

**State of Florida**  
**Department of Children and Families**  
**Semi-Annual Progress Report**  
**April 2017 through September 2017**  
**Title IV-E Demonstration Waiver**

## **I. Overview**

This document updates the information in the initial design and implementation report as required by section 2.3 of the Waiver Terms and Conditions. This semi-annual progress report for the period ending September 30, 2017 provides an update on the status of each activity or task identified in the Initial Design and Implementation Report (IDIR). Submission of this report is in accordance with section 5.2 of the Waiver Terms and Conditions.

Although there is a wide array of services available across the state, improvements are underway to address the availability and accessibility of some critical services in the more rural areas and to ensure that the services available are in alignment with Florida's new practice model. The strengths and challenges identified varied by service area; however, a couple of identified challenges related to the service array are consistent statewide:

- Lack of safety management service array for duration of intervention with family.

While most areas had identified safety management service providers for the investigation portion of safety management, very few areas in the state had created safety management services for ongoing case management.

- Services are provided without change in delivery or reporting of behavior change.

Some providers continued to provide the same service previously identified as a diversion, prevention, or treatment service without shifting the service provision to match the need for safety management. This is especially present in the treatment services funded through providers other than the CBC.

To address this, the Department is conducting a thorough service array assessment that will evaluate the service array of each CBC in the state. The assessment includes availability of services for child welfare providers in each larger service domain (whether the service is evidence-based and the target population for each service), the application of each service (how it is used by the front line and identification of the desired outcome), and the accessibility of the service for the families. The Department and CBC Lead Agencies established a workgroup to include CBCs and community stakeholders to inform the assessment and expansion of treatment and well-being services for children and to enhance the availability of evidence-based and promising practices services within the service array continuum. Casey Family Programs and a Harvard fellow serve as support to this Priority of Effort (POE). Through the POE, the Department established a baseline rating for each CBC for each large service domain. At this time, OCW determined a baseline for safety management services and prevention based family support services. The next steps involve mapping evidence-based and promising practices supported by research that address specific conditions present within children and families served and assessing current treatment and well-being services for children.

The baseline rating for each service array domain is integrated into the contract monitoring of each CBC. The contract monitoring includes on-site information gathering around the service array and updates, when appropriate to the rating.

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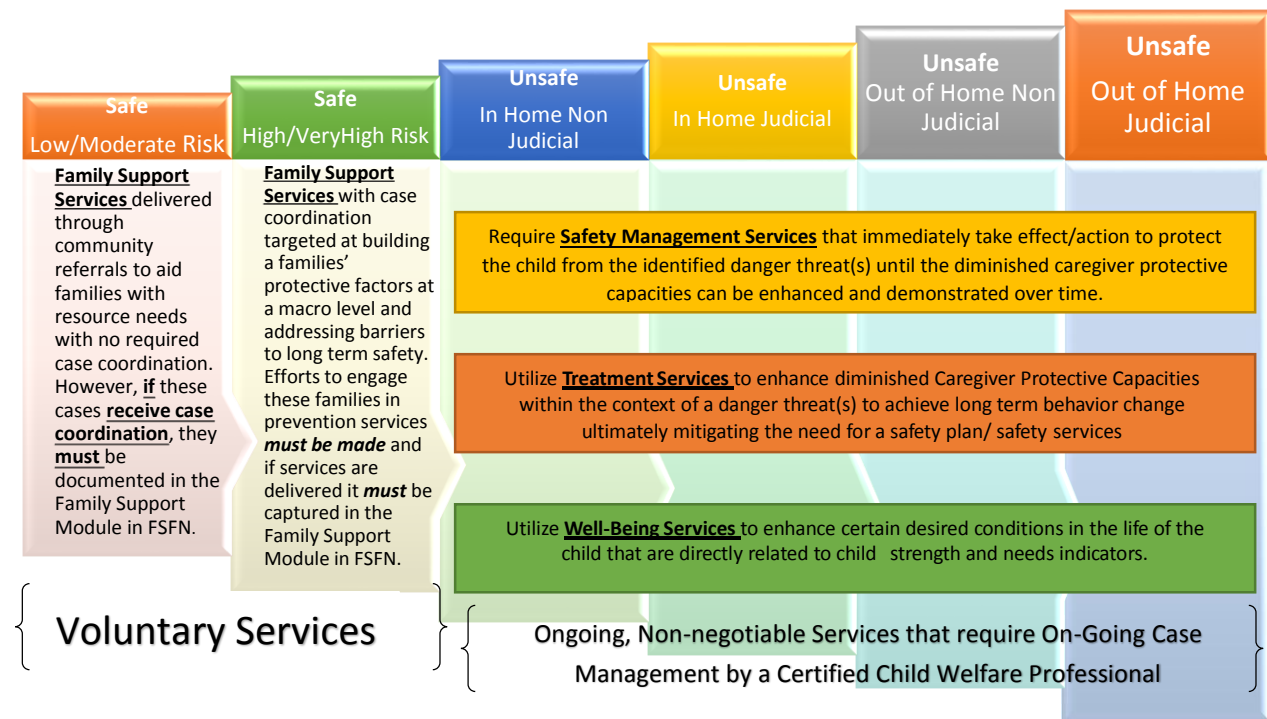
**II. Demonstration Status, Activities, and Accomplishments**

