

State Court Improvement Program 2023 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 (Continuous Quality Improvement) 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 is primarily focused on assessing efforts undertaken to date while the strategic plan maps out efforts going forward. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

I. CQI Analyses of Required Projects

It is ok to cut and paste responses from last year, updating according to where you currently are in the process, and, if you do so, highlight text to show anything that is new. Complete the descriptions for CQI stages you have progressed through or are in. Though some upcoming stages will be inapplicable, consider whether your team may have preliminary thoughts that are relevant to those questions. Please also indicate if you need assistance from your federal or Capacity Building partners in a particular phase.

Joint Project with the Child Welfare Agency

Project title: Safety Summit Project

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 were held in five Washington counties in 2021 (King County, Kitsap County, Pierce County, Chelan County, and Mason County), and two counties in 2022 (Spokane County and Grays Harbor County).

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. The training included joint presentation by Rob Wyman, Judicial Education Consultant with Casey Family Programs and the DCYF Safety Program Manager. 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](#). The findings of the evaluation were closely reviewed and discussed by the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee. This multidisciplinary group utilized the findings to identify areas of positive practice change and opportunities for enhanced efforts. Specifically, findings will be used to inform revisions to the current Safety Summit training curriculum (Safety Summit 1.0) and creation of new supplemental cross-system trainings that support system practice around safety planning and conditions for return (Safety Summit 2.0).

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.

Approximate date that the project began:

The official start date, according to the Program Improvement Plan was July 1, 2020, for the developing the safety crosswalk that is the underpinning for the summits. Planning for the Safety Summit Project started approximately June 1, 2021.

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

Phase V: Evaluate and Apply Findings

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.”

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;

SO THAT effective safety plans and case plans are created;

SO THAT a child remains in the home;

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.

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, Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA), the Alliance, and other identified stakeholders to:

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

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

- Providing information on updates to safety training (as a result of 4.2.1) and schedule of available trainings at the annual dependency training for judicial officers and FJCIP Coordinators
- Providing training to judges, multi-disciplinary partners, AGOs, and DCYF staff in FJCIP jurisdictions that have not completed the training, that identify safety principles that will be discussed at every Court hearing.
- Providing supportive resources to those who have already been trained per any changes or adjustments to the training curriculum.

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

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

CIP created a state-level team to guide the development and delivery of a cross-system safety framework training program that would lead to individual court systems being able to make real practice change in safety practices. 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.

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.

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](#)), and two counties in 2022 ([Spokane County](#) and [Grays Harbor 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., printing/laminating system resource tools for Kitsap County; facilitating post-summit strategic planning meetings).

| 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 |

How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V). *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project? Please note if you are using any JCAMP measures in this effort.¹*

¹ <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/courts/reform/jcamp/>

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 changed 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).

The pre-post hearing quality evaluation study has been completed for the Safety Summit Project and the results have been shared with courts and system partners. The findings of the evaluation are being utilized by the Safety Summit Advisory Committee to revise the training curriculum and create new learning opportunities for delivery to court sites in 2024.

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

The Grays Harbor County Safety Summit was originally scheduled for December 10, 2021.

On December 8, the State Team was notified by DCYF Headquarters of a critical incident related to a missing child who had previously been in

foster care. The team decided to reschedule the event to May 6, 2022. As a result of this delay, Grays Harbor County was not included in the data collection for the hearing quality evaluation component of this project.

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?

The CIP would benefit from continued assistance from CBCC and Dr. Alicia Summers in building our state capacity to conduct hearing quality evaluations.

Hearing Quality Project

Project title: Washington Safety Decision-Making Hearing Quality Evaluation

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

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

In 2020, Dr. Alicia Summers and the national Capacity Building Center for Courts conducted baseline hearing quality evaluations in all seven Safety Summit sites. Findings overall indicated that court systems, even those that demonstrated understanding of the safety framework, were not utilizing the safety framework in practice. This was indicated by a general lack of safety-related discussion in hearings, including ongoing assessments of safety, safety-related justifications for supervised family time, and articulating how the case plan can improve safety for the family (see [2021 Washington Baseline Safety Hearing Quality Report](#)).

The next phase of the hearing quality project involved partnering with Dr. Alicia Summers through CBCC to conduct a second round of safety practice hearing quality evaluations for the counties that held Safety Summits in 2021. Hearing data was collected January through March of 2022. Four of the five 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](#), published June 2022. Findings will be used to inform future training and technical assistance efforts aimed at improving safety practices within local court jurisdictions.

Approximate date that the project began:

Collection of post-training hearing data began in January 2022.

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

Phase V: Evaluate and Apply Findings

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

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

In its current Program Improvement Plan, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) identifies the following root cause in Goal Area 4: Permanency:

“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.”

DCYF collaborated with the courts and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of PIP strategies to address this need.

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

Create a shared understanding and language of safety:

SO THAT sufficient information is collected;

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

SO THAT effective safety plans and case plans are created;

SO THAT a child remains in the home,

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

SO THAT 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.

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

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

- Baseline assessment of current court practice, specific to discussions of safety and family time.

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

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

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

The 2022 Washington Safety Decision-Making Hearing Quality Evaluation Report was shared with courts and system partners, and published to the Family & Youth Justice Programs website in July 2022. A [Top Findings Infographic](#) was released in September 2022 and summarizes some of the most significant findings from the evaluation. The Safety Summit Advisory Committee has had continuous conversations over the last year regarding the results of the evaluation. Discussions have resulted in a general consensus that revisions of the current curriculum and creation of new learning opportunities will be needed to enhance the deficit areas identified in the evaluation (i.e., safety planning and conditions for return). This is in addition to the tangential need to revise the curriculum to accurately reflect the significant changes in safety standards and practices resultant from the 2021 passage of the Keeping Families Together Act, which will go into effect on July 1, 2023. The Safety Summit Advisory Committee has started this work and anticipates being able to offer the revised curriculum to sites in early 2024.

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.

