

I. Project Implementation: Using Comprehensive Family Assessments to Improve Child Welfare Outcomes

A. Major Activities and Accomplishments

Goals/Objectives (FY-08)	Responsible Parties	Projected Completion Date
Attended the Federal grantees kick-off meeting in Washington D.C.	ACTION, RYC, County Directors, Project Manager and State DHR Administrators	Completed November 2007
Hired a Project Manager and completed assignments of State Project Consultants.	Alabama DHR	Completed December 2007
Established a Project Leadership Team (PTL) and developed operating procedures. The PLT was formed to direct, oversee and facilitate the implementation of Alabama's Comprehensive Assessment Process (CAP) in the three pilot sites.	State office leadership in collaboration with ACTION	Completed January 2007
Preliminary implementation and evaluation meetings were conducted with County Directors, Administrators, Supervisors, State Department of Human Resources Personnel, State and County Quality Assurance Coordinators. The purposes for the meetings were: (1) to review the current structure of state information systems, data collection methods, and casework practice and decision-making methods, (2) to provide county Directors and Administrators with an overview of the Alabama CAP.	ACTION RYC	Completed January 2008
Facilitated a forum for field supervisors to provide an overview of the Federal Initiative on the Comprehensive Assessment project and review Alabama's CAP. A question and answer session was held regarding activities and steps for implementation and a consideration for implications for implementation	ACTION	Completed January 2008

Goals/Objectives (FY-08)	Responsible Parties	Projected Completion Date
effectiveness and fidelity.		
Identify CAP fidelity criteria	ACTION, RYC, Alabama CAP Project Manager	Completed January 2008
Practice and decision-making standards around Intake assessment, Initial Family Assessment, Protective Capacity Family Assessment, and ISP Review were drafted and submitted to Alabama DHR for review.	ACTION	Initial Draft Completed December 2007- 2 nd Draft Revised in January 2008
Regularly scheduled teleconferences have occurred related to implementation activities and project management generally, and specifically associated with the formation of implementation support teams; pre-implementation preparation; and review of CAP practice and decision-making standards.	ACTION Alabama DHR	Ongoing
Structured review of 118 randomly selected case records was completed to assess and analyze the status of current practice and decision making in the pilot sites in comparison to the proposed CAP, which will be used to inform the strategic plan for implementation.	ACTION/ RYC Project Leadership Team Pilot Site Consultants	Completed February 2008
Analyzed aggregate statewide data to make recommendations about the best choice of comparison counties to minimize selection bias in the research design.	RYC	Completed February 2008
Discussed differences and similarities between current policy and intervention approaches and the CAP fidelity criteria with state leadership.	ACTION Project Leadership Team	Completed March 2008

Dissemination Activities

Upon receiving notification of the grant award, The State of Alabama Department of Human Resources posted an announcement on the official website for the Department. There were also several newspaper articles

announcing the grant award in the large metropolitan areas. (“The Montgomery Advisor” and “The Birmingham News”).

Other Activities

As a result of some of concerns raised with regard to policy changes, the Project Leadership Team has met several times to strategically plan next steps for implementing the project. We are planning meetings with pilot site Directors and Managers. We are also trying to plan implementation in stages.

B. Challenges/Barriers

We have encountered a few minor issues in initiating the project with regard to policy and procedures. In discussing some of the changes in casework practice, we received feedback that with current caseloads, changing timeframes for staff could result in worker burnout. We have now decided to reframe the changes to reflect more of a standard for best practice rather than a change to policy and procedures.

C. Technical Assistance

Upon receiving the Grant, we requested and were granted approval for The National Resource Center for Child Protective Services to review Alabama’s Child Protective Services and Out-of-Home Care Policy to determine its compatibility to the components of the grant. The policy review has been completed, and currently we are trying to develop guidelines that will help us to achieve the goals for the grant.