Provide a detailed overview of the status of the demonstration in the following areas:

**A. Numbers and types of services provided to date. Note in particular the implementation status of any innovative or promising practices.**

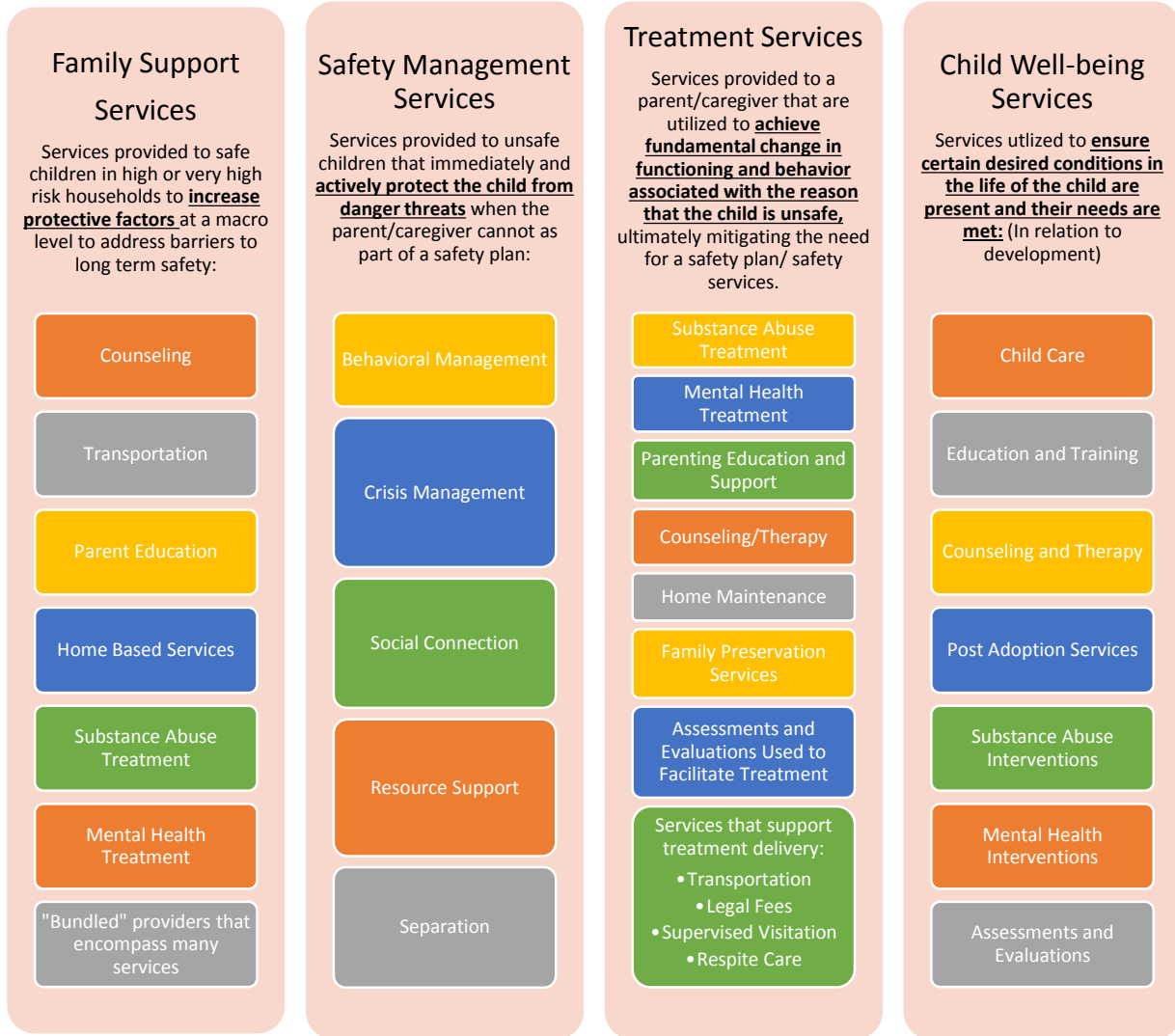
Services for children and families are delivered in all geographic areas of the state with oversight of Department regions, sheriffs (child protective investigation), or Community-Based Care Lead Agencies (CBCs) and their subcontractors. CBC contracts fully delineate the service array, including assessments (family functioning, behavioral health, and others), and individualized services based on the child and family’s needs. The goal is to improve the quality and quantity of available services statewide, especially in rural areas.

