Quality Improvement and Enhancement Team

Peer Quality Case Review Supplemental Report

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Summary

This report is compiled using data collected during the Santa Clara County’s Department of Family and Children’s Services (DFCS) Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) in July 2011. A. Mark Lapiz and Ernesto Bejarano of the Santa Clara County Quality Improvement and Enhancement Team (QIET) assisted in the construction of Santa Clara County’s DFCS PQCR Social Worker Interview Tool. The cases of 32 children were randomly selected to participate in the PQCR. These 32 children were selected from a larger pool of children, all of whom were dependents at least 18 months or longer. These 32 children were equally divided into two groups and then categorized into the following age groups:

- **Non-Permanency Group** - comprised of 16 dependent children/youth in care for 18 months or longer without an identified Permanency Plan.
  - 4 of these children/youth were 10 years of age or younger
  - 12 of these children/youth were 11 years of age or older
    - Of these 12 children/youth, 8 of them were 15 years of age or older
- **Permanency Group** - comprised of 16 dependent children/youth in care for 18 months or longer with an identified Permanent Plan (Legal Guardianship or Adoption).
  - 5 of these children/youth were 10 years of age or younger
  - 11 of these children/youth were 11 years of age or older
    - Of these 11 children/youth, 7 of them were 15 years of age or older

Methodology

The Quality Improvement and Enhancement Team provided technical support to the Department of Family and Children’s Services that included development of the PQCR Social Worker Interview Tool. At the conclusion of the PQCR, QIET collected aggregate extracted from completed from the Social Work Interview Tool narrative sections to be used for further analysis. The first set of findings in this report are based on case background information collected directly from CWS/CMS, as well as, information compiled by the assigned social worker of each child’s/youth’s case. This background information was collected prior to the social worker being interviewed. Information gathered from this data included trends related to: Mental Health Services, Concurrency Agreements, Team Decision Making Meetings (TDM) or Family Conferences, Family Finding Activities, and the average number of Social Workers for each child/youth. MY TIME/Emancipation Conferences were also examined for the children/youth who were 16 years or older. QIET took a further look into these trends by providing side by side comparisons of the two groups based on age groupings and placement types.

Placement Types for Children/Youth

Of the 32 children/youth whose cases were randomly selected to participate in the PQCR reside in the following placement types:

- **Non-Permanency Group** :
Further analysis and trends are provided in this report utilizing the data from the personal interviews with social workers assigned to each child’s case.

Findings Summary: Case Background Information

Non-Permanency Group (n=16) vs. Permanency Group (n=16)

- **Mental Health Services**: 43.75% of children in the Non-Permanency Group had Mental Health Services vs. 62.5% of children in the Permanency Group.
- **Concurrency Agreements**: There were Concurrency Agreements signed in 62.5% of the Non-Permanency Group at sometime during the course of the case history. 94% of the Permanency Group had signed Concurrency Agreements.
- **TDM or Family Conference**: Were utilized at the same rate by both Groups at 75%.
- **Family Finding**: 25% of the Non-Permanency Group utilized some type of Family Finding activity vs. 38% of the Permanency Group.
- **Number of Social Workers**: Children in Non-Permanency Group had an average of 4.2 social workers. Children in Permanency Group had an average of 2.9 Social workers.

Non-Permanency Group 0-10 yrs (n=4) vs. Permanency Group 0-10 yrs (n=5)

- **Mental Health Services**: Only 1 of the 4 children in Non-Permanency Group (25%) had Mental Health Services vs. 2 of the 5 children in Permanency Group (40%).
- **Concurrency Agreement**: All of the children in both the Non-Permanency and Permanency Groups had a Concurrency Agreement signed.
- **TDM/Family Conference**: Only one child experienced a TDM in the Non-Permanency Group (25%) as opposed to four children in the Permanency Group (100%)
- **Family Finding**: Only one child in each of the groups (25% for Non-Permanency vs. 20% for Permanency) had Family Finding activities utilized.
- **Number of Social Workers**: Children in the Non-Permanency Group had an average of 3 social workers. Children in the Permanency Group had an average of 3.2 Social workers.

Non-Permanency Group 11 yrs and older (n=12) vs. Permanency Group 11 yrs and older (n=11)

- **Mental Health Services**: 50% of Non-Permanency Group are participating or have participated in Mental Health Services. 55% of Permanency Group are participating or have participated in Mental Health Services.
Concurency Agreement: 91% of the Permanency Group had signed Concurency Agreements. There were Concurency Agreements signed in 50% of the Non-Permanency Group at sometime during the course of the case history.

TDM or Family Conference: Were utilized at the same rate by both Groups at approximately 91%.

The Permanency Group was comprised of seven youth that were at least 15 years of age or older.

Family Finding: 25% of the Non-Permanency Group utilized some type of Family Finding activity vs. 45% of the Permanency Group.

