

1. Project Title

Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool

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

Since the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227) passed the state legislature in 2021, CIP has been at the forefront of statewide efforts to prepare dependency courts for the implementation of the new law. Part of these efforts included collaboration with the Washington Center for Court Research (WSCCR) to develop a plan to monitor HB 1227 implementation, which involved creation of the [Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool](#) which was designed to collect data at initial shelter care court hearings before and after HB 1227 to assess alignment with new legal requirements and evaluate changes in court practice.

3. Approximate date that the project began:

April 2023

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

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment

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

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227), to emphasize the importance of child well-being within their families and communities. Effective July 2023, KFTA introduced significant changes to shelter care court procedures in cases of child abuse and neglect. These changes include emergency removal standards, early notification processes, discovery procedures, assignment of counsel, safety assessments, in-home pre-fact-

finding, prevention services, housing assistance, and placement considerations for relatives or suitable individuals. HB 1227 also contains a number of new provisions that directly impact administrative court processes and procedures, including that all discoverable materials be provided prior to the Shelter Care Hearing and the requirement to hold an additional Shelter Care Hearing any time a child is removed during the life of a case. The many statutory changes made by HB 1227 were intended to create a more equitable Shelter Care process that results in better outcomes for all families, with anticipated outcomes including:

- Decrease in overall number of child removals;
- Reduction of racial/ethnic disparities;
- Decrease in number of Dependency Petitions filed;
- Increase in number of children who return/remain home at the Shelter Care Hearing;
- Increase in utilization of prevention services (safety plans) during the Shelter Care process;
- Less time spent in out-of-home care for children who are removed;
- Increase in percentage of kinship placements (relatives and suitable others) at the Shelter Care Hearing.

The magnitude of the statutory changes made in HB 1227 created the need for a robust data evaluation plan for monitoring the impacts of HB 1227 on dependency court systems. The FWCC's Data & Evaluation Workgroup created a sustainable plan for identifying, collecting, tracking, and evaluating system process and outcomes associated with HB 1227. This group's objective was to collaborate and document the change that results from HB 1227 and what metrics are quantifiable, visible, and trackable in the courtroom from the perspective of each dependency professional. The plan created by the Data & Evaluation Workgroup includes development of a court observation tool for assessing the impacts of HB 1227 on court process and practice at Shelter Care Hearings.

6. What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II)

Create a HB 1227 hearing observation tool for evaluating quality of Shelter Care Hearing practices in local courts:

SO THAT relevant data points can be collected;

SO THAT any significant changes, patterns, and trends can be assessed;

SO THAT the quality of practice at Shelter Care Hearing can be analyzed;

SO THAT the quality of Shelter Care Hearing practice prior to HB 1227 can be compared to the quality of Shelter Care Hearing practices after HB 1227 goes into effect;

SO THAT any impacts of HB 1227 in improving the quality of practice at Shelter Care Hearings can be determined;

AND THAT the effectiveness of tools and resources created by CIP to support HB 1227 implementation can be assessed;

SO THAT effective tools, resources, and future learning opportunities can be developed to support quality Shelter Care Hearing practice;

AND THAT court communities can accurately assess their policies and practices;

SO THAT court communities have the skills, knowledge and capacity to hold quality Shelter Care Hearings;

SO THAT children are not unnecessarily removed from their homes;

AND THAT when children are removed from the home they do not remain out of the home longer than necessary.

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

Creation and implementation of a *Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool* that accurately captures relevant data points and provides valuable insights into the implementation of new practices during the Shelter Care Hearing. Researchers use this tool to collect and analyze performance measure data to evaluate the impacts of the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227) on the quality of the Shelter Care Hearing process. Local court systems will have the knowledge and capacity to utilize the *Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool* in the continuous evaluation and quality improvement of their Shelter Care Hearing process.

7a. If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).

N/A

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

Since April 2023, the CIP has supported WSCCR in partnering with graduate students from the University of Washington's School of Public Health to develop and evaluate an observation tool for shelter care hearings. Development of the tool involved multiple stages. A comprehensive review of relevant materials, including the HB 1227 bill, academic literature, national reports of hearing quality, and available resources was conducted. Next, key system partners involved in dependency proceedings were interviewed, including professionals from the Office of Public Defense (OPD), the Parents for Parents (P4P) coordinator, and a representative from DCYF. These interviews focused on the changes brought by HB 1227 and how the changes could impact the professional roles and court practices. One of the HB 1227 authors was also interviewed to gain insights into the legislative background and intended purpose of the statutory changes contained in the bill. Using these data, WSCCR compiled a list of significant data elements. Collaborating with the Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP) Community of Practice, and the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) helped us incorporate industry benchmarks and best practices into our tool. The Data & Evaluation Workgroup were also instrumental in defining the tool's objective and creating a comprehensive list of data elements. Dr. Alicia Summers also provided

guidance on identifying the most critical data elements and condensing them into a concise format.

After designing the initial draft of the tool, we solicited feedback from the CBCC, Data & Evaluation Workgroup, DCYF, OPD, Attorney General's Office, and P4P to ensure the tool adequately captured the major changes associated with HB 1227. Based on this feedback, we modified the tool and tested it in the field with volunteer court sites (all part of the Family & Juvenile Court Improvement Program). The primary objective of testing was to assess how the tool is functioning in real-world courtrooms. Although the tool had been created based on research and input from many important groups in the dependency community, we needed to ensure that it would work well when used during shelter care hearings. The goal was to identify any elements that might be missing and to determine necessary modifications based on the observations made during court proceedings.

The *Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool* includes a detailed list of attendees at hearings, assessments of questions asked by judges, breadth and depth of discussion, judicial engagement, and involvement of attorneys and social workers. It also evaluates the active participation and advocacy of legal representatives, services ordered for parents and children, considerations related to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), accommodations for incarcerated parents, interpreter provisions, and placement decisions. Additionally, the tool records placement decisions, visitation, and family time details, along with efforts to prevent removal. A designated section allows observers to note any additional observations during the hearing. CIP assisted WSCCR is adapting the Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool into a fillable electronic format that allows for the easy merging and compiling of aggregate data.

Following the tool's finalization, a codebook was created to assist research assistants and future observers in using the tool. The codebook explains how to interpret and fill out each element, providing clarity and increasing validity. It was developed in close contact with the tool's creators and modeled after the Nebraska Court's Procedures Manual and Codebook to ensure consistency and professionalism.

Court observations took place from July through September 2023, which coincided with the implementation of HB1227 (effective July 1, 2023). Of note was an overall decrease in dependency petition filings at the state level. For instance, in one county, there has been a substantial 70% reduction in dependency petition filings during the summer months, with only four petitions filed in July.

Three observers (Principal Research Associate and two Research Assistants) conducted the court observations. They selected Shelter Care Hearings conducted via Zoom based on notifications from courts and the availability of the observers. Court staff from each county would inform the observers about upcoming shelter care hearings through email and provide the Zoom links for attendance. Due to the short notice of these hearings, ranging from 72 hours to less than 24 hours in advance, it was challenging for all three observers to attend the same hearings. Most often, two observers attended a hearing, and occasionally only one researcher observed a particular hearing. In order to ensure reliability and adequately test the tool we aimed to watch multiple hearings. We used an iterative process to refine the tool, collecting feedback from each observer and adjusting the tool and codebook accordingly.

9. How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V)

Overall, data from 123 Shelter Care Hearings was analyzed. Forty-four hearings were observed over Zoom and 80 were coded based on the audio recordings received from the courts. Additionally, 58 hearings were from pre-implementation and 65 hearings were from post-implementation period. Overall, the post-HB1227 landscape displayed a more comprehensive, detailed, and focused approach to legal proceedings. The improvements observed across various metrics indicate a shift toward a more involved and considerate process, emphasizing parental involvement, thorough assessments, and a more proactive approach in ensuring the child's safety and well-being. CIP will be utilizing these results in future training and technical assistance efforts, along with sharing the findings with all relevant system partners, including representatives from the state legislature.

Key Findings

- On average, there was an increase in the average length of shelter care hearings, from 78 minutes to 93 minutes, that is 20% increase
- Post-HB 1227, there was a 17-percentage-point increase (from 69% to 86%) in parental attendance. The increase was particularly notable for mothers, with a 15-percentage point increase in attendance. Fathers also showed a positive change, with an 8-percentage point increase. Attending hearings allows parents to voice their concerns, share insights into their family situation, and present information that might not be documented elsewhere. For CASA/GAL: we also documented increase in attendance, from 5% to 18%.
- Post-HB1227, judges seem to be engaging with parents more interactively. We found a rise (45%) in judges addressing parents directly. Furthermore, there has been a 14% increase in conversations regarding the future stages and a 12% drop in judge interruptions points to a change in focus toward active listening.
 - *Overall, these results show a positive trend towards a more parent-centered approach in interactions during shelter care hearings.*
- Post-HB1227, there has been an increased focus on potential harm. Judges discussing the potential harms of removing children from their families rose by 30%, from 12% to 42%. There was also a 26% increase in judges balancing the harm of removal against the potential harms of keeping children at home, promoting a more nuanced approach to decision-making. Additionally, judges are 24% more likely to verbally discuss reasonable efforts to prevent removal on the record.

10. Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?

Partnering with graduate students from the University of Washington's School of Public Health significantly accelerated this effort. Involving students in this research project supplied much needed capacity for observing and coding hearings. It also provided practical experience for the students in research design and methodology, along with strengthening CIP's relationship with the university and community.

11. What assistance or support would be helpful from the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) or the Children's Bureau to help

move the project forward?

Connections with other jurisdictions that have implemented similar reforms or research projects, allowing sharing of best practices and lessons learned.

Assistance with creating a plan for sustaining the project beyond the initial stages, which may involve securing ongoing funding or integrating the observation tool into standard court practices.

Quality Legal Representation Project

1. Project Title

Judicial Officer/Attorney Academy on Reasonable & Active Efforts Hearing Evaluation

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

In the spring of 2022, CIP partnered with the CBCC to develop content and co-sponsor the [2022 Washington Judicial Academy on Reasonable and Active Efforts](#). A total of 24 judicial officers from 12 different Washington (WA) counties attended this two-day, highly interactive on-line academy. The training provided instruction in federal and Washington black letter law, the art of making reasonable efforts and active efforts findings, and conducting sufficient “reason to know” inquiries. Judicial officers learned new skills to prevent the unnecessary removal of children from their homes, and to make sure that those who are removed are returned to their parents or achieve permanence as quickly and safely as possible. As a part of the academy, CIP worked with cross-system state experts in relevant areas to develop WA-specific resource tools, including a comprehensive [WA Guide on Reasonable and Active Efforts](#), which was updated in March 2023 in preparation of the [2023 Attorney Academy on Reasonable & Active Efforts](#).

During the academy, judicial officers voiced a strong desire to have the attorneys who provide legal representation in child dependency cases trained on reasonable and active efforts practices in a similar way. There was general consensus that providing attorneys with an academy opportunity would result in enhance quality of legal representation that would support judicial officers’ ability to make quality reasonable and active efforts findings. In response to this request, WA CIP partnered with CBCC to bring the Attorney Academy on Reasonable and Active Efforts to Washington. These efforts are part of the broader mission of CIP to improve reasonable and active efforts practice in the WA dependency court system by increasing available learning opportunities and resources. This project would be aimed at evaluating the impact of the training on court system practice where at least one judicial officer, one parent attorney, one child attorney, and one state attorney attended an academy to inform to creation and implementation of future training and technical assistance efforts.

3. Approximate date that the project began:

July 2023

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

Phase III. Develop/select solution

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

As a result of this project, CIP would be able to demonstrate the impacts of having both judicial officers and attorneys within local court systems receive training through a Reasonable & Active Efforts Academy in increasing capacity to engage in quality reasonable and active efforts inquiries and decision-making at the appropriate points in the case, including: reason to know inquiries, determinations of Indian child status, efforts to prevent removal, and efforts to finalize the permanent plan. It was anticipated that the findings from this hearing quality evaluation study would provide CIP with insight into effective training modalities and strategies for enhancing capacity of court systems to meaningfully use reasonable and active efforts findings to improve outcomes for families.

The general need to enhance the capacity of judicial officers and attorneys to apply the law of reasonable and active efforts has been driven by a number of external forces:

- [Keeping Families Together Act \(HB 1227\)](#): One of the primary objectives of HB 1227 is ensuring that children are not being subjected to the trauma of forcible removal unless it is absolutely necessary to ensure safety. HB 1227 makes significant changes to the considerations that judicial officers be required to make in determining whether there is a sufficient legal basis of child removal (see above). Even when a judicial officer finds that there is sufficient basis of removal HB 1227 creates a final line of inquiry that requires consideration of whether there are any preventions services, including housing assistance and other reasonable available services, that could be put in place that would allow the child to safely return/remain home. If such services are identified and the parent agrees to participate in them, the court is required to order that the child be returned to that parent. In order to determine if a service would be sufficient to prevent or eliminate the need for removal, judicial officers will need to understand what efforts the Department has already made to prevent the breakup of the family. Quality reasonable and active efforts findings will depend on judicial officers and attorneys having a working knowledge of what prevention services are available in their local communities and capacity to argue how these services could or couldn't be structured to create immediate child safety given any particular family/home situation.
- [Appointment of Counsel for Youth in Dependency Proceedings \(HB 1219\)](#): In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed the Appointment of Counsel for Youth in Dependency Proceedings (HB 1219) which requires that for children aged 8 and older, courts must appoint counsel for children in the dependency case when a dependency petition is filed or before commencement of the shelter care hearing. For all children, no matter their age, when a termination petition is filed, courts must appoint counsel to the child in their dependency and termination cases. Counsel for children in dependency proceedings are to be appointed on a phased-in county-by-county basis over a six-year period with full statewide implementation by January 1, 2027. The WA Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) is responsible for the development of the phase-in schedule, as well as the recruitment, training, oversight, and payment of attorneys.

- *In re Dependency of A.T. (2024)*: In this appellate case, the court clarified that the possibility, and even the probability, of failure to prevent the breakup of the Indian family “does not excuse” the Department from continuing to try to make active efforts. The remedy for failure to make active efforts is to remand the matter to the trial court to return the child home unless doing so “would subject the child to substantial and immediate danger or threat of such danger.”
- *In re Dependency of R.D (2023)*: In this appeal of dependency and disposition orders, the court upheld the dependency order, reversed the lower court’s finding that the Department provided active efforts, and remanded the case to the lower court to order a return home unless it found that doing so would subject R.D. to substantial and immediate danger or threat of danger. As to active efforts, the court concluded that Department’s contacts with the mother did not qualify as such, in that they were limited (as opposed to ongoing) and were “designed to obtain information for the State, not to provide remedial services for the mother.” The Court pointed out that the active efforts requirement is not fulfilled simply because a parent is uninterested or that efforts would be futile.
- *In the Matter of the Welfare of C.W.M. (2023)*: In this appeal of dependency and disposition orders, Division Two analyzed the definition of “dependent child” in RCW 13.34.060(6) and held that this statutory definition does not require a finding of reasonable efforts in order for the court to establish dependency. Instead, the requirement for reasonable efforts is located in the disposition statute.
- *In re Dependency of J.M.W. (2022)*: Requires the State to prove it made active efforts to prevent the breakup of an Indian family before a child is brought into emergency foster care where the Department had prior contact with the family and reason to believe the child was at risk of physical damage or harm. Additionally, a trial court is required to make a finding on the record at a shelter care hearing that out-of-home placement is necessary to prevent imminent physical damage or harm at an interim shelter care hearing.
- *In re Dependency of L.C.S. (2022)*: In this appeal of a shelter care order, the juvenile court had ordered the child placed in shelter care and found that reasonable efforts as to the father did not need to be made due to the emergent circumstances of the case. The Supreme Court held that there is no exception to the reasonable efforts requirement, instead concluding that reasonable efforts must be made to place with both parents. In deciding whether the Department has made reasonable efforts as to the parents, courts should consider the facts and circumstances of each parent; the standard is flexible and entails the Department balancing family stability and child safety, often in a short amount of time. The Supreme Court outlined specific guidelines the court should consider when determining whether the Department has, in fact, made reasonable efforts, including making reasonable efforts findings on the record and individualizing findings for each parent; determining whether services are culturally appropriate, geographically accessible, meeting identified safety threats, and are tailored for any parents with developmental disabilities; and considering the harm of removal. Juvenile courts must make clear on the record what actions were taken to support a finding that the Department has met the reasonable efforts standard.
- *In re Dependency of M.A.S.C. (2022)*: Where the Department has reason to believe that a parent may have an intellectual disability, it must make reasonable efforts to ascertain whether that parent does in fact have a disability and, if so, how the disability could interfere with the parent’s capacity to understand the Department’s offer of services. The court must place itself in the position of an objective observer and the Department must

provide evidence of tailoring its offer of services in accordance with the current professional guidelines to ensure that the offer is reasonably understandable to the parent based on the totality of the circumstances. The Department must prove that it satisfied the termination elements; the parent is not required to prove the Department's offers of services were not understandable.

