

ARIZONA CHILD WELFARE WAIVER DEMONSTRATION SEMI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

I. Overview

Provide a brief summary of major demonstration activities completed to date, as well of any significant evaluation findings. Summarize any major changes to the design of the demonstration or to the evaluation since the previous semi-annual report (NOTE: Any significant changes to the design of the proposed demonstration or evaluation must be approved by the Children's Bureau before they are implemented).

The Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS, Department) began initial implementation of Arizona's Title IV-E waiver demonstration project, known as Fostering Sustainable Connections (FSC), on July 1, 2016. The reporting period of this semi-annual report is July 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018.

During this time, the contracted agency, Arizona's Children Association employed three additional Family Engagement Specialists (FES) and one Supervisor. These additional FES will support multiple Site Based Teams (SBT), but will focus on youth placed in a single group home identified as having a large population of youth eligible for the program.

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.

Fostering Sustainable Connections attempts to reduce the time children spend in congregate care settings by enhancing family/fictive kin search and engagement activities, introducing a new Team Decision-Making (TDM) type, and supporting the action plans created in partnership with the family/fictive kin with available in-home reunification, placement stabilization, and other needed services. The work of the Family Engagement Specialists is a key factor for achieving the desired outcomes. In order to track the work the FESs are completing, they are required, monthly, to enter data into the FES Tracking Workbook. This assists the FES supervisors, the Department, and ASU to evaluate program fidelity and outcomes. The data collected in the workbook include:

- Total number of children referred to FSC
- Age of child
- 'Before FSC' placement type
- Engagement activities the FES completed with child/youth
- Pre-FSC Family/Supports identified
- Database searches used
- 'After FSC' placement type

- Post-FSC Family/Supports found
- Services identified & referred during FSC
- The number of children receiving Blended Perspective and Life Long Connections Meetings

To date, the FESs have worked to engage 365 children and their family/fictive kin. The children's ages ranged from four to eighteen years old, all of whom were in either in shelter or group home settings at the start of the FES's involvement. Innovative Family Finding activities have included 94 connectedness maps, three eco maps, twelve genograms, 181 mobility maps, 54 safety circles, and 50 trees of life, and Family Finding interviews of 349 children. Database searches have been conducted through the DCS Family Locate Unit, Lexis Nexis, Seneca, White pages, Zaba Search, and social media. For the 265 children whose services have been closed, these search and engagement activities have resulted in 62 (23%) children being placed with relatives, 34 (12%) pending placement with relatives, and 38 (14%) placed in less restrictive family-like settings. These activities also identified an additional 2,207 family members and other individuals as supports for the children. Services put in place for children and their family/fictive kin included 44 referrals for behavioral health services, 38 linked to community-based services, and 11 referrals for in-home services.

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

With the advent of using contracted FESs to perform the work of FSC, the contracted staff needed to receive the same training as the Department's FESs. This is to maintain fidelity to the FSC model and to fully prepare them for this work. Eleven contracted staff received the FSC overview training and the Department's database training during this reporting period. In addition to training, contracted staff continue to participate in the statewide implementation team and site-based teams. A peer-to-peer learning convening is offered quarterly as additional support to members of the site-based teams, most recently in November 2018. Success stories were shared by the FESs and common topics/challenges were discussed. Future learning collaborates will include members from the new site-based teams and the expansion offices.

The FSC communication committee continues to include internal and community stakeholders, including court personnel and child advocacy group representatives. The last meeting was in December of 2018. The goal of the committee is to develop ongoing communication about the progress of FSC, which includes implementation updates and success stories. The committee has been successful in continuing to spread the word about FSC and has been an immense support in identifying the right type of communication to reach the courts, Department staff, and community.

Updates have been made to the FSC procedures and FES standard work to include clarification regarding the process workflow, the selection of children for FSC, and documentation of FES activities. In addition, the FES Tracking Workbook was updated

and streamlined in a way to gather the data in a more efficient manner. This has improved data collection in the master summary report. Additional updates have been made to the documentation of the family and child contacts made by the FESs. A new monthly report has been designed to contain all monthly contacts, a family contact sheet, and an overview page which can be provided to the court. This report was successfully rolled out being used by the FESs as of August of 2018.

Blended Perspectives Meetings (BPMs) are facilitated by the FESs, and bring the family and other key participants together to connect or reconnect the child and family. This meeting brings together the family network and others who support the child to provide a blended perspective so family/fictive kin that do not know the child or have not been in contact with the child for some time can learn about the child and his or her greatest strengths and needs. There have been 83 BPMs held with a total of 568 family members and supports. Fidelity monitoring continues through observation of BPMs. One fidelity observation per FES is completed each quarter by a member of the Permanency & Youth Services Team utilizing a monitoring tool, the BPM Quality Assurance summary report.

The Department has fully transitioned the Family Finding Training Curriculum from the Family Finding Purveyor. The Department's training team, Permanency & Youth Services Team, and contracted staff facilitated the most recent Family Finding Cohort that ended in April 2018. The Department now has full ability to facilitate the training for internal or external stakeholders.