With the implementation of the practice model, Florida’s service array is defined as follows:



Florida continues to assess and address challenges with the service array in an effort to improve the quality and expand the availability of appropriate services across the state. Through this ongoing assessment process, Florida is identifying the services available within each of the four categories (or “buckets”) below:

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Adequate capacity and accessibility does not exist across the state, primarily in rural areas.

Enhanced service capacity was identified as a need in the availability and accessibility of some critical services in the more rural areas and ensuring that the services available are in alignment with Florida's practice model. To address this need, Florida is completing a service array assessment that captures every provider in the state and evaluates the services provided. The assessment will determine whether a service is evidence-based and identify the target population for the service. The assessment design is broad enough to allow for variances between each community's service needs and the community resources to develop service array while allowing for a consistent manner of assessment across the state

Across the state, there are pockets where insufficient treatment services are available, or have wait times to access treatment or child well-being services providers. Capacity building, system

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integration, and leveraging the involvement of community resources and partners will yield improvements in this area.

Expanded services, supports, and programs may include:

- Enhancement of prevention services that target parental protective factors and preventing future maltreatment.
- Development and implementation of family-centered evidence-based programs and case management practices to assess child safety; support and facilitate parents and caregivers in taking responsibility for their children's safety and well-being; enhance parent and family protective capacities; develop safety plans; and facilitate families' transition to formal and informal community-based support networks at the time of child welfare case closure.
- Evidence-based, interdisciplinary, and team-based safety management services to prevent out-of-home placement.
- Services that promote expedited permanency through reunification when feasible, or other permanency options as appropriate.
- Improved needs assessment practices that take into account the unique circumstances and characteristics of children and families.
- Long term supports for families to prevent placement recidivism.
- Strategies that increase children's access to consistent medical and dental care; improve adherence to immunization schedules and well-child check-ups; and holistically address the physical, social/emotional, and developmental needs of children.

**B. Other demonstration activities begun, completed, or that remain ongoing (e.g., introduction of new policies and procedures, staff training).**

*Oversight*– Since the October 1, 2006 implementation and subsequent renewal of the waiver in 2013, the waiver oversight committee has continued to meet via conference call or in person on as needed basis. Members of the oversight committee, co-chairs, and the evaluator attended the Annual Waiver Meeting hosted by the Children's Bureau in June 2017.

During the latter part of the report period, the Department restructured the executive oversight committee with additional members whose focus incorporates the transition from the statewide waiver. The executive sponsors are David Fairbanks, Deputy Secretary of the Department, and Lee Kaywork, Chief Executive Officer, Family Support Services of North Florida, Inc. Members of the committee include:

JoShonda Guerrier, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare  
Scott Stewart, Assistant Secretary for Administration  
Kimberly McMurray, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Children and Families  
Walter Sachs, Northwest Regional Director  
Natalie Clayton, Managing Attorney, Northwest Region  
Shawn Salamida, Chief Executive Officer, Families First Network  
Glen Casel, Chief Executive Officer, Community-Based Care of Central Florida

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John Cooper, Chief Executive Officer, Kids Central, Inc.  
Amy Simpson, Boystown  
Melissa Jaacks, Consultant, Five Points  
Sallie Bond, Operations Management Consultant Manager, Department of Children and Families

*Eligibility* –A statewide eligibility conference held in May 2017 included topics such as best practices; eligibility and the IV-E waiver; and finance, eligibility, and Florida’s Safe Families Network (FSFN). In addition, ongoing technical assistance is provided as necessary. (See V. below.)