6. What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II)

Conduct a hearing quality evaluation:

SO THAT the quality of court practice in the context of Reasonable Efforts/Active Efforts (RE/AE) findings before and after the judicial academy can be assessed;

AND THAT participating attorneys in the identified counties are assessed on the quality of their RE/AE arguments, before and after the attorney academy;

SO THAT the quality of RE/AE system practices at shelter care and permanency planning can be assessed;

SO THAT the quality of RE/AE system practices prior to academy participation can be compared to the quality of RE/AE system practices after academy participation;

SO THAT any significant changes in RE/AE system practice can be assessed;

SO THAT the impacts of participation in the academy by both judicial officers and attorneys in improving the quality of RE/AE arguments and findings can be determined;

SO THAT effective RE/AE training opportunities and resources can be further developed for judicial officers and attorneys;

SO THAT judicial officers have the knowledge and skills necessary to make detailed and case specific RE/AE findings;

AND THAT attorneys representing parties in dependency cases have the knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary to engage in reasonable and active efforts

SO THAT judicial officers are able to make quality RE/AE findings at the appropriate points in a child welfare case;

SO THAT the court through the mechanism of the RE/AE findings ensures that the Department follows its statutory duty to make reasonable efforts to avoid removal and achieve timely permanency;

SO THAT children are not unnecessarily removed from their homes;

AND THAT children achieve timely permanency when they are removed from their home.

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

CIP worked with Dr. Alicia Summers to develop a plan for evaluating reasonable/active efforts practices using pre-post observations of Shelter Care and Permanency Planning hearings in counties where at least one judicial officer, state's attorney, parent attorney and youth attorney attended an academy. The court observation study would ask participating judicial officers to send 10 recorded initial and 10 recorded permanency hearings from prior to the academy, and 10 recorded initial and 10 recorded permanency hearings from immediately following the academy so that any practice-specific changes to reasonable efforts discussion, inquiry, and findings could be evaluated. The court observation study would look holistically across sites to see if there are trends in judicial and attorney practice changes following participation in the academy. No identifying information would be collected from the recordings and all information from the study would be reported in aggregate.

7a. If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).

N/A

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

In conjunction with Dr. Alicia Summers and the CBCC Liaison, CIP has determined that the court observation study would not be an effective use of CIP funds or staff capacity. As such, CIP has decided to sunset this court observation study and continue forward with a new Hearing Quality Project. We based this decision on a couple of key factors:

Insufficient sample size: After the conclusion of the judicial and attorney academies, CIP compiled attendee information and discovered that only two counties met the criterion for participating in the study. In addition, both counties have short judicial rotations (1.5-2 years) and the judicial officers who attended the academy were preparing to rotate off of the dependency bench.

Confounding factors: Implementation of this court observation study would coincide with the major statutory changes that resulted from the passage of the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227), which went into effect on July 1, 2023. HB 1227 made significant changes to the inquiries and decisions that judicial officers are required to engage in at Shelter Care Hearings and these changes alone were anticipated to have drastic impacts on judicial practice. As an extraneous, unmeasured variable, the effects of HB 1227 would likely introduce bias into the court observation study data that would result in misinterpretation of any cause-and-effect relationship between the academy training and change in practice. CIP was not able to identify a way to statistically differentiate the impacts to legal practice resultant of HB 1227 from those associated with the training academies in the two identified locales.

9. How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V)

While CIP has ultimately decided not to continue with the court observation study project, the judicial and attorney academies were evaluated by CBCC using other methods:

- A pre and post learning assessment was built into the training model. Participants are given a link to an online module that includes 10 knowledge based reasonable efforts questions two weeks prior to the event. During the event, participants are asked to re-take the same 10 item assessment to determine if knowledge has increased. Both judicial officers and attorneys demonstrated a knowledge gain on the post-academy assessment.

- Following the academies, participants are given a link to a short (5-10 minute) satisfaction survey to provide feedback on whether they found the academy valuable and provide suggestions for improvement of future academies. The majority of participants who responded to the survey were satisfied with the academy, and reported they gained knowledge and practical skills.

10. Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?

Only having two counties that met the criterion to participate in the court observation study resulted in notable delay and ultimately caused us to re-examine the feasibility of the project.

11. What assistance or support would be helpful from the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) or the Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?

Since this project is not moving forward, no assistance or support is needed from CBCC or the Children's Bureau.

II. Training, Projects, and Activities

Overview

1. During the FY 2022, did you hold or develop any of the following?

Data, Hearing Quality, Improving Timeliness of Hearing or Permanency Outcomes, Engagement and Participation of Parties, Well Being, ICWA or Tribal Collaboration, Quality Legal Representation, Preventing Sex Trafficking, Prevention, Safety, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

2. Did you have any significant training efforts not related to a particular project? If yes, please describe.

No

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

15 to 20

4. What is your best prediction for the number of attorneys, judges, or other legal system stakeholders that will participate in training annually?

On average, we reach 600 – 1000 court and community partners through our

trainings.

5. Have you been involved in planning with the agency on implementing Family First?

No

6. Have you developed/been developing your Family First judicial training plan?

No

7. Do you have any data training or project materials that you wish to share?

- [harm-of-removal-map.pdf](#) (176.87 KB)
- [legal-standards-comparison-chart.pdf](#) (151.76 KB)
- [wa-guide-on-reasonable-and-active-efforts.pdf](#) (770.27 KB)
- [other-materials.pdf](#) (45.67 KB)

8. Please describe how the CIP has been involved.

CIP has not been involved in Family First planning because DCYF has stated that Washington State has insufficient data system reporting mechanisms that would allow for drawdown of FFPSA funds for prevention services.

9. Please describe what has been developed

N/A

10. Other Notable Activities

Commission on Children in Foster Care: For the past year, the Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care (CCFC) has engaged in a strategic review and re-design of its role and structure. The Commission's multi-disciplinary system improvement workgroup, the Family Well-Being Community Collaborative (FWCC), serves as the advisory body for Washington's CIP. Working with CCFC co-chairs, Justice Barbara Madsen and DCYF Secretary Ross Hunter, the CIP Co-Director, Kelly Warner-King, has supported this effort and helped direct the work of two contracted facilitators.

The Commission was founded by the Washington Supreme Court in 2004, in response to recommendations in the Pew Commission report, "FOSTERING THE FUTURE: Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for Children in Foster Care." The Commission's mission is to "provide all children in foster care with safe, permanent families in which their physical, emotional, intellectual, and social needs are met." CCFC members and system partners identified a need to update the purpose, structure, principles, governance and staffing of the Commission to meet the current needs of the child welfare court system in Washington State. In March 2024, the

Commission hosted an in-person retreat, attended by 30 Commission members and partners, designed to generate ideas and next steps for the re-visioning effort. Based on that experience, a small, dedicated workgroup is being formed to examine options, including examples from other states, and author a set of recommendations for the full commission to vote on by November 2024. The CIP is supporting this effort and will also work with the Supreme Court to submit a budget request to the Legislature to fund a full-time staff person and part-time administrative position for the Commission.

Region 10 CIP Meeting: On February 6 - 7, 2024, CIP staff participated in the Region 10 CIP Director Meeting in Boise, ID. This meeting was facilitated by the Capacity Building Center for Courts and co-designed with Region 10 CIP program staff. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity for in-person connections, training, and development among CIP and CBCC staff. CIP staff from the four states in Region 10 were able to share what their state is working on and learn from numerous experts on topics that included tribal collaboration, pre-filing preventative legal advocacy, judicial training, and safety decision-making. Washington was honored to share our CIP's experience in providing judicial education and cross system safety practice improvement.

American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law's National Conference on Access to Justice: The CIP Co-Director presented a workshop session with partners from the Office of Public Defense and Office of Civil Legal Aid on the successes and lessons learned in Washington State's efforts to reduce family separation through collaborative projects that involved the state agency, courts, child and parent legal representation teams, and lived experience. Presenters have been invited to submit an article on this work to the Children's Rights Newsletter of the American Bar Association's Children's Rights Litigation Committee.

Data

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

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. This exists as an interactive database for registered users and is publicly available as an interactive dashboard of aggregate data.

- **2b. Project Sub-category:**

Agency Data Sharing Efforts

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

WA Dependency Data Dashboards/Reports

A public facing Washington State Dependency Timeliness Dashboard was created in November 2017 using Tableau software. It is maintained and updated by CIP. On average, the Dashboard gets around 2,000 hits per month.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Data dashboards

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

WA Interactive Dependency Timeliness Report (iDTR)

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.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Fostering Court Improvement data projects

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

CCWIS

Over the past reporting year, CIP staff engaged in the following activities to support statewide implementation of CCWIS:

- Met with the DCYF Data Reporting/Product Manager to discuss potential timelines for data base structure changes.
- Met with DCYF CCWIS Manager and CCWIS IT team to discuss updates concerning the current CCWIS feasibility study.
- Met with DCYF CCWIS Manager and CCWIS IT team to discuss procurement portion of the project and next steps for RFP.
- Agreed to meet end of Summer 2024 to evaluate progress, potential vendor process, and project time frames.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Use of AFCARS or CCWIS data

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: Yes

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

- **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** Yes
- Attorneys for Parents II:** No
- Attorneys for Children:** No

Attorneys for the Agency: No

Attorneys for a Tribe: No

Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.): No

Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.): No

Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.): No

Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.): Yes

Court Improvement Program Staff: Yes

Other: No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 26-50

In-Person Training: No

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): Yes

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.: Ongoing virtual demonstrations on how to access and utilize the online Dependency Dashboard.