Number of Social Workers: Children in Non-Permanency Group had an average of 4.6 social workers. Children in Permanency Group had an average of 2.7 Social workers.

TILP: The Non-Permanency Group was comprised of eight youth that were at least 15 years of age or older. The Permanency Group was comprised of seven youth that were at least 15 years of age or older.

- 88% of the youth 15 years of age or older in the Non-Permanency Group had a signed TILP vs. 57% of their counterparts in the Permanency Group.

MY TIME/Emancipation Conferences: There were 8 youth in the Non-Permanency Group and 3 youth in the Permanency Group that were at least 16 years of age or older and who were not in a permanent plan of adoption or guardianship.

- Five of the 8 Non-dependent youth (63%) and all 3 of the Permanency youth (100%) had participated in a MY TIME/Emancipation Conference for their respective case.

County Licensed Foster Home Placements: Non-Permanency (n=4) vs. Permanency Group (n=4)

Both the Non-Permanency Group and the Permanency Group each had a total of 4 children that were placed in County Licensed Foster Homes.

- All four children in both the Non-Permanency Group and Permanency Group were between the ages of 11-18 years old.
- The Non-Permanency Group had 3 youth who were at least 15 years and older and The Permanency Group had 2 youth who were at least 15 years or older.

TILP: All three youth (100%) in the Non-Perm Group who were 15 years of age or older had a signed TILP vs. only one of the two youth (50%)in the Permanency Group who were 15 years of age or older.

Mental Health Services: All four youth (100%) in both the Non-Permanency and Permanency Group who are placed in County Licensed Foster Homes are participating or have participated in Mental Health Services.

Concurency Agreement: 100% of the Permanency Group had signed Concurency Agreements. There were Concurency Agreements signed in 50% of the Non-Permanency Group at sometime during the course of the case history.

TDM or Family Conference: A TDM or Family Conference was utilized for all the youth in the Non-Permanency Group while they were utilized in only 75% in the Permanency Group.

Family Finding: Family Finding was utilized at the same rate of 50% for both groups.

Number of Social Workers: Children in Non-Permanency Group had an average of 3.75 social workers. Children in Permanency Group had an average of 2.25 Social workers.
Foster Family Agency Placements: Non-Permanency (n=4) vs. Permanency Group (n=4)

Both the Non-Permanency Group and the Permanency Group each had a total of 4 children that were placed in Foster Family Agency Homes.

- All four children/youth in the Non-Permanency Group were between the ages of 11-18 years old.
  - Three of the four children/youth in the Permanency Group were between the ages of 11-18 years old.
  - Three of the youth in both the Non-Permanency Group and the Permanency Group were at least 15 years and older.

- **TILP:** Only 1 of the 4 youth (25%) in the Non-Perm Group who was 15 years of age or older had a signed TILP vs. two of the three youth (67%) in the Permanency Group who were 15 years of age or older.

- **Mental Health Services:** Only 50% of the children/youth in both the Non-Permanency and Permanency Group who are placed in Foster Family Agency Homes are participating or have participated in Mental Health Services.

- **Concurrency Agreement:** 100% of the Permanency Group had signed Concurrency Agreements. There were Concurrency Agreements signed in 25% of the Non-Permanency Group at sometime during the course of each child’s/youth’s case history.

- **TDM or Family Conference:** A TDM or Family Conference was utilized for all the youth in the Non-Permanency Group while they were utilized in only 75% in the Permanency Group.

- **Family Finding:** Family Finding was utilized for 50% of the children/youth in the Permanency Group. None of the children/youth in the Non-Permanency Group had official Family Finding Activities utilized in their respective cases.

- **Number of Social Workers:** Children in Non-Permanency Group had an average of 5.25 social workers. Children in Permanency Group had an average of 2.75 Social workers.

Relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Member (NREFM) Placements: Non-Permanency (n=7) vs. Permanency Group (n=6)

The Non-Permanency Group had a total of 7 children/youth placed in the home of a Relative/NREFM. The Permanency Group had a total of 6 children/youth placed in the home of a Relative/NREFM.

- The Non-Permanency Group was comprised of 3 children that were 10 years old or younger and 4 children/youth between the ages of 11-18 years old.
  - Of the four children/youth between the ages of 11-18 years of age, three were at least 15 years of age or older.
- The Permanency Group was comprised of 3 children that were 10 years old or younger and 3 children/youth between the ages of 11-18 years old.
  - Of the three children/youth between the ages of 11-18 years of age, only one was at least 15 years of age or older.

- **TILP:** All three youth (100%) in the Non-Perm Group who were 15 years of age or older had a signed TILP. The one youth who was 15 years of age or older in the Permanency Group did not have a signed TILP (0%).
• **Mental Health Services:** 0% of Non-Permanency Group is participating or has participated in Mental Health Services. 67% of Permanency Group are participating or have participated in Mental Health Services.