*Fiscal Accounting and Reporting* – Procedures are in place to ensure that demonstration financial information that is reported reflects effective management of the demonstration as well as information needed by the Administration for Children and Families, Region IV Office and Central Office. This also includes assuring cost neutrality is achieved as specified in section 4.0 of the Terms and Conditions.

*Communication and Training* –Technical assistance and training is provided on an ongoing basis as needed. The Waiver Demonstration Evaluation Progress Reports are published and available through Florida’s Center for Child Welfare.  
<http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/TitleIVE.shtml>

See V. below for activities planned for next reporting period.

**C. Challenges to implementation and the steps taken to address them.**

Florida’s demonstration waiver was implemented in October 2006. To date, no significant implementation problems have been identified. Meetings are occurring on a regular basis to identify the pathway for operating Florida’s Child Welfare System outside of the demonstration waiver.

**D. All demonstrations with a trauma focus (e.g., implementing trauma screening, assessment, or trauma-focused interventions) should report on each of the data elements listed below. For activities that are not being implemented as part of the demonstration, please indicate this with “N/A.” If information is currently unknown, please indicate an approximate date that the data will be available.**

- **Target population(s) age range(s)**
- **Type of trauma screens used**
- **Number of children/youth screened for trauma**
- **Type of trauma/well-being assessments used <sup>1</sup>**
- **Include any trauma and well-being assessments for which data is available.**
- **Number of children/youth assessed for well-being/trauma**
- **Type of trauma-focused evidence-based interventions (EBI’s) used**
- **Number of children/youth receiving trauma-focused EBIs<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Include any trauma and well-being assessments for which data is available

<sup>2</sup> Include all children that have received any portion of the EBI(s).

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- **Percentage of children and youth receiving trauma-informed EBIs who report positive functioning at follow up<sup>3</sup>**

N/A for Florida.

**III. Evaluation** –The Phase 6– Florida Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Evaluation Semi-Annual Progress Report is attached.

**IV. Significant Evaluation Findings to Date**

See III. above. No significant evaluation findings identified at this point.

**V. Recommendations and Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period**

- The Department in collaboration with the CBCs will continue implementation of the practice model for on-going services cases, as well as focus on fidelity to the practice model. See VI. below.
- The Department and CBCs will continue assessment and expansion of treatment and well-being services for children to enhance the availability of evidence-based and promising practices services within the service array continuum. The service array assessment captures every provider in the state and evaluates the services provided. The assessment will determine whether the services are evidence-based as well as the target population for the service. See II. A. for detail.
- The process analysis component of the evaluation plan includes a service array assessment. A web-based service array survey was developed and administered to all CBC lead agencies in late January 2017. Six lead agencies responded to the Service Array Survey (33.3% response rate). Four additional agencies started the survey, but did not provide responses beyond which CBC agency they represent, and one agency provided a copy of their response to the service array survey previously administered by DCF. For the Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Survey, 11 lead agencies responded (61% response rate). Data from the Service Array Survey indicate that CBCs are providing a variety of Family Support and Safety Management services to prevent families from formally entering the child welfare system and to help children remain safely in their home. Based on the EBP Survey responses, Wraparound is a highly utilized service across 80 percent of responding CBCs. The most commonly reported use was as a Family Support Service. Nurturing Parenting Program was reported by 45 percent of responding CBCs. The Nurturing Parenting Program most commonly reported uses were as a Family Support Service and as a Treatment Service. The evaluator plans to follow-up with the seven CBCs that did not complete the EBP Survey.
- Ongoing meetings of the Path Forward Steering Committee will continue to identify strategies for sustaining waiver interventions following the Demonstration waiver period.

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<sup>3</sup> A jurisdiction may define “positive functioning” in any manner that is consistent with the definition used for the local evaluation of the waiver demonstration.

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**VI. Program Improvement Policies.**

The Florida Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Evaluation Interim Evaluation Report (10/01/2013 – 3-31-2016) offered policy and practice recommendations. The Office of Child Welfare leadership considered each of the recommendations and activities are underway to address the following:

1. Work with lead agencies and the Coalition to establish an authorized list of services Title IV-E funding can now be used for, allowing for a list of creative services lead agencies have put into place and out of the box thinking other agencies might learn from and be able to apply IV-E funds to in the future.