Increased capacity of local courts to use the “Dash” in system improvement efforts, especially in regard to racial equity.

Satisfaction Survey: No

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

• **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** Yes

Attorneys for Parents II: No

Attorneys for Children: No

Attorneys for the Agency: No

Attorneys for a Tribe: No

Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.): No

Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.): No

Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.): No

Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.): Yes

Court Improvement Program Staff: Yes

Other: No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 0-25

In-Person Training: No

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): Yes

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.: On-going virtual training for FJCIP, family treatment and early childhood court coordinators to use iDTR and incorporate data into local CQI efforts.

Increased capacity of courts to use the iDTR to support improvement efforts.

Satisfaction Survey: No

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

3a. Do you have data reports that you consistently view?

Yes

3b. How are these reports used to support your work?

Reports are used to assist in determining which jurisdictions may need assistance in focusing their efforts on certain aspects of their dependency practice, including ensuring equitable access to specialty courts and other resources. Through the Dependency Dashboard, publicly available and regularly updated data is employed to describe trends and identify high performing jurisdictions and effective court practices. Data reports are shared with child welfare and court system partners.

Hearing Quality

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

iDecide

The [iDecide](#) tool is a web-based application that is designed to support dependency court systems in understanding and applying the statutory changes in the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227). CIP staff facilitated workgroups that worked diligently over a two-year period to develop iDecide. CIP has worked to continuously update iDecide over this last reporting period to align with legislative and appellate decisions. In addition, interactive versions of the Harm of Removal Map and Legal Standards Comparison Chart were added to

the tool.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Process Improvements

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

Legal Standards Comparison Chart

The [Legal Standards Comparison Chart](#) was created in response to system confusion over the correct legal standard to apply in decision-making before and after disposition is entered.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Process Improvements

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

Jurist-in-Residence Program

The [Jurist-in-Residence \(JIR\)](#) program supports high quality judicial practice by making multiple experienced, retired dependency court judges available to advise on trainings and offer one-on-one mentorship to current dependency court judicial officers. JIRs have

expertise in effective judicial practice, court management, dependency system leadership, and related areas. They lead the Judicial Community of Practice (JCoP) and contribute to the development of trainings, materials, policies, and multi-system collaborative efforts.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Process Improvements

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook

CIP worked with cross-system experts to update the following chapters of the [Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook](#):

- Parent Representation in Child Welfare Proceedings
- Fact-Finding Hearing
- Special Juvenile Immigrant Status

2b. Project Sub-category:

Process Improvements

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

The FWCC's [Meaningful Shelter Care Hearing Workgroup](#) worked to identify the components of a meaningful shelter care hearing and created [The Shelter Care Think Tank](#) resource. The Think Tank is a group of cross-system partners committed to collaborating with local dependency courts to improve their shelter care hearings. The Think Tank can help court communities identify barriers and develop solutions.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Process Improvements

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

- **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** Yes
- Attorneys for Parents II:** No
- Attorneys for Children:** No
- Attorneys for the Agency:** No
- Attorneys for a Tribe:** No
- Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.):** No
- Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.):** No
- Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.):** No
- Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.):** No
- Court Improvement Program Staff:** No
- Other:** No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 26-50

In-Person Training: No

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): No

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: Yes

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

The [Judicial Community of Practice \(JCoP\)](#) consists of monthly virtual peer-learning sessions that are topic-focused and facilitated by a Jurist-in-Residence. Topics covered in JCoP during this reporting year included: prenatal & perinatal substance use, extended foster care, improving systems through partnerships with lived experts, making quality findings, protective factors for families, community-based services, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, and Protein for AllTM

- Increase judicial capacity by providing a safe environment to learn about effective practices being used in dependency courts and talk with peers about shared issues.

Satisfaction Survey: Yes

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

- **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** Yes
- **Attorneys for Parents II:** No

Attorneys for Children: No

Attorneys for the Agency: No

Attorneys for a Tribe: No

Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.): No

Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.): No

Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.): No

Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.): Yes

Court Improvement Program Staff: Yes

Other: No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 26-50

In-Person Training: No

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): Yes

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

The [2024 Dependency Judicial Training Academy](#) was a 3-day virtual training held in May 2024.

- Increase understanding of the current state of child welfare, and recent legislative and appellate decisions impacting dependency courts.

- Build the capacity of courts to make safety decisions that balance the protection of a child with the preference for family preservation.
- Enhance ability of courts to successfully lead their systems during times of tragedy (e.g., child fatalities)

Satisfaction Survey: Yes

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

Improving Timeliness of Hearing or Permanency Outcomes

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

FJCIP Data Mapping Tool

CIP assisted in creation of the [FJCIP Mapping Tool](#) which guides dependency court professionals through the dependency timeline and learn what data is available to them through the iDTR for each area of the timeline with an understanding of what the data means and where the data is coming from.

- **2b. Project Sub-category:**

General/ASFA

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

New Fact-Finding Exceptional Circumstances Codes

In Washington State, the Fact-Finding Hearing must occur within 75 days of the filing of the dependency petition, unless exceptional circumstances for a continuance are found. [RCW 13.34.070\(1\)](#)

Fact-finding data (e.g., average time to Fact-Finding) is used by our courts and systems partners around the state. Some communities collect their own fact-finding data and others use what is available in (iDTR) and Dependency Dashboard. There is general agreement that the current data is limited due to exceptional circumstances being granted by the court and no tracking mechanism being available in the data. This results in misinterpretation of fact-finding data at the local and state levels.

A cross-system workgroup was developed to collaboratively develop a coding framework that sorts exceptional circumstances into meaningful and relevant categories. A group of judicial officers was provided the opportunity to provide input on this framework. A meeting with system partners was also held to present the work of the group, collect feedback and identify any overlap in efforts. After incorporation of this feedback, the codes and revised pattern forms were submitted to the appropriate committees for approval and implementation.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Continuances/Delays

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

- **2a. Project Description:**

FWCC Guardianship Workgroup

The [FWCC's Guardianship Workgroup](#) was formed to identify current system challenges and develop practical tools that enhance the understanding and ability of dependency court communities to utilize Title 13 and Title 11 guardianships in ways that promote positive outcomes for families.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Guardianship

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: Yes

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

[No available information]

Engagement and Participation of Parties

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

Protein for All

CIP supports the implementation of [Protein for All](#) into dependency court practice. Protein for All provides education and resources to engage and support individuals and families who find themselves navigating the legal system while experiencing challenges such as food insecurity, homelessness or high levels of stress.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Engagement Skills

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

[The Engaging Parents at Shelter Care Workgroup](#) (EPSC) is a subgroup of the FWCC's Meaningful Shelter Care workgroup. The EPSC was purposefully developed using dependency front line staff and lived experts to identify ways our system can increase engagement of parents at the shelter care hearing. The group consisted of six Lived Expert professionals, two court improvement persons, two parent attorneys, a GAL, AAG, and three DCYF staff. EPSC identified six strategies to increase engagement during the shelter care. The group is developing the theory of change for their primary strategy to provide peer support and legal advocacy pre-filing.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Parent Engagement

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: Yes

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

- **2a. Project Description:**

Attending Dependency Hearings Videos

Results from the COVID recovery interviews identified a common need for help preparing court participants to attend virtual and hybrid hearings. CIP gathered a team of cross-system partners, including parents with lived experience, to develop useful tools to address this need. The result was the creation of two short videos that can be easily shared with parents, youth and other court participants. CIP utilized COVID funding to contract with Public Knowledge to create two animated [videos](#) titled “Attending Your Dependency Hearing,” and “Connecting to Your Dependency Hearing.” Videos are currently being considered for widespread adoption by other courts in WA.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Parent Engagement

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

Spanish Translation of Attending Dependency Hearings Videos

Two animated videos created to help participants be prepared for their in-person/virtual/hybrid dependency hearings were translated to include a version with Spanish subtitles.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Limited English Proficiency

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

Additional Translations of Attending Dependency Hearings Videos

CIP worked with Public Knowledge and the Administrative Office of the Courts to translate the videos into Russian, Chinese, Somali, and Vietnamese. Videos have been dubbed in the languages listed, and Spanish.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Limited English Proficiency