D. Changes (Additions and Deletions) from Original Application or Implementation Plan

At this time, we have not made any formal changes or additions to the original application. With regard to the implementation plan, there have been no formal changes made; however, we are having meetings with the Project Leadership Team to determine the best way to implement the project.

E. Contextual Events or Community Changes

Over the past six months, there have been no significant contextual conditions or events. There has been no change in the communities of the three pilot counties.

F. Lessons Learned

During the initial planning stages, we encountered an issue with regard to the changes in policy for best practice. We decided to reframe the policy and present more as a standard of practice rather than a change to policy. We also learned that it may be best to implement the project in stages as opposed to implementing all at one time.

G. Activities Planned for the Next Reporting Period

Develop an Evaluation Advisory Team to provide ongoing feedback to the evaluation design and implementation plans. The Evaluation Advisory Team will include representatives from the RYC and other faculty at the University of Maryland, ACTION, and Alabama state agency personnel.	RYC	April 2008
Developed a comprehensive logic model with outputs developed a comprehensive logic model with quality outputs, and outcomes for the process, practice and outcome evaluation.	RYC ACTION Alabama DHR	April 2008
Convene meeting with county directors and state administrators to review implementation fidelity criteria and establish commitment regarding timeframes for proceeding with the next steps of CAP implementation.	ACTION RYC	April 2008
Develop strategic plan for implementation of the CAP and submit for review and approval by management team.	Project Leadership Team	April 2008
Develop a data user agreement and data sharing plan for state and county level administrative data.	RYC Alabama DHR	April 2008
RYC will complete and submit a human subjects research protocol to the University of Maryland Institutional Review Board to ensure that the rights of all participants in the research study are protected.	RYC	April 2008
The CAP intervention standards will be reviewed by the pilot sites and finalized.	ACTION Project Leadership Team Alabama DHR	May- June 2008

	County Pilot Site Directors and Standards Advisory Team	
An Intake Assessment curriculum will be developed and submitted for review.	ACTION	May 2008
An Initial Family Assessment and Safety Assessment and Analysis curriculum will be developed and submitted for review.	ACTION	May 2008
Initial Family Assessment worker field guides will be conceptualized and designed, and a plan for operationalizing the field guides will be developed.	ACTION	June 2008
Initial Family Assessment (IFA) supervisor consultation guides will be conceptualized and designed and a plan for operationalizing the supervisor guides will be developed.	ACTION	June 2008
The Protect Leadership Team will receive extensive training, consultation and technical assistance in the CAP.	ACTION Project Leadership Team	May-July 2008
The Project Leadership Team will complete a workload analysis and begin considering strategies for workload management.	ACTION Project Leadership Team Pilot Site Consultants	July 2008
Intake staff and supervisors will be trained using the Intake Assessment curriculum.	ACTION	July-August 2008
Initial Family Assessment staff and supervisors will be trained using the Initial Family Assessment and Safety Assessment and Analysis curriculum.	ACTION	August-September 2008
Post training consultation and coaching strategies will be developed to support continued staff/supervisor development and competency building related to the Intake Assessment and the Initial Family Assessment.	ACTION Project Leadership Team	September 2008
Form county specific pilot site CAP "Special Forces" implementation teams that will collaborate with the Project Leadership Team in developing and operationalizing specific implementation strategies and activities targeted to each of the county	Project Leadership Team ACTION County Pilot Sites	July 2008

pilot sites.		
--------------	--	--

Develop instruments and protocols to collect primary data as defined in the evaluation plan. All data collection instruments will be submitted to the Evaluation Advisory Team for review and comment.	RYC Evaluation Advisory Team	July 2008
The Protective Capacity Family Assessment and ISP Review curriculum will be developed and submitted to the Department for review.	ACTION	November 2008
Protective Capacity Family Assessment and Ongoing Safety Intervention worker field guides and supervisory consultation guides will be developed to support implementation and institutionalization of standardized practice and decision making.	ACTION	November-December 2008