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

CIP assisted CBCC in gathering data for the second round of the hearing quality evaluation. Dr. Summers completed the evaluation and provided the report on June 20, 2022. The CIP has disseminated the evaluation results to courts and system partners, which includes the cross-system planning teams at each Safety Summit site. The CIP also created an infographic to summarize the most significant findings of the evaluation. Information about the project is publicly available on the Family & Youth Justice Programs webpage. The Safety Summit Advisory Team has had numerous conversations about the results of the evaluation and how the findings can best inform the work moving forward. The team is currently working to revise the Safety Summit training curriculum to better meet the needs of court communities. The team will also be working to create additional learning opportunities to improve practice in safety planning and conditions for return, which were both indicated in the evaluation as areas that would benefit from enhanced efforts.

How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V). *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project? Please note if you are using any JCAMP measures in this effort.*

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 changed 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).

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

In order to have the final report done in time to submit for the final PIP report deadline, hearing data collection for sites needed to occur by the end of March 2022, at the latest. This resulted in the two sites that held their summits in 2022 (Spokane County and Grays Harbor County) not being included in the data collection. It also meant that the sites that held their summits in December of 2021 (Chelan County and Mason County) had less than one-month to implement their strategic plans by the time data collection started.

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

The CIP would benefit from continued assistance from CBCC and Dr. Alicia Summers in building our state capacity to conduct hearing quality evaluations.

Quality Legal Representation Project

Project title: Practice standards and training guidelines for youth legal representation

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

This project involved convening a diverse workgroup to review, develop, and update the standards of practice, caseload limits and training guides for the Children’s Representation Program. This team reviewed the short- and long-term impacts of standards-based legal representation on case outcomes for children eight and older and available research and best practices. This information was used to develop recommendations to the legislature the appropriate model of representation of children under the age of eight, including timing of appointment, training and oversight needs, and other considerations.

Approximate date that the project began: July 2021

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

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

Washington State is one of a few states in the nation that does not provide legal representation for all dependent children and youth. Under current Washington law, the court must appoint an attorney for a child in a dependency proceeding six months after granting a petition to terminate the parent and child relationship when there is no remaining parent with parental rights, if a young person is petitioning for their parent’s parental rights to be reinstated, or if a youth is in extended foster care. The court may appoint an attorney to represent the child’s position at any point in a dependency action on its own initiative, or upon the request of a parent, child, guardian ad litem, caregiver, or DCYF.

The system that Washington has operated under since 2014 has been a bifurcated one, where most of the attorneys who are representing children and youth are not required to engage in any mandatory training, have no caseload limits, do not need to practice consistent with practice standards, and are often not sufficiently compensated for their work. In 2014, RCW 13.34.100(6) was amended to provide for the mandatory representation of children and youth whose parents’ parental rights had been terminated and who had not reached permanency after six months. The legislature appropriated money to be distributed by the Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA). Payment for attorney services under the statute was

predicated on compliance with the practice standards that were adopted by the Washington State Supreme Court in 2010. These practice standards require training, caseload limits, and lay out the best practices when representing children and youth in dependency proceedings.

2SSHB 1219, which was passed in the 2021 legislative session, provides mandatory appointment of counsel for children and youth in dependency proceedings for:

- Children age 7 and younger, upon the filing of a termination petition;
- Children and youth age 8 through 17 when a new dependency petition is filed, with mandatory appointment made at or before the commencement of the shelter care hearing; and
- Any pending or open dependency case where the child is unrepresented and is entitled to the appointment of an attorney, mandatory appointment occurs at or before the next hearing.

Statewide implementation will occur in phases starting July 1, 2022, with full implementation by January 2027. Implementation will be prioritized in counties that have significant racial disproportionality in the number of dependent children (as compared to the general population) and in counties that currently do not appoint counsel for children.

While this legislation makes great strides towards legal representation for children in Washington State, there is still a need for children younger than eight-years-old to receive legal representation.

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

Update children's legal representation standards informed by best practice models, rigorous data analysis, race and other equity considerations:

SO THAT all children's attorneys are trained and held to those standards;

SO THAT quality legal representation is provided for all children in dependency and termination cases, regardless of age;

SO THAT all children's legal rights and stated interests are effectively advocated for in the court system;

SO THAT fewer children are disproportionately impacted by the system and avoid the foster care to prison pipeline;

SO THAT dependency case outcomes improve for children who experience the child welfare system, including increased family reunification rates, fewer placement changes, educational stability, statutorily required educational advocacy, and reduced time in out-of-home care.

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

CIP supports the Office of Civil Legal Aid in facilitating the Children's Representation Workgroup to review, develop, and update the standards of practice, caseload limits and training guides for the Children's Representation Program. The updated standards of practice, caseload sizes and training guides will be utilized by the Children's Representation Program as they initiate the phased implementation of child representation in counties across the state, as mandated by 2SHB 1219, codified at RCW 13.34.212. CIP will distribute the updated standards to courts and collaborate

with OCLA to develop educational content for judicial officers and court partners in the CRP implementation communities. Training and resources for judicial officers will focus on understanding the key goals and features of child and youth representation in Washington, as well as ways that judicial officers can work with children, youth and their attorneys to ensure their voices are heard in court.

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

CIP's Jurist in Residence, Judge Helen Halpert (ret.), was a co-presenter in a virtual webinar entitled Ethics of Submitting a Report to Court in Dependency Proceedings. The focus of this training was meaningful representation and inclusion of youth voices in the dependency process. The March 2022 training was sponsored by the Washington Defender Association (WDA).

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

Under the auspices of the Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care, CIP partnered with The Office of Civil Legal Aid to develop a workgroup co-chaired by the former director of OCLA's Child Representation Program and a young person with lived expertise in the child welfare court system. Members of the workgroup include: child and youth attorneys, tribal youth attorneys, judicial officers, a legal ethics expert, University of Washington School of Law child advocacy professor, and a representative from the National Association of Counsel for Children. The Child Representation Standards Workgroup was divided into subgroups charged with reviewing and updating the current standards of practice, caseload limits, and training guides for child and youth attorneys in Washington.