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

Promotional Materials for Attending Dependency Hearings Videos

CIP worked with an instructional design consultant to create a flyer, business card, and brochure that include a QR code that courts and their partners can use to share the videos with court participants. All of the materials are available to courts in both English and Spanish. In addition, the promotional business card has been translated into Russian, Chinese, Somali, and Vietnamese, CIP mailed an initial “starter kit” to Department of Children, Youth, and Families offices

that included copies of the flyer, business card, and brochure to share with clients and in spaces with families. CIP also shared a folder of the above materials with each parent and youth attorney in attendance at the annual Office of Public Defense and Office of Civil Legal Aid conference in September 2024.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Parent Engagement

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

Trainings

Trainings

[No available information]

Well Being

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

[Science of Hope](#) Community of Practice & Listserv

CIP hosts a monthly Science of Hope Community of Practice that includes child welfare partners, private partners implementing hope in their organization, and community partners. The community of

practice helps increase understanding of the science of hope and how to best utilize it to increase client success and reduce staff burnout. In addition, FYJP created an email listserv to send subscribers Science of Hope updates.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

[Hope Week 2024](#)

A subgroup of system leaders from the Hope Community of Practice and Dr. Chan Hellman met twice a month with the goal of integrating hope science into child and family serving systems in Washington. The group initially planned Hope Week for September 2023, but due to lack of resources, reschedule the events for June 2024. Hope Week 2024 will include four days of Science of Hope trainings, led by Dr. Hellman, for dependency court professionals and community partners. Hope Navigators will then develop projects within their own organizations to infuse the science of hope into current practice and policies.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

Hope Rising WA

The subgroup mentioned above, worked with two community agencies, Mentor WA and Kitsap Strong to create an intermediary organization to host Hope Rising WA and Hope Navigation. Hope Rising WA is a statewide effort and partnership to bring the Science of Hope to child and family serving organizations. Hope Rising WA will coordinate organizations showing interest and taking part in Science of Hope activities. In addition, the intermediary will host navigation training for the state.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: Yes

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

Hope Navigation

CIP has been partnering with Hope Rising WA to plan a two-day Hope Navigator training for any organization that wants to train staff to be a Hope Navigator, along with a yearlong learning community. CIP will encourage dependency court staff to take part in Hope Navigation training. Hope Navigation trains staff to utilize the science of hope to apply to a project, so that inherently, the project will increase hope by those using that project's process.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: Yes

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

- **2a. Project Description:**

Improving Child Welfare Court Culture with Hope-Centered Leadership

CIP is in the process of planning an event designed for court and child welfare system leaders who want to improve the culture and civility of dependency court communities. In discussion with Dr. Hellman, participants will explore ways that a hope-centered culture can instill a sense of common purpose and collaboration, enabling professionals to shift from focusing on conflict and recrimination to prioritizing respect and positive outcomes. Event participants will identify the next steps for promoting hope-centered court communities and implementing effective changes at the local level. Dependency Court partners, including parent and youth attorneys, the department, the attorney generals, and GASA/guardian ad litem representatives, have been invited to this event.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

- **2a. Project Description:**

Spokane Hope Summit: Hope-Centered Leadership

CIP partnered with Spokane County Dependency court to bring Dr. Christopher Freeze to their annual summit on February 14, 2024, to share how leaders can utilize the science of hope with families and staff. While CIP assisted with connecting Spokane County with Dr. Freeze, we did not hold or develop a training related to this topic.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

Trainings

Trainings

[No available information]

ICWA or Tribal Collaboration

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

Development of Yakima County [ICWA Court](#)

CIP staff supported Yakima County Superior Court in partnering with Yakama and Tlingit & Haida tribes, and other court partners to develop an ICWA court/docket.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Tribal Collaboration

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

- **2a. Project Description:**

ICW Subcommittee

CIP staff regularly attends monthly meetings between DCYF's Office of Tribal Relations, DCFY leaders, Tribal leaders and their staff to learn more about changes at DCYF related to ICWA and tribal families, and to share information about court activities related to ICWA and tribal families.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Tribal Collaboration

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

Tribal State Court Consortium (TSCC)

CIP staff attended a TSCC meeting in September 2023 and shared the work happening in our program to support ICWA implementation. CIP continually connected with the TSCC to attempt to collaborate without success. CIP will continue to share ICWA/Tribal child welfare updates

with the TSCC.

2b. Project Sub-category:

State/Tribal Court Agreements

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

- **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** No
- Attorneys for Parents II:** Yes
- Attorneys for Children:** Yes
- Attorneys for the Agency:** No
- Attorneys for a Tribe:** Yes
- Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.):** No
- Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.):** Yes
- Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.):** No
- Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.):** No
- Court Improvement Program Staff:** Yes
- Other:** No
- 1b. Define other unlisted audiences:** No
- 1c. List the audience of your training:**

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 26-50

In-Person Training: No

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): Yes

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

Live webinar, co-presented with DCYF, entitled “In this Together: Understanding the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227)”

- Enhanced understanding of the statutory changes contained in HB 1227 and how those changes have impacted dependency court practice.
- Build capacity to engage in safety planning and harm of removal considerations
- Increased ability to access helpful tools, trainings, and resources.

Satisfaction Survey: Yes

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

• **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** Yes

Attorneys for Parents II: Yes

Attorneys for Children: Yes

Attorneys for the Agency: Yes

Attorneys for a Tribe: Yes

Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.): Yes

Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.): Yes

Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.): Yes

Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.): Yes

Court Improvement Program Staff: No

Other: No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 51-100

In-Person Training: Yes

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): No

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

2nd Annual Indian Child Welfare Conference for the Olympic Peninsula

CIP partnered with Clallam County ICWA Court, October 17, 2023 to support their annual ICWA educational conference. The conference was attended by Peninsula Tribal and Clallam County Court Judicial Officers, Tribal Partners, Court Administrators, Attorneys, Law Clerks, Social Workers, GALs/CASAs, and Child Welfare Service Providers. Topics included; History of ICWA and Emergent DCYF ICWA Policies, After Brackeen: Outcomes and Implications of the Supreme Court's Decision Upholding the Indian Child Welfare Act, Washington State Caselaw Update, Active Efforts, and cultural activities.

- Create a space for ICWA practitioners to learn together and strategize on how to improve the outcomes of Indian families

Satisfaction Survey: Yes

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

• **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** Yes

Attorneys for Parents II: No

Attorneys for Children: No

Attorneys for the Agency: No

Attorneys for a Tribe: No

Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.): No

Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.): Yes

Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.): No

Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.): Yes

Court Improvement Program Staff: No

Other: No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 0-25

In-Person Training: Yes

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): No

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

Yakima ICWA Court Kickoff

Partnered with Yakima County Superior Court to support the Yakima ICWA Court with an educational Kickoff training scheduled Monday, October 30, 2023 and attended by dependency court staff and tribal partners. The kickoff covered topics including overviews of ICWA and Washington ICWA law, culturally relevant services, and Tribal ICWA Engagement.

- Increase capacity of Yakima County Superior Court to effectively meet the individualized needs of ICWA families in the child dependency court system.
- Motivate and inspire the Yakima County court community to support the newly launched ICWA court docket.

Satisfaction Survey: No

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

Quality Legal Representation

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

Collaborative E-Course Creation

CIP staff are a part of a statewide group of trainers from the Office of Public Defense, Office of Civil Legal Aid and Attorney General's Office that meets on a regular basis to discuss overlapping training needs and coordinate joint cross-system education efforts. This group identified a statewide need for general training on the dependency

court system and process. The three attorney trainers have agreed to author updates to the process chapters of the Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook. CIP staff then uses that content to create an asynchronous online course module in Articulate360. CIP staff sends the back-end files for the course to the three attorney training partners who are then able to modify the content to meet their specific needs and publish the course on their internal LMS platform.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Multi-Disciplinary Representation

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

- **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** Yes
- Attorneys for Parents II:** Yes
- Attorneys for Children:** Yes
- Attorneys for the Agency:** Yes
- Attorneys for a Tribe:** No
- Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.):** Yes
- Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.):** No
- Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.):** Yes
- Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.):** Yes
- Court Improvement Program Staff:** No
- Other:** No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: Unknown

In-Person Training: No

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): No

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): Yes

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

The [Shelter Care Hearing Module](#) is an asynchronous, online learning module that provides an overview of Shelter Care Hearings in Washington State, including inquiries, findings, and orders that courts are required to make.

- Increase understanding of the purpose and procedures of Shelter Care Hearings, and what information needs to be contained in a Dependency Petition.
- Enhance courts' capacity align with the required inquiries and findings involved in child removal, placement and family time visitation decisions at the Shelter Care Hearing.