*Ongoing.* The Office of Child welfare will continue to share information on promising practices. Information is available on Florida's Center for Child Welfare.

<http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/EvidenceBasedPractice.shtml>

The workgroup established under the Service Array Priority of Effort is mapping evidence-based and promising practices supported by research that address specific conditions present within the children and families served.

2. During training and technical assistance activities related to Florida's practice model, facilitate discussion and identification of how the flexible use of IV-E funds can support the development of a more comprehensive service array.

*Ongoing.* The Office of Child Welfare and the Contract Oversight Unit continued to facilitate discussion on the flexible use of IV-E funds to support a more comprehensive service array. The Waiver Demonstration executive oversight committee expanded its members whose focus incorporates the transition from the statewide waiver and sustaining a comprehensive service array.

3. As new leaders emerge in Florida's child welfare system at state and community levels, provide educational opportunities regarding the vision and goals of Florida's IV-E Demonstration.

*Ongoing.* The Department continues to identify opportunities for communication with the Regions, CBC leadership, and other partners. The Florida Coalition for Children and Families continues to hold monthly conference calls with leadership, operations, fiscal officers, and case management. Two sub-committees under this umbrella are Finance and Eligibility.

4. The Department and CBCs should continue to jointly develop and implement strategies to address the high turnover rates among case managers and child protective investigators.

*Ongoing.* Robust activities are occurring at various levels throughout the Department. The Department is preparing a legislative report (due October 1) on Child Protective Investigator and Child Protective Investigator Supervisor Educational Qualifications, Turnover, and Working Conditions Status Report. Developing and retaining a qualified and highly proficient workforce remains the Department's top priority while continuing to evaluate and prioritize ways to strengthen outcomes for Florida's families.

The Florida Institute for Child Welfare, Florida State University, is leading a 5-year longitudinal study, Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families, of newly hired child

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protective investigators and case managers to study the individual and organizational influences on child welfare workforce retention and ultimately, child and family outcomes.

<http://ficw.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/imported/storage/original/application/03581454899c1340cdbc46dc5a0a608f.pdf>

Additionally, the Department implemented an operationalized predictive model with MindShare Technology to help mitigate Child Protective Investigator turnover.

5. The Department and CBCs should continue to work toward long-term sustainability of child welfare funding mechanisms and additional ways to leverage state and federal fiscal resources.

*Ongoing.* The Department is analyzing all state and federal funding sources for child welfare, developing legislative requests, and identifying activities and ways to leverage state and federal resources for long-term sustainability. A major activity for the Executive Oversight committee (see B.) is to address sustainability of child welfare services and necessary funding following the waiver period. The path forward envisions utilizing Title IV-E options for programs such as candidacy, Guardianship Assistance, and extended foster care. These Title IV-E options provide the necessary leverage to re-invest IV-E funds in the practice model.

6. Review current outreach strategies and educational opportunities for key stakeholders external to DCF including the judicial system, Guardians ad Litem, and providers. Discuss ways to increase engagement around training events.

*Ongoing.* The Department continuously reviews and engages in opportunities to increase involvement at various training events. The Office of Child Welfare and the Office of Court Improvement meet monthly. The waiver demonstration is one of the topics on the agenda. Most recently in August 2017, the Department and the Office of Court Improvement hosted the annual Dependency Summit. The Dependency Summit is a major training event for all involved with Florida's child welfare system. Participants include judiciary, foster parents, adoptive parents, foster youth, former foster youth, child welfare professionals, providers, attorneys, Department leadership, and other stakeholders.

7. Continue public relations and media campaigns with legal partners, external partners, and the community that includes examples of success with individual families. Discuss the impact of negative media attention and strategies to maintain a positive organizational environment while still being responsive to individual events.

*Ongoing.* The Department's Communications Office is working to tell the Department's story before the media. Additionally, Communications is sharing success stories and information in general with the public. One example is the Department's Child Fatality web site. <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/childfatality/>

The Department, in collaboration with Florida's Children First and Florida Youth Shine, launched an advocacy project – *Our Voice, Our Stories*. This is a collection of ten digital storytelling videos by Florida's Youth Shine.

<http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/YouthSpace/DigitalStories.shtml>



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8. Continue to provide ongoing training, coaching, and mentoring for both CPIs and case managers on the implementation of Florida's practice model, including ongoing assessment and monitoring of fidelity to identify areas of focus for continuous quality improvement efforts.