The draft report on best practice for representation of children under eight was presented to the Commission on Children in Foster Care on June 17, 2022, for comment and feedback. **The report, Representation for Children Under 8 Years Old was finalized in the summer of 2022. The workgroup continued to meet to reach consensus on the updated representation standards through August, and the [Washington State Children's Representation Practice, Caseload and Training Standards](#) were finalized in September 2022. The Commission submitted the updated standards and the report on representation of children under eight to the Legislature on November 18, 2022.**

How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V). *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project? Please note if you are using any JCAMP measures in this effort.*

In November of 2021, the Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR) published a comparative study of the impact of early representation of children in dependency cases. The 2021 Evaluation of the Washington State Dependent Child Legal Representation Program compared time to permanency, relevant child welfare indicators and outcomes, and potential cost savings from the appointment of attorneys for children at the shelter care hearing in "treatment counties" with those for children in "control counties" who are not represented.

The report showed that children and youth with mandatory legal representation:

- are more likely to experience reunification;
- have increased placement stability;
- enjoy greater stability and consistency in their education while in care and;
- produce cost savings to the state.

Following a positive cost-benefit analysis from the DCLR study, the state legislature endorsed the program by funding its gradual expansion to all courts in the state. The legislation provided for ongoing performance reporting and feedback to the implementing sites and recurring evaluation of the program's impact. WSCCR recruited and conducted interviews for the funded 0.5 FTE researcher position in late Spring 2023. The researcher is expected to start in July 2023, with their initial tasks identified as reviewing the data collection plan used in the initial study, and establishing and seeking guidance about research questions and methods from a stakeholder group.

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

Presentation to the legislature of the report on best practices regarding representation of children under the age of eight did not occur on the due date of March 31, 2022, because a team from the University of Washington School of Law was still conducting research and interviews with child attorneys across the state and the nation. The final draft of the standards was delayed due to disagreement among the workgroup on appropriate caseload size for youth attorneys. The workgroup decided to hold additional meetings to attempt to work through differences. The group was eventually able to reach consensus and both reports were submitted to the legislature in November 2022.

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

None identified at this time.

II. Projects, Activities, and Training

For questions 1-13, provide a *concise* description of work completed or underway to date in FY 2023 (October 2022-June 2023) in the topical subcategories below where applicable.

1. Training Overall

Did you have any significant training efforts not related to a particular project (those are now integrated under 2 to 14 below)? If yes, please describe.

On average, how many training events do you hold per year? On average, we typically host 15 to 20 training events per year. This year, we participated in many more, due to the upcoming implementation of the Keeping Families Together Act (30 additional trainings) and the rollout of the updated Dependency Dashboard's race and ethnicity components (15 additional trainings/presentations).

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. This year, we trained over 2,700 people in Washington.

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

(1)² IN GENERAL.— In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a highest State court ... *shall provide for the training of judges, attorneys, and other legal personnel in child welfare cases on Federal child welfare policies and payment limitations with respect to children in foster care who are placed in settings that are not a foster family home...*—

Have you been involved in planning with the agency on implementing Family First? Yes No

If yes, please describe how the CIP has been involved.

The CIP Director and the Assistant Secretary for Prevention and Client Services have been in communication regarding FFPSA implementation and have included FFPSA in the work plan for the CIP multidisciplinary task force, the Family Well-Being Community Collaborative. Previously, Washington State House Bill 1900, regarding FFPSA, included changes to statutes regarding the court's oversight of quality residential treatment program (QRTP). Implementation also included changes in pattern court forms for dependency hearings.

Have you developed/been developing your Family First judicial training plan? Yes No

If yes, please describe what you have done.

Information on the legal requirements of FFPSA was included in module one of the Dependency 101 for Judicial Officers online course. Previously, to help courts implement the QRTP requirements, the CIP, in partnership with DCYF, the AG's Office, and OCLA, recorded a 35 minute training webinar that covers the law, DCYF's process for assessing and treating youth, and the [new court forms](#) and procedures.

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

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

2. Data Projects.

Data projects include any work with JCAMP,³ administrative data sets (e.g, AFCARS, CCWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| WA Dependency Data Share Efforts - Child data is extracted from the DCYF FAMLINK data system. This data is then used to match back to WA Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) case file data. | Agency Data Sharing Efforts | Evaluation/Assessment |
| WA Dependency Data Dashboards/Reports - A public facing Washington State Dependency Timeliness Dashboard was created in November 2017 using Tableau software. In early 2023, an update to the dashboard was released to include the display of county-level information for dependency filings, population-based rates and comparison, and measure by race and ethnicity. Since this upgrade, there have been more than 8,000 new hits on the site. | Data dashboards | Evaluation/Assessment |
| 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. | Fostering Court Improvement data projects | Implementation |
| The FWCC's Data and Evaluation Workgroup created a sustainable plan for identifying, collecting, tracking, and evaluating system process and outcomes associated with HB 1227. | Fostering Court Improvement data projects | Implementation |

³ <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/courts/reform/jcamp/>

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| CIP staff has met with DCYF CCWIS Implementation Manager and CCWIS IT team to discuss potential collaborative pathways and timeline of events moving forward. The CCWIS IT team has been connected with the IT team at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). CIP has provided both IT teams with demonstrations of the Dependency Dashboard to provide a better understanding of data tools/products already being produced and available. | Use of AFCARS or CCWIS data | Identifying/Assessing Needs |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|

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

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

Reports are used to assist in determining which jurisdictions may need 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. Reports are also used to assess the impact of the pandemic on court operations.

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Judicial officers Court Staff System Partners | 20 | Ongoing virtual demonstrations on how to access and utilize the online Dependency Dashboard (“Dash”). | Increased capacity of local courts to use the “Dash” in system improvement efforts, especially in regards to racial equity. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Judicial officers Court Staff | 18-20 | 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. | <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A |

3. Legal Representation.

Legal representation projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of legal representation for parents, children and youth, the agency, or others. List projects here if you have any in addition to the required project.

Do you have (an additional) legal representation project/activity? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Attorney Academy on Reasonable & Active Efforts The CIP partnered with the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) to bring a Reasonable and Active Efforts Attorney Academy to Washington twice in 2023 (March and June). This highly interactive, virtual training was designed to help attorneys practicing in the Washington child welfare system gain the knowledge and skills necessary to make substantive reasonable and active efforts arguments and engage in targeted out-of-court and in-court advocacy. | Multi-Disciplinary Representation | Selecting Solution |
| | Choose an item. | Choose an item. |
| | Choose an item. | Choose an item. |

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | State Attorneys, Parent Attorneys, Youth Attorneys, Attorneys for CASA, Tribal Attorneys | March Academy: 32 June Academy: 26 | 1.5-day practice-based virtual training | Ensure children, parents, and families receive appropriate, tailored services or interventions to avoid unnecessary removals, reunify children with their families, and improve time to permanency. Ensure Native children and families are identified and provided culturally appropriate services that meet Active Efforts standards. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

4. Hearing Quality

Hearing quality projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of child welfare hearings, including court observation/assessment projects, process improvements, specialty/pilot court projects, projects related to court orders or title IV-E determinations, mediation, or appeals. List projects here if you have any in addition to the required project.