Satisfaction Survey: No

Learning: Yes

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

In 2024, the Washington State Legislature passed SB 6006, which aims to improve how the state identifies and responds to victims of human trafficking and sexual abuse, including providing victims with continued care and enabling victims to seek civil remedies for the wrongs done to them. One of the changes contained in SB 6006 was adding minor victims of human trafficking, where the parent(s) were aware or complicit in the trafficking, to the statutory definition of “Dependent Child”. This legislation goes into effect on July 1, 2025. CIP will work with system partners to create tools, resources, and training that helps prepare courts for the implementation of this new law.

- **2b. Project Sub-category:**

Sex Trafficking

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: Yes

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

[No available information]

Prevention

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

FIRST Clinic

CIP continues to support the expansion of the [Family Intervention Response to Stop Trauma \(FIRST\) Clinic](#), an innovative model that provides legal and peer support to pregnant and new parents struggling with substance use. The goal of the program is to keep infants safely with family and avoid entry into the dependency court system.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Secondary or tertiary prevention

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

[No available information]

Safety

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

Safety Summit Project

The [Safety Summit Project](#) is a training package that provides training and action-oriented planning for sustainable, long-term safety practice improvement efforts at the local court level. A state-level partnership between AOC and DCYF guides court communities through a process to organize, plan and host cross-system Safety Summits for local court communities.

- **2b. Project Sub-category:**

Decision-making

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: No

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: Yes

- **2a. Project Description:**

Harm of Removal Workgroup

The [Harm of Removal Workgroup](#) was created to develop resources and training that supports court communities in assessing and responding to the harm of removal in the context of forcible family separation by child welfare.

- **2b. Project Sub-category:**

Removal/Return

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

- **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** Yes
- Attorneys for Parents II:** Yes
- Attorneys for Children:** Yes
- Attorneys for the Agency:** Yes
- Attorneys for a Tribe:** No
- Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.):** Yes
- Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.):** No
- Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.):** Yes
- Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.):** Yes
- Court Improvement Program Staff:** No
- Other:** No
- 1b. Define other unlisted audiences:** No
- 1c. List the audience of your training:**

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 100+

In-Person Training: No

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): Yes

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

The [Snohomish County Safety Summit](#) was a live, 4-hour webinar event.

- Build understanding of the fundamentals of child welfare safety and the importance of using frameworks in decision-making.
- Increase understanding of the components and terminology used in American Bar Association Child Safety: A Guide for Judges and Attorneys.
- Increase capacity of court systems to apply the “Safety Framework” at every step in a case.
- Enhance ability of caseworkers to effectively articulate safety-related information to the court.

Satisfaction Survey: Yes

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

• **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** No

Attorneys for Parents II: Yes

Attorneys for Children: Yes

Attorneys for the Agency: No

Attorneys for a Tribe: No

Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.): Yes

Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.): No

Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.): No

Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.): No

Court Improvement Program Staff: No

Other: No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 51-100

In-Person Training: Yes

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): No

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module): No

Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No

Conference: No

Community of Practice: No

Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

CIP staff presented the Harm of Removal workshop at the annual joint conference sponsored by the Office of Public Defense, Office of Civil Legal Aid, and Akin.

- Increase understanding of how forcibly removing a child from their primary caregiver disrupts a child's neurological and socio-emotional development.
- Enhance basic understanding of the domains of a child's life that are impacted by removal.
- Increase capacity of, parent attorneys child attorneys, social service workers, and parent allies to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of removal.

Satisfaction Survey: Yes

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

- **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** No
- Attorneys for Parents II:** No
- Attorneys for Children:** No
- Attorneys for the Agency:** No
- Attorneys for a Tribe:** No
- Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.):** Yes
- Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.):** No
- Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.):** No
- Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.):** No
- Court Improvement Program Staff:** No
- Other:** No
- 1b. Define other unlisted audiences:** No
- 1c. List the audience of your training:**

See above

- 1d. How many persons attended the training?:** 26-50
- In-Person Training:** Yes
- Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together):** No
- Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module):** No
- Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training):** No
- Conference:** No
- Community of Practice:** No
- Other:** No
- 1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:**

CIP staff co-presented the Harm of Removal workshop with the Office of Public Defense at the annual Washington Association of Child Advocate Programs (WACAP) conference.

- Increase understanding of how forcibly removing a child from their primary caregiver disrupts a child's neurological and socio-emotional development.
- Enhance basic understanding of the domains of a child's life that are impacted by removal.
- Increase capacity of child advocates to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of removal.

Satisfaction Survey: Yes

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

• **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** No

Attorneys for Parents II: Yes

Attorneys for Children: Yes

Attorneys for the Agency: No

Attorneys for a Tribe: No

Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.): Yes

Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.): No

Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.): No

Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.): No

Court Improvement Program Staff: No

Other: No

1b. Define other unlisted audiences: No

1c. List the audience of your training:

See above

1d. How many persons attended the training?: 51-100

In-Person Training: No

Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together): Yes

Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works

individually to complete an online module): No
Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training): No
Conference: No
Community of Practice: No
Other: No

1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:

CIP staff co-presented the Harm of Removal workshop with the Office of Public Defense at the National Association of Public Defense annual conference.

- Increase understanding of how forcibly removing a child from their primary caregiver disrupts a child's neurological and socio-emotional development.
- Enhance basic understanding of the domains of a child's life that are impacted by removal.
- Increase capacity attorneys and other system partners to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of removal.

Satisfaction Survey: Yes

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

Projects

Projects

- **2a. Project Description:**

Equity and Engagement Framework

CIP staff facilitates a co-design team that includes youth, parent, and caregiver lived experts to create a framework for safely engaging lived experts in systems change work. The framework utilizes a belonging lens to increase equity in systems change work. Much of the framework has been completed and the co-design team is developing additional forms and resources to support the work. Next steps include the creation of a webpage, trainings for FYJP staff, and a completed framework document. The program will be piloted in the fall of 2024.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

Contracting and Compensation for Lived Experts

CIP staff worked closely with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to create a process for contracting with lived experts that compensates them fairly for their participation in workgroups, meetings, committees, and events. AOC created a title for Lived Experts, Lived Experience Experts (LEE) along with an agreement, versus traditional contracts, that allows more flexibility and ongoing work on multiple projects. AOC is currently working to adopt gift cards as additional form of payment for LEE. FYJP will continue to work with AOC to adopt good practices for supporting the engagement of LEE in organization's endeavors.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

- **2a. Project Description:**

Reflective Practice for Lived Experts & Support Staff

CIP contracted with Dr. Gina Veloni to meet twice monthly with CIP staff supporting the Equity and Engagement co-design team, and once monthly with the co-design team. Reflective practice sessions will be used to support well-being for the co-design team and staff partnering with and supporting LEE. Information shared in reflective practice that adds value (without breaking confidentiality) will be used to inform the framework.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

- **2a. Project Description:**

Developing a Lived Expert Network

The Equity and Engagement co-design team started working with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to develop a Lived Expert Network that will launch in August of 2024. The Lived Expert Network will operate like a “open office hours” where other dependency courts developing a Lived Expert program can “drop in” to the session to get

advice and share their experiences.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Other

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

• **2a. Project Description:**

Language Glossaries

In partnership with DCYF, CIP staff is creating two language glossaries. The first phase is an acronym glossary that contains definitions of commonly used acronyms in child welfare courts. System partners will have the ability to submit an acronym for addition to the glossary using a QR code. All acronyms will be gathered into one glossary where they will be defined using plain language and made available for the public to access. The second glossary will be a “Use this, Not That” format designed to reduce the use of harmful language in dependency by supplying a strength-based alternative. The “Use This, Not That” glossary will also define complex terms and offer plain language alternatives. The goal of both glossaries is to make our dependency child welfare system more accessible and inclusive.

2b. Project Sub-category:

Persons with Disabilities

Phase I. Identifying and Assessing Needs: No

Phase II. Develop theory of change: No

Phase III. Develop/select solution: No

Phase IV. Implementation: Yes

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment: No

Trainings

Trainings

- **Judicial Officers (Judges, Magistrates, Referees, etc.):** No
- Attorneys for Parents II:** No
- Attorneys for Children:** No
- Attorneys for the Agency:** No
- Attorneys for a Tribe:** No
- Non-Attorney Advocates (Non-Attorney GALs, CASA, Parent Partners, etc.):** No
- Non-Attorney Tribal Representatives (Tribal Agency Worker, Tribal ICWA Worker, etc.):** No
- Agency Staff (Caseworkers, Administrators, Data Analysts, etc.):** No
- Court Staff (Clerks, Court Administrators, etc.):** No
- Court Improvement Program Staff:** Yes
- Other:** Yes
- 1a. Professional Roles of Trainees Other:** Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts' Office of Court Innovations staff
- 1b. Define other unlisted audiences:** No
- 1d. How many persons attended the training?:** 0-25
- In-Person Training:** No
- Synchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learners gathered on Zoom to attend a training together):** Yes
- Asynchronous Virtual Training (e.g., learner works individually to complete an online module):** No
- Hybrid Training (a combination of both in-person and synchronous or asynchronous virtual training):** No
- Conference:** No
- Community of Practice:** No
- Other:** No
- 1g. What were the intended training outcomes of this training? Please answer concisely.:**

Introduction to the Equity and Engagement Framework and how to partner with Lived Experts to do system improvement work.

