

Permanency Enhancement Project: Southern Region Report FY 2017

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Goals of Permanency Enhancement Project

1. Improve permanency
2. Reduce racial disproportionality
3. Reduce racial disparities
4. Reduce overrepresentation of African Americans in the child welfare system

University Partnership

SIUE

- University Partner consists of Faculty and research personnel who help supervise and monitor efforts of each Action Team in the Southern Region
- Ongoing consults and engagement to
 - ✓ Provide 'Technical Support' (i.e. assistance) with action team activity and development, as needed
 - ✓ Evaluate progress on action team goals/outcomes.
 - ✓ Review service data trends and assist teams in using data for action team goal development

Southern Region Action Teams

Cairo (Alexander & Pulaski)

Carbondale (Jackson, Franklin, Perry, Williamson)

Carlyle (Bond, Clinton)

Sparta (Monroe, Randolph, Washington)

Effingham (Effingham, Fayette, Jasper)

Madison (Madison)

Metropolis (Hardin, Johnson, Massac, Pope)

Mt. Vernon (Jefferson, Marion)

Olney (Crawford, Edwards, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash)

St. Clair (St. Clair)

Cairo Action Team

Annual Activities

- Current Action Team Leader: **Trina Mayfield & Esther Meade**
- Team meetings regularly (*at least quarterly*)
- Team is working with new Family Advocacy Center that was established in Cairo

Cairo Action Team

Concerns & Barriers

- Closure of public housing unit (implications for other systems of care, youth/families)
- Closure of Delta Center (major service provider)
- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Partnering with new Family Advocacy Center and other community supports including schools to provide families support

Cairo Action Team

Future Direction

- Maintain ongoing meetings and action team participation
- Continue partnership with Family Advocacy Center
- Assess and Monitor Impact of current Housing Crisis
 - Participate in advocacy efforts, as appropriate, for families, children impacted
 - Engage housing crisis response efforts to explore ways to support family members and other constituent groups impacted by housing development closure
- Engage other Systems of Care to seek support (i.e. Plans to engage Cairo High School Principal for the African American Advisory Council Conference and support of permanency efforts)
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency rates

Carlyle Action Team

Annual Activities

- Current Action Team Leader: Teresa Towler
- Action team meets annually
- Currently in a *'transition period'* – action team re-constitution, development and membership recruitment activities.

Carlyle Action Team



Concerns & Barriers

- Reduction in Action Team Membership
 - Garnering interest
 - Scheduling ongoing meetings
- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Currently Re-constituting action team and renewing membership
- Explore use of innovative communication strategies (i.e. phone conference call or video conference meetings such as Skype to overcome barriers with traveling time and accessibility).

Carlyle Action Team

Future Direction

- Continue to Build Action Team membership
 - Outreach to identify new potential members
 - Set regular meeting schedule for Action Team and market to constituents and prospective members
- Identify necessary resources and capabilities to engage in innovative, efficient communication strategies, such as conference calls and video-conferencing
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency rates

Effingham Action Team

Annual Activities

- Currently in a *'transition period'* – action team re-constitution, development and membership recruitment activities.
- Monitoring service trends; has interest in new data to assess change/progress in permanency efforts
- Active (outgoing) Action Team Leader - Kari Rogers
- New Action Team Leader **Kelly Hegarty**

Effingham Action Team

Concerns & Barriers

- Reduction in Action Team Membership
 - Members from private organizations in fluctuation
 - DCFS staff fluctuations, transitions
- Large area covered with three rural counties
- Place, Space logistic challenges (i.e. travel across distance, time, and convenient/accessible location for all)
- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Currently Re-constituting action team and renewing membership
- Considering more targeted approach to address logistic challenges (i.e. focus on one county at a time; create Action Team Subcommittee for regions if necessary)
- Explore use of innovative communication strategies (i.e. phone conference call or video conference meetings such as Skype to overcome barriers with traveling time and accessibility).