Do you have (an additional) hearing quality project/activity? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| WA Reasonable & Active Efforts Academy Hearing Quality Evaluation | Court Observation/Assessment | Selecting Solution |

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------|
| <p>In 2022 CIP partnered with the CBCC host the 2022 Washington Judicial Academy on Reasonable and Active Efforts. In 2023 CIP partnered with CBCC to bring the Attorney Academy on Reasonable and Active Efforts to Washington. CIP is partnering with CBCC and Dr. Alicia Summers to conduct a hearing quality evaluation study to determine the impacts of having both judicial officers and attorneys within local court systems receive training through a Reasonable & Active Efforts Academy on quality reasonable and active efforts inquiries and findings at appropriate points in a case.</p> | | |
| <p>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.</p> | Process Improvements | Implementation |
| <p>Jurist-in-Residence Program CIP implemented a Jurist-in-Residence (JIR) program in 2021. This program supports high quality judicial practice by making three experienced, retired dependency court judges available to mentor and train sitting judicial officers across the state. JIRs have expertise in effective judicial practice, court management, dependency system leadership, and related areas. They contribute to the development of trainings, materials, policies, and multi-system collaborative efforts.</p> | Process Improvements | Implementation |
| <p>Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook CIP worked with cross-system experts to update the following chapters of the Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parentage • Department of Children, Youth & Families | Process Improvements | Implementation |

| | | |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Influence of Federal Law on State Child Welfare Proceedings • State Legislation Affecting Child Welfare • Shelter Care Process | | |
| The FWCC's Meaningful Shelter Care Hearing Workgroup works to identify the components of a meaningful shelter care hearing and create tools for courts to utilize to improve their processes and practices. | Process Improvements | Selecting Solution |

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Judicial officers | 9 sessions; 10-24 attendees per session; | 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 included: termination settlement conferences, guardianship, domestic violence, case law updates, educational stability, housing assistance, hearing engagement, and using data in dependency cases. | Increase judicial capacity by providing a safe environment to learn about the best-practices being used in dependency courts and talk with peers about shared issues. | <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A |

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Judicial officers, Court Administrators, FJCIP Coordinators | 45 | The 2023 Dependency Judicial Training Academy was a 3-day virtual training held in May 2023. | Increase court capacity to lead court implementation of HB 1227 and support successful system implementation. Increase judicial officer knowledge and capacity around utilization of iDecide in court practice. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | State Attorneys | 117 | 45-minute virtual webinar introduction to iDecide and demonstrated use of the tool. Training was requested by the Attorney General's Office and was part of a HB 1227 training conference for agency attorneys. | Increase state attorney understanding of judicial decisions required by new law. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

5. Improving Timeliness of Hearings or Permanency Outcomes

Timeliness and permanency projects include any activities or projects meant to improve the timeliness of case processing or achievement of timely permanency. This could include general timeliness, focus on continuances or appeals, working on improvement in specific outcomes such as around reunification, guardianship, adoption or a focus on APPLA and older youth.

Do you have a timeliness or permanency project/activity? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| HB 1227 Court Readiness Toolkit | Other | Implementation |

| | | |
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| CIP staff was involved in the creation of the HB 1227 Court Readiness Toolkit which is a suite of tools and resources to help court systems prepare for HB 1227 implementation by providing tools that help court systems assess current system capacity and start building capacity in identified areas. The toolkit was utilized by all 10 Family & Juvenile Court Improvement Programs (FJCIP) courts to facilitate local system planning retreats, and has also been used by other court systems in planning efforts. | | |
| | Choose an item. | Choose an item. |
| | Choose an item. | Choose an item. |

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

6. Engagement & Participation of Parties.

Engagement and participation of parties includes any efforts centered around youth, parent, foster family or caregiver, or relative engagement, limited English proficiency, or other efforts to increase presence and engagement at the hearing.

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

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| COVID Court Recovery and Timeliness (COVID)- CIP met with court staff, judicial officers, and system professionals in each county to assess dependency court practice at the local level to inform allocation of CIP pandemic funding. As part of that work, CIP worked with local judicial officers and court partners to review their local timeliness data to identify delays and barriers | Other | Evaluation/Assessment |

| | | |
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| <p>to timely permanency. Resources and support were offered to courts to address system delays and barriers to timely case processing. In addition, CIP staff provided training to local court staff, judicial officers, and system professionals to access and utilize the online dependency dashboard. Including county specific data related to federal timeliness measures and race/ethnicity breakout. Individualized reports were created for participating counties, and a statewide report summarizing the findings is almost finalized. CIP plans to coordinate release of the state report with publication of best practice findings from the National Center for State Courts Hybrid Initiatives report, expected in July 2023.</p> | | |
| <p>COVID Court Recovery- Attending Dependency Hearings Videos (COVID)- 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.”</p> | Other | Evaluation/Assessment |
| <p>Spanish Translation of Attending Dependency Hearings Videos (COVID)- 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.</p> | Limited English Proficiency | Evaluation/Assessment |
| <p>Additional Translations of Attending Dependency Hearings Videos (COVID)- CIP is currently working with Public Knowledge to translate the videos into Russian, Chinese, Somali, and</p> | Limited English Proficiency | Implementation |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Vietnamese. Videos will be dubbed in the languages listed, and Spanish. | | |
| <p>Promotional Materials for Attending Dependency Hearings Videos (COVID)- 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. CIP mailed an initial “starter kit” to each dependency court in Washington that includes copies of the flyer, business card, and brochure to share in their lobbies and court spaces. Similar starter kits are being created for the Office of Public Defense, the Office of Civil Legal Aid, and the Parents for Parents program.</p> | Other | Implementation |
| <p>Parents for Parents (P4P) Materials (COVID)- CIP utilized COVID funds to purchase digital tablets to provide Parent Allies with a portable resource to help court involved parents fill out virtual forms, respond to emails remotely, and access information for families in court lobbies and while waiting for virtual hearings. Parents for Parents program manuals containing updated and new policies, processes and Dependency 101 information were printed and provided to each P4P site in Washington to support implementation and improvement of local P4P programs.</p> | Parent Engagement | Evaluation/Assessment |
| <p>Remote Operations Support for Clark and San Juan County Dependency Courts (COVID)- During the COVID Recovery interviews, two courts were identified as innovative in their approach to engaging parents and lived experts in virtual and hybrid hearings, and conducting remote operations. San Juan County, a rural, island county, created a community-based kiosk for virtual hearings in a local library. COVID funds were used to purchase technology to make this possible. In Clark County, COVID funding was utilized to purchase</p> | Parent Engagement | Evaluation/Assessment |