- Increased capacity of AOC staff to partner with people with lived experience in child welfare to engage in system improvement work.
- Statewide court improvement work will involve more LEEs.

Satisfaction Survey: No

Learning: No

Knowledge and Skill Aquisition Assessment: No

Behavior Change Evaluation: No

Outcome Evaluation: No

III. CIP Collaboration in Planning and Improvement

CIP Collaboration Overview

1. Please describe how the CIP was involved with the state's CFSP due June 30.

CIP staff were invited to participate in DCYF's CFSP meetings to prepare the report due on June 30, 2024. The CIP staff representative was able to attend seven of the eight total meetings. Overall, CIP staff appreciated being involved in the CFSP effort and learned a lot about DCYF's internal process. However, CIP felt that the presence of non-agency staff could be better utilized in these meetings, as there was a lack of explicit discussions of how external partners might contribute or collaborate on any of the CFSP projects. For example, Goal 2 focuses on enhancing child safety practice, yet there was no indication that the agency was even aware of the Safety Summit Project (Joint Project). None of the below projects/strategies were included in the CFSP. Goals primarily focused on improving internal agency capacity and strategies involving system collaboration were notably absent. The voices of those with lived experience in child welfare (parents and children) were largely missing from the group discussions.

2. Does the CSFP include any of the following

[No available information]

3. 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 has not been asked to participate in Washington's Title IV-E Eligibility Review.

CFSR / PIP Round 4 Participation

1. Regarding engaging the legal and judicial communities with a broad representation of perspectives in CFSR/PIP processes: what barriers do you foresee in engaging communities at an appropriate breadth and depth?

A primary barrier in engaging the community at the appropriate breadth and depth will be the limited capacity of CIP staff to absorb this work into their existing duties. The capacity of the legal and system partners in the community is also limited and it has historically been difficult to find people willing to volunteer their time and energy to assist in these types of time-intensive efforts.

In addition, CIP's experience collaborating with the agency on the required Joint Project in the last PIP has made us wary of committing significant time and resources to DCYF efforts without defined expectations and measures for accountability to follow through.

2. Regarding engaging the legal and judicial communities with a broad representation of perspectives in CFSR/PIP processes: what do you believe will facilitate engaging communities at an appropriate breadth and depth?

Recruiting court and legal partner volunteers to participate in the CFSR will be far more successful if DCYF starts the process timely and includes CIP as an active partner throughout the entire process.

In order for CIP to meaningfully engage with DCYF in Round 4 of the CFSR/PIP, the outstanding issues with the Joint Project from Round 3 would first need to be acknowledged and addressed.

3. Are there other leadership structures for legal and judicial communities and how can those facilitate the processes around the CFSR / PIP?

The Family Well-Being Community Collaborative (FWCC) is a multi-disciplinary workgroup of the Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care (CCFC) with the goal of facilitating cross- system collaboration to keep families safely together and to reduce inequities within the child welfare court system. The FWCC has over 80 members and is co-chaired by CIP and DCYF, which would make it an appropriate forum for facilitating the process around CFSR/PIP.

4. How will legal community involvement in the CSFR / PIP be managed? e.g. CIP is the lead, via the Multi-Disciplinary Task force, a sub-committee established by the child welfare agency, etc.

DCYF has not explicitly discussed this with us yet, however it is anticipated that CIP will assist DCYF in coordinating legal and judicial community involvement in the CFSR/PIP via the Family Well-Being Community Collaborative (FWCC). Intentional effort will be required to tailor the information so that it is focused on areas where court involvement in the CFSR would be relevant and worthwhile for everyone involved.

5. What court, judicial, or attorney data could be integrated into the CFSR / PIP process?

Data found in the public Dependency Dashboard and in the secured interactive Dependency Timeliness Report (iDTR) could be integrated into the CFSR/PIP process. These sources would provide data related to timeliness measure, racial disproportionality, permanency outcomes, and county data for broad comparisons. CIP could also supply data and findings from the Shelter Care Hearing Observation Study such as average length of hearings, parties present, topics discussed, judicial decisions, and the breadth and depth of courtroom discussions. FWCC meetings could include joint review and discussion CFSR progress, including the monitoring and reviewing of goals, identification of opportunities for interventions, and planning for legal and judicial involvement.

6. How might participation vary in stages of the process?

CIP staff are able to participate on CFSR/PIP workgroups and can help convene groups of legal and system partners (i.e., FWCC) to monitor and review progress. We are also able to supply data from multiple sources and assist DCYF in identifying other sources of needed data. CIP is able to help connect DCYF to different system partners for the purpose of requesting participation in the CFSR process. CIP's ability to meaningfully engage in case file reviews will be limited due to limited capacity of CIP staff, courts, and system partners, along with the significant time associated with doing these reviews.

7. What feedback loops will be needed to keep communities informed?

Regular reporting at FWCC meetings on the progress made towards CFSR goals and mechanism for continuously collecting feedback from legal and judicial partners. This endeavor would greatly benefit from DCYF leadership and Title IV-E administrative staff being actively involved and invested in this feedback loop.

8. What supports do you need from the Children's Bureau or Capacity Building Centers for participating in the CFSR / PIP?

Support in addressing the outstanding issues in collaboration from Round 3 with agency leadership (i.e., Joint Project). As previously noted, this accountability and rebuilding of trust is needed before CIP can be truly invested in collaborating with the agency in Round 4 beyond the minimum expectations for state court participation.

Having the facilitation support of CBCC and CB in the PIP development process, including facilitation of meetings to discuss collaboration, was very successful in Washington's last round of the CFSR/PIP.

Collaboration with the Child Welfare Agency

1. 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 [Commission on Children in Foster Care \(CCFC\)](#) is co-chaired by a Supreme Court Justice and the Secretary of DCYF and staffed by CIP. The purpose of the CCFC is to promote communication, collaboration, and cooperation among court, child welfare, legislative, tribal, and community stakeholders. The CCFC oversees and supports several workgroups focused on improving the child welfare and dependency court systems to ensure justice and better outcomes for the children and families they serve. The group has worked collaboratively to develop processes and share information on topics such as: addressing racism and bias in the system, family time, delaying unnecessary termination of parental rights trials and the mental health needs of children and youth. The CCFC also convenes the Family Well-Being Community Collaborative workgroup (see below).

The [Family Well-Being Community Collaborative \(FWCC\)](#) serves as the required CIP cross-system collaboration with the state child welfare agency, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). Co-chaired by the CIP Co-Director and the DCYF Assistant Secretary for Partnership, Prevention and Services, the FWCC's mission is to "collaborate to keep families safely together and supported in their communities and to radically reduce inequities within the child welfare court system." The collaborative meets eight times a year, where they engage in cross-system learning and receive reports from action-oriented workgroups. The Workgroups are facilitated by CIP staff and include system members with current (often front-line) experience related to the issue they are designed to address. Workgroups focus on a discrete topic, guided by a clear workplan and agreed upon indicators of progress. When a workgroup successfully completes its charge, it is disbanded. Each workgroup has a publicly accessible Hub that include houses all of the notes, resources and tools created by the workgroup.

For the past two and a half years, the FWCC has been especially effective at bringing court system partners together to prepare for and implement a major legislative change to the filing and shelter care phases of dependency cases. The Keeping Families Together Act was passed by the Washington State Legislature in 2021 and went into effect on July 1, 2023. The FWCC created four interdisciplinary workgroups and utilized the partnership to identify all of the changes that the new law would make to legal standards, judicial inquiries and decisions, findings and orders, process and practice, and other considerations. The workgroups then set about creating trainings and tools to explain and prepare all system partners for the change in the law. The statutory crosswalks, multiple tools and tool kits (including a Harm of Removal map and interactive judicial decision-making guide), and on-demand training videos are kept updated and posted on the Family and Youth Justice Programs website here. CIP staff developed and co-presented cross-system Keeping Families Together trainings for each DCYF region in the state and provided training to dependency judicial officers and appellate court judicial officers. This considerable collaborative effort to build common understanding of and preparation for the new law strengthened training

partnerships and a willingness to work together on system reform efforts. The CIP, Washington State Center for Court Research, and the Family Juvenile Court Improvement Program are currently partnering to conduct courtroom observations. The goal is to assess the effectiveness of the FWCC's training and technical assistance, and to identify additional training needs and opportunities to improve practice.