Effingham Action Team

Future Direction

- Continue to Build Action Team membership
 - Outreach to identify new potential members
 - Set regular meeting schedule for Action Team and market to constituents and prospective members
- Identify necessary resources and capabilities to engage in innovative, efficient communication strategies, such as conference calls and video-conferencing
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency rates

Jackson Action Team

Annual Activities

- Current Action Team Leader: **Janelle Pulcher**
- Currently in a *'transition period'* – action team re-constitution, development and membership recruitment activities
 - Has identified potential members
 - Letter of invitation in development

Jackson Action Team

Concerns & Barriers

- Currently Re-constituting action team and renewing membership
- Transition period, due to new leadership (i.e. the action team leader is new)
- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Explore use of innovative communication strategies (i.e. phone conference call or video conference meetings such as Skype to overcome barriers with traveling time and accessibility)
- Support new Action Team Leader, in new role and offer assistance [from past/current Action Team Leaders across system, past/current Action team members, and University Partners

Jackson Action Team

Future Direction

- Continue to Build Action Team membership
 - Outreach to identify new potential members
 - Set regular meeting schedule for Action Team and market to constituents and prospective members
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency rates

Madison Action Team

Annual Activities

- Current Action Team Leader: **Shiela Reed**
- Major activity since August of 2016
- Regular monthly meetings for Action Team (later switched to quarterly meetings)
- 44 members on Action Team currently
- Last Quarterly Meeting was March 8, 2017 discussing the following:
 - Created Court Subcommittee due to large amounts of court-specific issues
 - Court Subcommittee Report: Court hearing continuances are now being scheduled within 30-45 days, as opposed to three months. This has proven to be a very helpful improvement in moving cases along.
 - Riverbend Ministries: Looking for references for youth violence prevention. There is a waiting list for children to be enrolled in trauma informed therapy. Need and available resources considerably outweighed.
 - Restore Network: Foster parents trained on 3/15.

Madison Action Team

Concerns & Barriers

- Maintain current level of action team engagement and leadership
- Recruit additional Action Team Co-Chair and potentially an active community stakeholder
- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region
 - Previous data reported Madison showed higher racial disparities than other counties in Southern Region (2014); thus being able to track progress is critical for this team

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency trends
- Action Team continues to identify and address issues among racial disparities, child welfare, and permanency within region
- Ask for volunteers and potential stakeholders who might be interested in Co-Chair position next Action Team Meeting

Madison Action Team

Future Direction

- Sustain Action Team Membership as well as attendance (i.e. Continue quarterly Action Team Meetings) – Next Meeting, June 14, 2017 (Wood River Ministries)
- Continue to foster development of Court Subcommittee
- Acquire Co-Chair to assist with facilitation
- Implement survey to assess support needs of ‘Action Team’ to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency trends

Metropolis Action Team

Annual Activities

- Outgoing Action Team Leader – Trina Mayfield
- Accomplished goal of achieving the new Action Team Leader, **Tracey Elliott** (still in training).
- Ongoing Quarterly meetings (last meeting January 2017)

Metropolis Action Team

Concerns & Barriers

- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region
- Transition period due to new leadership
- Last known Action Team Activity was January 2017

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Support new Action Team Leader, Tracey Elliot in new role and offer assistance [from past/current Action Team Leaders across system, past/current Action team members, and University Partners
- Encourage upcoming Quarterly Meeting in May or June

Metropolis Action Team

Future Direction

- Continue to Build Action Team membership
 - Outreach to identify new potential members
 - Set regular meeting schedule, at least quarterly, for Action Team and market to constituents and prospective members
- Identify necessary resources and capabilities to engage in innovative, efficient communication strategies, such as conference calls and video-conferencing
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency trends

Mt. Vernon Action Team

Annual Activities

- Current Action Team Leader: **John (Jay) Reeves**
- Team is meeting regularly (*at least quarterly*)
- Team is actively addressing goals
 - assist families in accessing proper hygiene/skin care/hair care for kids
 - gain community support for access to dress clothes for teens and parents in need of proper interview attire
 - DCFS will work toward targeted recruitment for foster parents that would accept older Youth in Care as well as homes that are from minority cultures
 - Attempt to develop a format for writing summaries for youth in care that puts weight on the child's present and more recent history rather than creating an image of the child from the past that is not accurate to the present.