| | | |
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| network printers, scanners and a subscription for Dropbox to facilitate the exchange and sharing of electronic orders that were not previously possible. | | |
|--|--|--|

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|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

7. Well-Being

Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of children and youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, psychotropic medication, trauma, social network support, cultural connections, or other well-being related topics.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| The Science of Hope Community of Practice and email listserv- CIP started 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. | Other | Implementation |
| Hope Week 2023 and Hope Navigators- A subgroup of system leaders from the Hope Community of Practice and Dr. Chan Hellman meet twice a month with the goal of integrating hope science into child and family serving systems in Washington. The group is planning a week of Science of Hope workshops, trainings, and advisory | Other | Implementation |

| | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| sessions in September 2023, where organizational leaders, youth, and community providers will be trained in the basics of hope science. Staff in those systems will have an opportunity to take part in Hope Navigator training. Hope Navigators will then develop projects within their own organizations to infuse the science of hope into current practice and policies. | | |
| | Choose an item. | Choose an item. |

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Dependency court professionals, cross system partners, and community partners | 426 | The Science of Hope Webinar | Understand the science of HOPE and how hope centered organizations promote well-being for families, professionals, organizations, and systems. Additionally, participants will learn the language of the science of hope, describe how hope centered organizations create positive culture and consider how it can be infused it into child welfare. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

8. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)

These projects include any efforts related to improving equity in child welfare systems around race, sexual orientation or gender identity, national origin or immigration status, religion, persons with disabilities, geographic or otherwise.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on DEIA? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|--|---------------------------|
| <p>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, and recommendations for reflective practices to support lived experts and professionals.</p> | Other | Selecting Solution |
| <p>Contracting and Compensation for Lived Experts- CIP staff worked closely with the Administrative Office of the Courts to create a process for contracting with lived experts that compensates them fairly for their participation in workgroups, meetings, committees, and events. The contracting process is currently being updated to better align to the Community Compensation Guidelines established by Washington State Office of Equity.</p> | Other | Selecting Solution |
| | Choose an item. | Choose an item. |

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|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Other CIP and national court partners | Limited to 20 participants | NCSC Learning Collaborative | Create a learning collaborative for courts that want to be more intentional about meaningfully engaging lived experts in inclusive and accessible policy and planning reform | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

9. ICWA/Tribal collaboration

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

Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA or tribal collaboration? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Improving ICWA Practice - A cross-system team of state experts worked to update the WA Guide on Reasonable & Active Efforts in response to a number of significant appellate court decisions related to ICWA, reason to know, and active efforts, along with recent legislative and policy updates. | Hearing Quality | Evaluation/Assessment |
| | Choose an item. | Choose an item. |
| | Choose an item. | Choose an item. |

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Judicial officers, Attorneys, Court Staff, Child Advocates, Tribes, Community Providers | 50 | Partnered with the Attorney General’s Office to hold two ICWA Workshops at the in-person Children’s Justice Conference. | Increase knowledge and understanding of the potential impacts of the U.S. Supreme Court’s <i>Haaland v. Brackeen</i> decision. Enhance capacity of court systems to collaborate effectively with Tribes in response to <i>Haaland v. Brackeen</i> decision | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

10. Preventing Sex Trafficking

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

Do you have any projects/activities focused on preventing sex trafficking/runaways? Yes No

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

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

11. Normalcy/Reasonable and Prudent Parent

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

Do you have any projects/activities focused on normalcy/reasonable prudent parenting? Yes No

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

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

12. Prevention

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

Do you have any projects/activities focused on prevention? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| <p>Family & Youth Justice Programs created the Keeping Families Together Court Community Initiative to help prepare WA courts for the significant changes of the Keeping Families Together Act (1227) which was passed by the Washington State Legislature in 2021 and becomes effective July 1, 2023. This initiative is part of the work being done by the FWCC and aims to support court communities in implementing these significant changes to the front-end of cases. The changes required by this new law were intended to decrease the number of families who become involved in the dependency court system and reduce the number of child removal through strategic application of prevention services that create immediate safety for the child, thereby preventing the compounded trauma associated with forcible child separation and further maltreatment.</p> | <p>Secondary or tertiary prevention</p> | <p>Implementation</p> |
| <p>State Team Action Plan- CIP staff work with system partners to refine and take action on the State Team Action Plan to Ensure Racial Justice in Child Welfare. The State Team met twice monthly, starting in May 2021, to identify team priorities, track the work of other groups, including the Keeping Families Together coalition, and create workgroups to move efforts forward. Because much of the work initially identified in the original state team plan was accomplished in the HB 1227 Keeping Families Together legislation, the team is discussing the having a summit every other year to continue to identify child welfare equity projects to adopt as a system. If a summit is adopted, the Commission on Children in Foster Care will host and monitor the work of the summit.</p> | <p>Secondary or tertiary prevention</p> | <p>Develop Theory of Change</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| <p>FIRST Clinic – Supporting 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.</p> | <p>Secondary or tertiary prevention</p> | <p>Implementation</p> |
|--|---|-----------------------|