*Ongoing.* Training, coaching, mentoring on Florida's practice model as well as assessment and monitoring are integral to the practice model and fidelity. As of October 4, 2017, 73.3% of ongoing services cases utilize the practice model. The implementation of Florida's practice model continues a primary focus for the Department. Using implementation drivers, Florida has continued its journey through initial implementation focusing on skill building and staff development, using data and continuous quality improvement to further model fidelity, operationalizing the practice through policy and guidance, supporting the practice through leadership and FSFN (SACWIS system) functionality.

The Rapid Safety Feedback case review process for Child Protective Investigations and in-home services cases integrates immediate mentoring, coaching, and corrective action as needed. Rapid Safety Feedback case reviews target open investigations because this affords an opportunity to identify activities that need additional attention before making final decisions and closing an investigation. The Community-Based Care Lead Agencies also complete Rapid Safety Feedback reviews designed to flag key risk factors in in-home services cases that could gravely affect a child's safety. The critical component of the process is the case consultation in which the reviewer engages the child case manager and the supervisor in a discussion about the case.

9. Ensure that standardized processes and expectations for collaborative casework between CPIs and case managers are in place and adhered to, such as joint home visits and family assessments during the transition from investigation to case management.

*Ongoing.* Standard processes and expectations are integral to the practice model and ongoing services for children and parents. The Department in collaboration with the CBCs developed, revised, and published operating procedures that describe the practice model, provide process and procedure, and outline expectations. These are available on the Department's web site and on Florida's Center for Child Welfare.

<http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/DeptOperatingProcedures.shtml>

The standardized process for developing and revising operating procedures involves extensive collaboration. A workgroup comprised of Department representation, CBC representation, child welfare professional supervisors, legal, foster parents, and other related stakeholders develop or modify each operating procedure.

The Department and the Florida Coalition for Children embarked on several Strategic Initiatives focusing on practice alignment and performance improvement.

10. Encourage among CBCs the expansion of approaches such as family team conferencing, family group decision making, or family group conferencing at the front-end of system involvement. These family-centered approaches contribute to greater system collaboration and cohesion since all concerned parties come to the table, facilitate greater clarity for families about the system and expectations, and engage families in the identification of their needs and supports.

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*Complete.* The Department in collaboration with the CBCs developed and published operating procedures that describe the practice model, provide process and procedure, and outline expectations. The operating procedures include family team conferencing, family group decision making and other family centered approaches. These are available on the Department's web site and on Florida's Center for Child Welfare.

11. CBCs should ensure that service providers comply with contract language relating to the evaluation and demonstration of service effectiveness and requirements for assessing and reporting client outcomes to the child welfare agency/case manager.

*Complete.* This is a contractual requirement. The Department revised the process for contract monitoring. The revised process should identify CBCs with service providers who are not meeting expectations.

12. Continue to identify strategies to fill current service gaps at the community-level.

*Ongoing.* The Secretary of the Department of Children and Families identified a full service array of child welfare services for children served by the child welfare system as a Priority of Effort (POE) focus area. Key activities are underway to increase availability and access to services for children served by the child welfare system in both in-home and out-of-home care.

13. Develop funding strategies to fill current service gaps at the community-level and expand the availability of providers who offer in-home services.

*Ongoing.* Each year the Office of Child Welfare (OCW) prepares Legislative Budget Requests (LBRs) to address service gaps. Examples of the 2018-19 LBRs include funding requests for a Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program, enhanced services for human trafficking victims, child protection workforce stability, etc. The path forward envisions utilizing Title IV-E options for programs such as candidacy, Guardianship Assistance, and extended foster care. These Title IV-E options provide the necessary leverage to re-invest IV-E funds in the practice model.

14. To further prevent re-entry into out-of-home care, more intensive services, such as frequent visitations by a case manager, in-home parent education, and various supports (e.g., providing information about specific resources, connecting families with necessary services) should be provided to families immediately after reunification or adoption.

*Ongoing.* The Office of Child Welfare (OCW) Performance and Quality Management division prioritized re-entry as a Six Sigma "black-belt" project to determine root causes and identify strategies for improvement. The Department completed a black belt analysis to inform what strategies need to be in place. The Florida Institute for Child Welfare is researching evidence-based and promising practices across the country as well as the feasibility of the recommendations. Additionally public facing data indicators dashboard is available to monitor the outcome quarterly.

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/performance/dashboard/>