The [Family and Juvenile Court Improvement Program \(FJCIP\)](#) was created in 2008 to help local dependency courts assess and improve how they operate and serve families by providing a dedicated coordinator to work with judicial officers, DCYF and court partners. The FJCIP Statewide team is instrumental in connecting local court staff (e.g., FJCIP Coordinators; Court Administrators) with relevant local and regional DCYF staff (e.g., Area Administrators; CQI/QA Specialists) to move court improvement work forward.

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

Lack of Data: CIP continued to experience a lack of critical child welfare data, particularly data related to family time visitation and services, making it difficult to identify improvement opportunities and assess the impact of policy and practice changes. DCYF has data system challenges that prevent it from collecting and sharing data related to the provision of family time. While we are able to collect data on removal and return metrics, there is no mechanism in place to collect information on what services are being put in place or to assess the impacts of individual prevention services on outcomes for families.

Availability of Prevention Services: Creating immediate safety for a child through prevention services requires those services to be available at that time. This has raised significant concerns from around the state regarding the lack of availability and accessibility of prevention services to families, especially in rural areas. There has also been noted concern over what efforts DCYF is making to recruit and retain service providers of color. DCYF was successful in securing multiple funding packages in the 2023 state legislative session to which included funding to increase the accessibility of prevention services. While a positive step forward, this is not a continuing source of funding, and the amount is entirely insufficient to address the need for sustainable prevention services around the state. Washington State could be drawing funding from Title IV-E to reimburse for the costs of prevention services for families at risk of out-of-home placement. However, DCYF continues to assert that they lack the data reporting capacities that would allow Washington to access reimbursement through the Title IV-E Prevention Service Program, which is resulting in our state's continued inability to access this federal sustainable funding source. It is our understanding that DCYF intends to implement CCWIS which provide the reporting mechanisms needed to draw down FFPSA funds, but that the new software will not be deployed for at least another 5 years.

CIP Capacity: Another barrier is the limited amount of CIP staff resources available to reach out and work with all local jurisdictions on improving their dependency system. CIP staff frequently get stretched too thin and have difficulty with follow up. Also, staffing costs needed to support the breadth of work performed by the CIP Team leaves few resources to support local projects and travel. Our hope is that CIP funding can be increased in the President's budget to provide additional resources necessary to provide more support at the local level, which should improve practice.

3. Regarding training needs across the child welfare system, what is your process to work with the agency to consider how to maximize the impact of complementary resources and ensure there is no undue

duplication of efforts?

The FWCC provides a space where CIP and DCYF can collectively collaborate together on training and cross-system improvement efforts. DCYF participated heavily in the creation of the tools, resources, and trainings designed to support courts in implementing the Keeping Families Together Act. DCYF Program Managers have been invaluable partners in developing and delivering training on child safety, harm of removal, safety planning, prevention services, and out-of-home placement. CIP staff and DCYF Program Managers periodically meet to discuss cross-agency projects, initiatives, policy changes, and opportunities for information and resource sharing. The positive working relationship between CIP and DCYF has been instrumental in advancing the work of CIP, especially in regard to enhancing safety practice.

4. 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?

Yes

4a. Please provide a brief description of what is provided and how.

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. The Office of Public Defense (OPD) and Child Advocates (voluntary guardian ad litem) have training included in the Title IV-E Training Plan and DCYF contracts with OPD and Washington Association of Child Advocate Programs to reimburse training expenses. Several judicial officers attend the annual child advocate training conference.

The Washington CIP is not currently included in DCYF's Title IV-E Training Plan and does not receive IV-E funding for training activities. CIP explored this option with DCYF over the past year. CIP estimated the cost of 47 training opportunities anticipated for the next year at a total of \$178,200. However, given how Title IV-E reimbursement is calculated and Washington's 30% penetration rate, the maximum amount that would be reimbursed for these trainings was about \$40,000 (22%). Given this low rate of return and the staff capacity that would be required to track reimbursement, CIP determined it would be fiscally irresponsible to pursue Title IV-E reimbursement for training projects.

5. 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 or currently receiving reimbursement?

Yes

5a. Please describe any plans, approaches, or models that are under consideration or underway.

The state offices managing parent representation and child representation are already able to access Title IV-E for legal representation.

IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment

Current Practices

1. Has your ability to integrate CQI into practice changed this year? If yes, what do you attribute the change to?

Yes. In partnering with the AOC's Washington State Center on Court Research (WSCCR), we have increased our ability to utilize CQI in our projects. Using state funds, we have integrated two researchers into our dependency court improvement projects. These researchers provide training and technical assistance to courts and workgroups in all phases of the change management process. Dr. Arina Gertseva, the deployed researcher working with the Family and Juvenile Court Improvement Program (FJCIP), has developed training modules for the local FJCIP Coordinators to help them understand and utilize data to assess needs, develop a theory of change and assess the effectiveness of a program. She has also developed and tested a court observation tool in collaboration with graduate students, greatly increasing our ability to effectively evaluate the impact of legislative changes and the CIP's training and technical assistance. April Kraft-Duley, the deployed researcher working with the Collaborative Courts has led Family Treatment Court and Early Childhood Courts through a drop-off analysis process to help them identify opportunities to increase the number and diversity of families involved in team-based, therapeutic court programs. As courts and system partners are increasingly exposed to change management ideas and processes, our efforts to apply CQI principles to CIP projects are met with greater understanding and enthusiasm. Additionally, CIP staff benefit from the knowledge and support these researchers bring to their work.

2. Which of the following CBCC Events / Services have you or your staff engaged in this past year?

CIPShare 2.0, Constituency Group - Data / Evaluation, Constituency Group - Hearing Quality, Constituency Group - ICWA, Constituency Group - Legal Representation, Constituency Group - New Directors, Constituency Group - Regional CIP Calls, CIP All Call - What % of All Calls does your CIP Participate in?

2c. CIP All Call - What % of All Calls does your CIP Participate in?

100

3. Do you have any of the following resources to help you integrate CQI into practice?

CIP staff with data expertise, CIP staff with evaluation expertise, CIP staff with CQI expertise, a University partnership, a statewide court case management system, Other resources

3a. Other resources

CIP staff with Liberating Structures expertise; partnership with Washington

State Center for Court Research; ongoing coaching with National Center for State Courts

4. Do you record your child welfare court hearings?

Yes

4a. What format are the recordings?

Audio

5. Can you remotely access your court case management system? For example, Odyssey systems often allow remote access to case files

No

6. 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.

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

CIP continues to hold a license for access to the Articulate360 suite of applications designed for e-learning course creation and instructional design. This new technology has enabled us to greatly expand our virtual learning capacity through creation of e-courses, training HUBS, information libraries, interactive graphics, and the iDecide tool.

8. Do any of these systems include an electronic filing system?

No

9. Please describe any continuity planning the CIP has led or has been involved in if not noted already.

When CIP met with court staff, judicial officers, and system professionals in each county to allocate CIP pandemic funding, we discovered a need to help prepare court participants to attend virtual and hybrid hearings. CIP gathered a team of cross system partners, including parents with lived experience, to determine the best way to inform court participants. The result of that work was two short, animated videos, created by Public Knowledge, to help participants be more successful attending their dependency hearings. The first video called, "Attending Your Dependency Hearing," gives participants tips and tricks for attending a successful dependency hearing. The second video called, "Connecting to Your Dependency Hearing," provides technical support for court participants attending a hearing by Zoom or WebEx platforms. CIP has provided an initial "starter kit" to each dependency court and DCYF office in Washington that includes copies of a flyer, business card, and brochure to share in their lobbies and court spaces. Similar starter kits were created for the Office of Public Defense, the Office of Civil Legal Aid, and the Parents for Parents program. Videos have been translated and dubbed into Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Somali, and Vietnamese. All versions of the videos are available online:

<https://www.wacita.org/videos/>

10. Considering 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. CIP recognized the value and benefits of utilizing hearing quality evaluations in conjunction with file reviews and outcome data to capture a holistic research perspective. We continue to work towards developing internal capacity to collect, code and analyze hearing quality data.

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

- Early engagement of families child welfare courts
- Tribal collaboration
- Responding to child and parent fatalities; high profile cases
- "Shadow" foster care system (how to identify and quantify the problem and share potential solutions).

V. Review and Submit

Additional supporting documents

[No available information]

DEFINITIONS

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 CQI Phases

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.

Paperwork Reduction Act

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control Number. The OMB control number for this collection is 0970-0307 and it expires 11/30/2022. The estimated time to complete the CIP Complete Application is 92 hours.