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Child welfare caseworkers, State attorneys, parent and youth attorneys, child advocates, community providers, and other system partners.</p> | <p>Over 2,500 people across the state through numerous different training events</p> | <p>CIP partnered with Department staff to hold six regional webinars which provides an introductory overview of HB 1227 and system implementation.</p> <p>CIP staff also partnered with the Department to organize a “Keeping Families Together Act Track” for the in-person annual Children’s Justice Conference, which consisted of a series of seven HB 1227 related workshops</p> <p>CIP held a three-day virtual academy in May 2023 for judicial officers and court administrators that focused on HB 1227.</p> | <p>Increase the knowledge and capacity of court systems to collaborate in the successful implementation of HB 1227 statutory changes.</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| | | | <p>Multiple virtual presentations to system partner agencies, including: Attorney General’s Office, the Department, Office of Public Defense, Office of Civil Legal Aid, and Foster Care Assessment Program.</p> <p>CIP staff partnered with Mason County Superior Court and local system partners to facilitate a half-day kickoff event for HB 1227 implementation.</p> | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|

13. Safety

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

Do you have any projects/activities focused on safety? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| 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. | Substantiation | Evaluation/Assessment |
| The FWCC’s Removal & Placement Decisions Workgroup completed a statutory analysis of the | Removal/Return | Implementation |

| | | |
|---|------------------------|----------------|
| inquiries, findings, and orders that courts will be required to make in child removal and placement decisions at the Shelter Care Hearing. | Placement | |
| The FWCC's Emergency Removal Decisions Workgroup completed a statutory analysis of how HB 1227 will impact the Ex Parte request for removal process. | Removal/Return | Implementation |
| The FWCC's Family Time Decisions Workgroup completed a statutory analysis of the legal standards, inquires, findings, and orders that courts must make in regards to family time visitation orders at the Shelter Care Hearing. | Family time/visitation | Implementation |

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

14. Other

Please list any projects you have that do not fit in any of the categories above.

Do you have any other projects/activities? Yes No

| Project Description | How would you categorize this project? | CQI Stage (if applicable) |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Facilitation Trainings CIP co-designed with the Dispute Resolution Center a facilitation training series for Early Childhood, Family Treatment, and Family and Juvenile Court Program Coordinators. In addition, the trainings series was also made available to Lived Experts and Parent for Parent Coordinators at no cost. The series trained coordinators and lived experts about facilitation skills related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Dynamics and Meeting Roles | Staff Capacity | Evaluation/Assessment |

| | | |
|---|--|-----------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator Skills and Meeting Activities • Types of Meeting, Process of a Meeting and Further Facilitator Skills • Cultural differences, Managing Power, and Difficult Behaviors | | |
| | | Choose an item. |
| | | Choose an item. |

| <i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i> | <i>Who was the target audience?</i> | <i>How many persons attended?</i> | <i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i> | <i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i> | <i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i> |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | CIP staff, Family Treatment and Early Childhood Court facilitators, Family and Juvenile Court Improvement facilitators, court staff who facilitate dependency meetings, and parent allies from the Parents 4 Parents program. | 40 | CIP is partnering with the Dispute Resolution Center to provide a series of 4 monthly trainings in facilitating effective meetings. | Develop skills to facilitate court staffing and policy meetings. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

15. Other Notable Activities

Are there any other activities the CIP has been engaged in not included above that you believe would be important to share with partners including those in the state, partner tribes, the Children’s Bureau, or the Capacity Building Center for Courts?

On February 7 - 8, 2023, CIP staff participated in a Liberating Structures Workshop in Portland, OR. This workshop was facilitated by the Capacity Building Center for Courts and co-designed with Region 10 CIP program. Attendees included CIP staff and court partners from Region 10. The workshop focused on learning how to facilitate group collaboration and communication using Liberating Structures. The workshop provided a

valuable opportunity for in-person connections, training and development. The knowledge and skills gained at this workshop were directly applied in much of the work CIP did in Spring 2023 to prepare courts for implementation of the Keeping Families Together Act. For example, a template Storyboard was created for court systems to plan local system retreats, which is part of the [HB 1227 Court Readiness Toolkit](#). Numerous Liberating Structures were utilized to deliver content in the 2023 Dependency Judicial Training Academy (held May 2023), including a variation on the “Open Spaces” structure which was titled, “Monsters Under the Bench”.

16. Materials

From any of the work described above, do you have any documents or other materials that feel would be helpful to share with the national CIP community? For example, research, innovative approaches, compelling outcome data, etc. Please link here or note and include in your submission.

- [iDecide](#)
- [Statutory Crosswalks](#)
- [HB 1227 Court Readiness Toolkit](#)
- [Family Well-Being Community Collaborative](#)
- [Safety Decisions Hearing Quality Evaluation Top Findings Infographic](#)
- [WA Guide on Reasonable & Active Efforts](#)
- [Washington State Dependency Timelines Dashboard](#)
- [“Getting Ready for Your Dependency Hearing” video series](#)
- [Judicial Community of Practice](#)
- [Jurist-in-Residence Program](#)
- [Hope Science](#)

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

A. Overall Legal System Structures

This section collects overall information about how legal systems are structured in your state. This information is designed to help partners understand the overall landscape of legal services. This will also be shared with the national CIP community to allow more targeted peer connections and technical assistance. We recognize that some responses may vary across your state, so we have set up items so that you can estimate percentages that would apply to the question at hand. **If you completed the survey that was sent out January 10th, 2023, and there have been no changes regarding questions 1 to 16 in this section, there is no need to answer these again at this time.**

1. What kinds of judicial officers preside over your child welfare cases? (check all that apply)

- Judges
- Magistrates
- Referees
- Commissioners
- Other:

2. Approximately how many judicial officers oversee child welfare cases in your state?

3. What percentage of your courts have a dedicated child welfare docket?

- 0%
- 1-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 75-99%
- 100%

Regarding child representation and advocacy in your state:

4. Thinking about the practice in all courts in your state, please estimate what percentage do the following:

| What percentage of the courts in your state... | 0% | 1-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76-99% | 100% |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Appoint an attorney for children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Appoint an attorney guardian ad litem for children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Appoint an attorney and a lay advocate for children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do not appoint legal representation/advocates for children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use in-house staffing (e.g., Children’s Law Center, Office of Child’s Representative, etc.) for child representation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use contract attorneys for child representation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have multi-disciplinary child representation offices or “specialty” offices | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. Do you have standards of practice for children’s attorneys/attorney GALs? Yes No