Mt. Vernon Action Team

Concerns & Barriers

- Maintain current level of action team engagement and leadership
- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region
- Identification of community partners to help enhance action team efforts

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Network and partner with area community partners
- Refine action team goals and plans of address
- Team is addressing needs identified by action team members

Mt. Vernon Action Team

Future Direction

- Sustain Action Team Membership as well as attendance
- Continue to identify action team partners
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency trends

Olney Action Team

Annual Activities

- Current Action Team Leader: **Lindsey Tompson & Aundrea Brooks**
- Meets regularly (*at least quarterly*)
- Improved Membership - updated Action Team Roster (17 members listed with 8 agencies listed)
- Exploration of potential Court Subcommittee
- Focus on Olney County as the highest priority out of the five counties

Olney Action Team



Concerns & Barriers

- Maintain current action team engagement and leadership
- Limited on family counseling contracts and drug testing contracts (Lack of ability to utilize Indiana resources)
- Large area spread out to five counties with predominately rural setting
- Limited resources for children transitioning from residential facilities to next steps toward permanency.
- Issues with confidentiality in past with community stakeholders in rural towns within Action Team
- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Focus on one county at a time to focus on case-by-case systematic areas of improvement and resources by area.
- Discuss with other DFCS professionals, community stakeholders, and University Partners resources and networking opportunities for contracts.

Olney Action Team

Future Direction

- Sustain Action Team Membership as well as attendance
- Growth of committee focusing on court-related issues similar to Madison County's Court Sub-committee (Utilizing Juvenile Court Act)
- Focus on one county at a time starting with Olney County.
- Grow Action Team membership focused on region, court subcommittees, etc.
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency trends

Sparta Action Team

Annual Activities

- Current Action Team Leader: **Tina Simpson**
- No full action team meetings, but team communication with community partners and constituents as needed to move forward
- Actively involved in collaborative efforts with state's attorneys and court systems

Sparta Action Team

Concerns & Barriers

- No current formal full team meetings are being conducted
- Overlap between action team membership
- No current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- Working on specific identified needs with attorneys and court system
- In lieu of not having updated data, as such has not been made available by Division, have used most recent data to frame decision-making

Sparta Action Team

Future Direction

- Consideration of full team meetings as needed
- Continue to develop and engage in partnership with court systems and attorneys
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency trends

St. Clair Immersion Site Action Team

Annual Activities

- Current Action Team Leader: **Diane Parker**
- Immersion Site: **James Toole**
- Shift in focus and effort towards 'Immersion Site' Approach
- Ongoing meetings in both the capacity of an area Action Team & Immersion Site
- Completion of updated Action Team Roster (17 members listed with 8 agencies listed)
- Engaged in a number of Process Changes (i.e. CAPU process, discontinuation of Matching Tool, Norman Cash Assistance)
- Development/Implementation of Trainings and Conferences (i.e. LGBTQ Conference, CFTM training, Core practice FTF training, Procedures 315 training)
- Other Systemic Changes, Successes –
- Southern Region and St. Clair County's first Emergency Foster Home became operational in March 2017 and assisted in reuniting a child/youth and family;
- POS approved for 1 Foster Parent Support Specialist per Foster Care Agency on 4/20/17

St. Clair Immersion Site Action Team

Concerns & Barriers

- Continue to sustain Action Team Membership as well as attendance
- Large workload with being one of four Immersion Sites in the state of Illinois
- Facilitating integration of Action Team and Immersion Site so that needs are easily apportioned (if needed) and identified.
- Assessing and reviewing PEP objectives have been communicated with every meeting since integrating Action Team with Immersion Site
- No Current data supplied by Division to assess current service data trends and updates on permanency numbers for region

Response to Concerns & Barriers

- James Toole has emailed many documents to University Partners which has greatly enhanced the understanding of St. Clair's Immersion Action Team
- Emailing regarding Immersion Site specifically has improved communication barriers /eliminated concerns.

St. Clair Immersion Site Action Team

Future Direction

- Sustain Action Team Membership as well as attendance
- Integrating PEP objectives into agendas of future Immersion Site meetings
- Implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency trends

St. Clair Immersion Site Action Team

Future Direction: Other Key Efforts of Merit

Upcoming Programs NLT July 2017:

- Wrap Around Lead Agent
- Intensive Intact Program & Reunification Program
- Therapeutic Mentoring
- Family Advocacy Center
- Safe Families; Nurturing Parenting Program

Pending Process Changes

- Service Plan and I.A.
- Continuity of Caseworker (One CW from opening to closing of case involving permanency)
- Timely completion of investigations involving foster parents
- Minute cell phones for Emergency Foster Homes (pending completion)
- Localizing Spec Foster Care Matching Process

- Upcoming Immersion Site Stakeholder Meetings: 5/11/17, 6/8/17, 7/20/17