



Permanency Enhancement Project Technical Assistance Annual Report Update

Southern Region Sparta Action Team

This two-part report provides an update of all PEP Action Team and University Partner activities during the 2017 fiscal year (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017). Information herein is based off of communication and correspondence with key Action Team members and all other stakeholder group members. These individuals potentially include action team lead contact persons, PEP regional staff, other division employees, area community members, and families involved in the PEP initiative in the related counties.

Action Team Catchment Area

The **Sparta Action Team** encompasses the following counties listed below:

Monroe
Randolph
Washington

University Partner Activity Overview

During fiscal year 2017 the Department of Children and Family Services worked with the University Partner (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville- SIUE) to retain faculty researchers and graduate students (who serve in the role of PEP Action Team Community Liaisons) to explore barriers to permanency, including but not limited to trends in racial disparity and disproportionality as it impacts child outcomes in the Southern Region of Illinois.

In the month of **May** the Department of Children and Family Services Quality Assurance Department provided county level permanency data for **Quarter 4 of fiscal year 2016**. The data provided spans the following months: **March - June FY 2016** to SIUE, so that the University research team could analyze trends in permanencies, by age and race, over the period in question. This data analysis will be provided in a **supplementary report**.

In addition to analyzing permanency data, the PEP Community Liaison (University Graduate Student **Bethany Richards**) contacted representatives who had been identified as leaders of the **Sparta Action Team** and explored PEP goals, accomplishments, barriers and activities. Communication with the following individuals occurred:

Name	Role in DCFS or PEP Action Team
Tina Simpson	Action Team Leader

** To see dates of contact and method of communication please refer to attached contact log document*

Context of Permanency Barriers for Action Team Catchment Area

This section includes a list of the permanency barriers discussed by action team members that are prevalent in the action team catchment area.

- **No formal team meetings are being conducted**
- **Overlap between action team membership with St. Clair County Action Team**
- **No current data available to help in setting permanency goals**

This section provides a discussion of the permanency barriers identified above. This discussion is based on information provided by action team members and is supported by the data presented in the supplementary report.

Regular action team meetings are not being held by the Sparta Action Team. There is an overlap between action team membership with St. Clair County, which creates the need for action team members to attend multiple meetings. However, the team is actively addressing the goals listed below. At this time, data has only been recently been supplied to the university partner by the Department of Children and Family Services Quality Assurance Department. However, the action team has been lacking current data for a long period of time and does not yet have access to this data. Such data will influence goals, activities, and encourage action team participation. Action team leader asked for data to help address goal setting.

Fiscal Year 2017 Action Team Goals

This section includes a current list of goals identified by the action team membership.

- **Work with state’s attorneys to identify ways to reduce time in out of home care placements**
- **Monitor juvenile court cases**

Action Team Goal Related Activity Overview

Activity	Location	Date & Length of Time	Stakeholders Represented	University Partner Role	Other
Educate new state's attorney	N/A	N/A	State's Attorney	University partner helped action team leader to get access to the most recent available data	
Monitor juvenile court cases	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Discussion of Action Team Activities to Improve Permanency in the Catchment Area

One of the main activities of the Sparta action team is to work with the state's attorneys and to make sure they understand permanency efforts and disparities that exist. There is a new state's attorney, who is very interested in research, so team shared most recent data with him. Team also monitors juvenile court system to make sure that cases do not get held up in court.

Action Team Next Steps:

- Wait to receive current data
- Continue to work with state's attorneys and courts
- Host an action team meeting
- Participate in survey developed by university partners

Include all meeting minutes, contact logs, event flyers, and other relevant materials with the report document.