• **Concurrency Agreement:** 83% of the Permanency Group had signed Concurrency Agreements. There were Concurrency Agreements signed in 86% of the Non-Permanency Group at sometime during the course of each child’s/youth’s case history.

• **TDM or Family Conference:** A TDM or Family Conference was utilized for 43% the children/youth in the Non-Permanency Group while they were utilized 83% of the children/youth in the Permanency Group.

• **Family Finding:** Family Finding was utilized for only one child in each of the groups (14% for the Non-Permanency Group vs. 17% for the Permanency Group).

• **Number of Social Workers:** Children/Youth in Non-Permanency Group had an average of 4.1 social workers. Children/Youth in Permanency Group had an average of 3.5 Social workers.

### Findings Summary: Interview Data

In analyzing the anecdotal interview data from the PQCR Interview Tool, QIET was able to identify the following trends:

• **Mental Health Diagnosis/Psychotropic Medications:** 20 children/youth were identified by their respective social worker to have a DSM-IV Mental Health Diagnosis. Of these 20 children/youth, 10 were identified to have been prescribed some type of psychotropic medications(s).

• **When was the child’s/youth’s Concurrent Plan Identified:** Social workers reported that the child’s/youth’s concurrent plan was identified:
  - 1 during the ER phase
  - 9 during the DI phase
  - 4 during the Continuing phase
  - 9 when the case was already in the post. 26 phase

• **Cultural and Ethnic Identity:** 69% of the social workers reported that they took the child’s/youth’s cultural and ethnic identity into consideration in their development of the concurrent plan. When asked to elaborate as to how the child’s/youth’s cultural and ethnic identity were taken in to consideration, social workers explained:
  - 47% Placed with NREFM/Relatives
  - 22% Placed in their community
  - 50% placed based on cultural needs
  - 19% Placed based on language needs

• **Team Decision Making Meetings/Family Conferences:** Social workers identified multiple ways in which TDM’s/Family Conferences were utilized for their case:
  - 59% Engagement Techniques Used in the Permanency Planning
  - 44% Processes Utilized Towards achieving Permanency
  - 31% Family Finding Efforts
  - 69% What activities took place and services utilized to plan for and promote permanency (Adoption and Legal Guardianship)
• **Monthly Contacts and Case Planning Discussions:** Social Workers reported utilizing monthly contacts and Case Planning Discussions in the following manner:
  - 53% utilized Monthly contacts as an engagement technique used in Permanency Planning
  - 50% utilized Case Planning Discussions as an engagement technique used in Permanency Planning
  - 47% utilized Case Planning Discussions as a process towards achieving Permanency

• **Family Finding:** When asked “What family finding efforts were utilized for this case?” Social workers provided the following answers:
  - 31% identified TDM/Family Conferences
  - 31% identified Interview of child’s/youth’s parents
  - 31% identified Interview of extended family
  - 38% identified family finding unit

  - Social Workers also reported utilizing Family Finding efforts in the following manner:
    - 16% as a Process Towards achieving Permanency
    - 38% as an activity to plan for and promote permanency (Adoption and Legal Guardianship)?
    - 28% to search for relatives/NREFMs

• **Engagement in the Permanency Planning for the Child/Youth:** When asked to identify all of whom were engaged in the permanency planning for their respective child/youth, social workers reported the following:
  - 56% reported the child’s/youth’s biological mother
  - 38% reported the child’s/youth’s biological father
  - 44% reported the child/youth
  - 31% reported the child’s/youth’s grandparents
  - 38% reported the child’s/youth’s extended family members
  - 22% reported the child’s/youth’s service providers/professionals
  - 50% reported the child’s/youth’s caregivers

• **Processes Utilized Towards achieving Permanency:** Social workers identified the following steps they utilized towards achieving Permanency for the child/youth:
  - 16% Utilized Family Finding Unit
  - 47% Utilized Case Planning Discussions
  - 44% Utilized TDM or Family Conferences
  - 47% Interviewed Extended Family Members

• **How were relatives/NREFMs searched:** Social Workers identified the following processes as means they utilized to search for Relatives/NREFM’s for the child/youth:
  - 13% TDM
34% Parental Interview  
50% Extended Family Member Interview  
28% Family Finding Unit  
22% Interview of the child/youth  
10% Interview of the child’s/youth’s siblings

- **What has been most helpful as you have proceeded with establishing permanency for this child/youth?** Social Workers identified the following as helpful in establishing permanency:
  - 50% Departmental Supports
  - 47% Support from other Agencies
  - 56% Social Workers Techniques and skills

- **What has not worked as you have proceeded with establishing permanency for this child/youth?** Social Workers identified the following as barriers in establishing permanency:
  - 25% Departmental support
  - 47% Lack of support from other agencies
  - 34% Departmental Procedures/Protocol
  - 44% Systemic barriers