If yes, can you provide a link? _____

6. Where does the funding for child legal representation primarily come from in your state? _____

7. Regarding how children's attorneys are compensated in your state jurisdiction: (It’s okay to estimate your answer.)

| What percentage of children’s attorneys in your state are compensated... | 0% | 1-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76-99% | 100% |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| at an hourly rate, with no cap per case. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| at an hourly rate, with a per case cap. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| as a salary | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| at a flat rate per case | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| at a per hearing rate | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I don’t know | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8. Regarding any lay advocacy your jurisdiction provides to children or youth: (It’s okay to estimate your answer.):

| What percentage of courts in your state have... | 0% | 1-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76-99% | 100% |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| peer advocates for children or youth | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Court Appointed Special Advocates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| non-attorney guardians ad litem | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Regarding child welfare agency representation in your state:

9. How is your agency's legal representation organized in your jurisdiction?

- state department of human services (i.e., "agency") staff
- county department of human services (i.e., "agency") staff
- non-department of human services (i.e., "agency") state or county office (e.g. prosecutor's/district attorney's office)
- Other_____

10. How are agency attorneys compensated in your jurisdiction?

- salary
- hourly rate
- other _____

11. Do you have standards of practice (e.g., attorney competencies, workload standards, policy of practice, etc.) for agency attorneys? Yes No

a. If yes, can you provide a link? _____

12. Who does the agency attorney represent; that is, who is the client?

- the child welfare agency
- the "people" of the state
- the state itself
- Other, please specify _____

Regarding parent representation and advocacy in your state:

13. Do you have standards of practice for parents' attorneys? Yes No

a. If yes, can you provide a link? _____

14. What percentage of your courts have the following parent representation structure?

| What percentage of the courts in your state... | 0% | 1-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76-99% | 100% |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Use in-house staffing (e.g., Family Defense Center, Office of Respondent Parent’s Counsel, etc.) for parent representation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use contract attorneys for parent representation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have multi-disciplinary parent representation offices or “specialty” offices | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15. How are parents’ attorneys compensated in your jurisdiction? (It’s okay to estimate your answer.)

| What percentage of parents’ attorneys in your state are compensated... | 0% | 1-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76-99% | 100% |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| at an hourly rate, with no cap per case. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| at an hourly rate, with a per case cap. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| as a salary | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| at a flat rate per case | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| at a per hearing rate | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I don’t know | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

16. Does your state utilize Title IV-E funding to help pay for representation?

| Representation type | Yes, in a single jurisdiction | Yes, in multiple jurisdictions | Yes, statewide | No |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Parent | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

a. If yes, what are the administrative structures for accessing these IV-E funds? _____

17. Please describe how the CIP was involved with the state's CFSP due June 30, 2023.

Does the CFSP include any of the following:

- the CIP/Agency Joint Project
- the Hearing Quality Project
- the Legal Representation Project
- other judicial strategies
- other attorney strategies

If *yes*, please describe.

18. 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.

19. Please describe how the CIP was or will be involved in preparing and completing round 4 of the CFSR and PIP.

B. Round 4 CFSR Questions

Only states that will be participating in round 4 of the CFSR and PIP in your state this reporting year are required to complete the remaining questions in this section B. However, working to organize meaningful engagement of a broad array of legal and judicial stakeholders and to support collaboration with other system partners is useful for other major CIP projects as well, so others may wish to consider these with your teams. See the PI at page 9 for further explanation.

1. Regarding engaging the legal and judicial stakeholders with a broad representation of perspectives in CFSR/PIP processes:

- i) What barriers do you foresee in engaging stakeholders at an appropriate breadth and depth?
- ii) What do you believe will facilitate engaging stakeholders at an appropriate breadth and depth?

2. Are there other leadership structures for legal and judicial stakeholders and how can those facilitate the processes around the CFSR/PIP?
3. How will legal stakeholder involvement in the CFSR/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.
4. What court, judicial, or attorney data could be integrated into the CFSR/PIP process?
5. How might participation vary in stages of the process?
6. What feedback loops will be needed to keep stakeholders informed?
7. What supports do you need from the Children’s Bureau or Capacity Building Centers for participating in the CFSR/PIP?

C. Collaboration with the Child Welfare Agency in General

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 [Family Well-Being Community Collaborative \(FWCC\)](#) is co-chaired by CIP and DCYF. The group has a diverse, multi-disciplinary membership committed to collaborating to keep families together and supported in their communities and to radically reduce inequities in the child welfare system. The FWCC seeks to work upstream to avoid entry into the dependency system by addressing the impacts of poverty and trauma on families. For those families who require the oversight of court, the group is committed to ensuring that they receive effective, culturally relevant services in a system that is equitable, accountable, and hope-centered. The FWCC is structured to be action-oriented, with facilitated workgroups meeting regularly on time limited projects. The group decided to focus its work in 2022-23 on training and supporting courts to effectively implement the [Keeping Families Together Act \(HB 1227\)](#). The FWCC facilitated multiple cross-system workgroups in 2022-2023 that were dedicated to creating practical solutions that support court systems in successfully implementing HB 1227. The FWCC workgroups consists of 85 different members from across 15 different disciplines, including judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, child advocates, community providers, and parents and youth with lived experience in child welfare. These members made up the sub-groups that worked for 16-months, over 23 different meetings, to analyze how each change in the law would likely impact court process and practice. These “[statutory crosswalks](#)” provided the foundation for the tools, resources, and trainings created by CIP to support court system in successfully implementing the new law, including [iDecide](#) and [the HB 1227 Court Readiness Toolkit](#).

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 program creates local capacity to launch system wide educational and CQI efforts, and to support the adoption of new programs and practices, such as Early Childhood Courts and ICWA-focused dockets. As high-end users of data, FJCIP Coordinators are valuable partners in the Continuous Quality Improvement of the iDTR database. In 2022, Family & Youth Justice Programs (FYJP) requested and received additional funds from the Washington State Legislature to fully funding ten existing FJCIP coordinator positions, adding six new courts, and creating staff positions at AOC to oversee and evaluate the program. The FJCIP Statewide Coordinator and Senior Researcher were hired in 2022. Expansion of the FJCIP program is focused on reducing geographic resource disparities and increasing racial equity. FJCIP is excited to welcome Grays Harbor County and Clark County in early 2023, and anticipates the remaining four new FJCIP courts will be announced by the end of 2023.

Co-chaired by a Supreme Court Justice and the Secretary of DCYF and staffed by CIP, the [Commission on Children in Foster Care \(CCFC\)](#) promotes communication, collaboration, and cooperation among court, child welfare, legislative, tribal and community stakeholders. The Commission 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 several workgroups, including the FWCC (see above) and the Children’s Representation Standards Workgroup. The Children’s Representation Workgroup is charged with reviewing and updating existing standards of practice, caseload limits, and training guidelines for child and youth attorneys and making recommendations to the legislature for representation of children under the age of eight years old.

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. A 2021 change to Washington law created a presumption that Family Time visits are unsupervised, unless a party presents convincing evidence that supervision or monitoring are required to keep a child safe during a visit. Court and system partners anticipated that this would decrease supervision levels and speed up reunification for some families. However, DCYF and system partners are unable to assess the impact of the new because DCYF does not collect and extract the data needed. In addition, DCYF does not collect data on the prevention and remedial services offered or ordered in a case. One of the many changes made by the Keeping Families Together Act (effective July 1, 2023) is the

expansion of judicial inquiry into prevention services that could prevent or eliminate the need for removal, and requires the court to return the child home that if such services exist and the parent agrees to participate in them. It is anticipated that this new provision will contribute to more children returning or remaining home at the Shelter Care Hearing. 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: The new inquiries and findings regarding prevention services has increased attention on how systems work collaboratively to structure prevention services in the formation of safety plans that allow children to safely remain with their family while continuing under court jurisdiction. 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 makes to recruit and retain service providers of color. This has been further complicated by a recent increase to contacted providers to provide remedial services, but the rate to provide prevention services did not increase. DCYF was successful in securing multiple funding packages in the 2023 state legislation session to support the implementation of HB 1227, including 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.

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. In absence of additional funding, the capacity of CIP to meaningfully engage in the upcoming Round 4 of the CFSR will be limited.

3. Regarding collaboration on training with the child welfare agency...

a. 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. CIP partnered with DCYF to co-facilitate a series of six regional cross-system webinars on the new law. 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. They were included as co-trainers at the Children’s Justice Conference and 2023 Dependency Judicial Training Academy. CIP staff and DCYF Program Managers frequently 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 regards to enhancing safety practice.

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

Yes and No. 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. We are working with DCYF to gain access to Title IV-E for reimbursement for training.

IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment

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

The ability of CIP to integrate CQI into practice has greatly increased this past year. This is largely attributed to the expansion of the Family & Juvenile Court Improvement Program (FJCIP), which included the addition of a Statewide Coordinator and Researcher (FJCIP Team). Each FJCIP court has a dedicated FJCIP Coordinator who facilitates system improvement efforts and supports system learning by gathering and analyzing data which is shared with local dependency partner groups. FJCIP has proven to be an excellent laboratory for innovative ideas and implementation of CQI practices. The FJCIP Team provides training, technical assistance, and support in data collection and evaluation. The FJCIP Team has worked over the past year to create a hearing quality evaluation tool to assess the quality of Shelter Care Hearing practices. The

team will pilot the tool in select FJCIP Courts with a plan to then refine the tool for implementation into local court systems across the state. It is anticipated that this tool will provide a sustainable mechanism for courts to incorporate CQI into their system improvement efforts.

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

- Attorney Academy
- Judicial Academy
- CIPShare 2.0
- CQI Consult (*Topic: Race Equity Data*)
- CQI Workshop
- Constituency Group - JCAMP
- Constituency Group - Data/Evaluation
- Constituency Group - Family First Prevention Services Act
- Constituency Group - Hearing Quality
- Constituency Group - ICWA
- Constituency Group - Legal Representation
- Constituency Group - New Directors
- Constituency Group - Race Equity
- Constituency Group - Regional CIP Calls
- Constituency Group - Other _____
- 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
- Contracts with external individuals or organizations to assist with CQI efforts
- Other resources: CIP staff with data visualization and web-design expertise

a. Do you record your child welfare court hearings? Yes No

If yes, are they audio video

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

Yes No

c. 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.

d. 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.

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

No, none of these systems include an electronic filing system.

4. Please describe any continuity planning the CIP has led or has been involved in if not noted above. Continuity planning includes prevention and recovery planning for threats such as public health crises, natural disasters, or cyber-attacks. This may include, for example, technology support for remote hearings or legal representation, developing guidance, coordinating with other agencies, or otherwise ensuring back-up approaches are in place to ensure needed services are able to continue.

CIP met with court staff, judicial officers, and system professionals in each county to assess dependency court practice at the local level to inform allocation of CIP pandemic funding. Consistently, system professionals stated that they needed help preparing court participants to attend virtual and hybrid hearings. In response, CIP gather a team of cross system partners, including parents with lived experience, to determine the best way to inform court participants. The group determined two short videos that could be easily shared would be created using the pandemic funding. CIP worked with consultants, Public Knowledge, and created two animated [videos](#) to help participants be more successful attending their dependency hearings. The first video called, “Attending Your Dependency Hearing,” gives participants tips and tricks for 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 worked with an instructional design consultant to create a flyer, business card, and brochure that have a QR code that courts and their partners can use to share the videos with court participants. All of the materials were then translated into Spanish and are not available to courts in both English and Spanish. CIP mailed an initial “starter kit” to each dependency court in Washington that includes copies of the flyer, business card, and brochure to share in their lobbies and court spaces. Similar starter kits are being

created for the Office of Public Defense, the Office of Civil Legal Aid, and the Parents for Parents program. CIP is currently working with Public Knowledge again to translate the videos into Russian, Chinese, Somali, and Vietnamese. Videos will be dubbed in the languages listed, and Spanish.

5. 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.

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

- How to work with the Department to maximize utilization of Title IV-E funding
- How to better engage and partner with Tribes

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 as good practice. They may or may not have empirical support as to effectiveness, but are often derived from teams of experts.

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 02/28/2026. The estimated time to complete the Self-Assessment is 40 hours