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

Fostering Sustainable Connections had one challenge during this reporting period that required use of adaptive measures to continue the program with minimal interruption or negative effects. The child welfare agency contracted to provide FESs has experienced turnover and delays in onboarding new staff, which has impacted the number of children serviced.

Each site-based team has remained motivated and supportive of implementation. New staff and leadership have embraced FSC while balancing all priorities of the Department. The Department's Permanency and Youth Services Team continues to be actively involved with each office to address the barriers due to FES staff turnover impacting the number of children served in the program.

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 used¹
- 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 EBIs²
- Percentage of children and youth receiving trauma-informed EBIs who report positive functioning at follow up³
- Number of parents/caregivers:
 - Screened for trauma
 - Assessed for trauma
 - Treated for trauma
- Number of clinicians trained in trauma-focused EBIs⁴

Section II should address both activities and accomplishments that have been completed to date as well as any that remain in progress or that have been delayed. It may be helpful to include an updated work plan or Gantt chart that highlights progress in implementing the demonstration.

The Arizona Title IV-E waiver demonstration project does not include a trauma focus; thus this section does not apply.

III. Evaluation Status

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

- A. Numbers of children and families assigned to the demonstration (including to any comparison/control groups if appropriate); note if current sample sizes differ significantly from original sample size estimates.

For the first year of the waiver demonstration project (July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017), 60 children had been interviewed for the child well-being sub-study as planned, including 30 from FSC and 30 from a matched comparison group. It was later discovered that three of the comparison group children were 18 years of age at the time of the interview, thus bringing the total of matched pairs for Year 1 to 27. In addition, 10 qualitative interviews with children and four interviews with adult caregivers were completed as part of the process evaluation study on engagement and satisfaction, the plan was for 10 and 10.

For Year 2 (July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018), 66 children were interviewed for the child well-being study, or 33 matched pairs bringing the total to 60 which met the goal for Years 1 and 2. Permission to use social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat) was granted by DCS to help locate and contact youth for follow-up interviews once they turn 18 years of age. Fifty of the 57 Year 1 cohort children were re-interviewed in Year 2 (28 intervention and 22 comparison group children). The seven children from Year 1 who were

¹ Include any trauma and well-being assessments for which data is available.

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

³ A jurisdiction may define "positive functioning" in any manner that is consistent with the definition used for the local evaluation of the waiver demonstration.

⁴ This may include initial training and follow-up training.

not interviewed in Year 2 were unable to be located or were unwilling to participate in follow-up interviews. In addition, for Year 2, 10 qualitative interviews with children and 15 interviews with adult caregivers were completed as part of the process evaluation study that examines engagement and satisfaction. At the end of Year 2, the goal was met for 20 child interviews, and was one person short of 20 adult caregiver interviews as the interview was scheduled and rescheduled; thus, not completed.

Currently, for Year 3 (beginning July 1, 2018), 27 of the 30 targeted intervention children were interviewed as of December 27, 2018, in Maricopa, Pima, and Pinal Counties. Seven of the 57 Year 1 cohort children were re-interviewed (six intervention and one comparison group child), and 14 of the 66 Year 2 cohort (only intervention children) were interviewed. Efforts will continue to contact all Year 1 and Year 2 cohort children regardless of whether or not they participated in the second interview. ASU conducted propensity score matching to create the comparison group sample for Years 1 and 2 of the project, and will continue this method for Year 3 (the data file was received from DCS in October, 2018). This matching procedure involves determining the common variables available for the children in the implementation offices and the pool of potential matches of children in the non-intervention offices. ASU uses the birthdate of the individual child, age of the individual child at removal, congregate care type, number of placements, number of removals, gender, and race as the variables to match the children who receive FSC to those who do not receive FSC. As of now, four children and zero caretaker qualitative interviews on engagement and satisfaction were completed of the targeted 10 children and 11 adult caregiver interviews for the desired total of 30 child and 30 adult interviews for the 3 years.

The Year 1 cohort of 30 intervention children were not randomly selected as planned, as there were fewer FESs than anticipated; thus, fewer children served. As a result, ASU interviewed children from the intervention group as they became available. A random selection procedure was still not possible in Year 2. Although it appeared the capacity would increase with additional FESs from contracted providers; due to turnover and other barriers, the capacity of the FESs did not increase to the extent it would allow for random selection. Thus, selecting cases/children occurred as new cases served by the FESs became available. The in-person data collection protocols worked well and were continued until the sample size ($n = 66$) was reached for Year 2 of the evaluation. For the Year 3 cohort, the intervention children were randomly sampled, as there was a sufficient number of children served by internal and contracted FESs.

- B. Major evaluation activities and events (e.g., primary and secondary data collection, data analysis, database development).

Process Evaluation Activities: The major process evaluation activities completed to date include the following:

- a. **Context:** In Years 1 and 2, individuals for key stakeholder interviews were identified and ASU created a semi-structured interview guide. In Year 1, 15 interviews were completed and the results of the interviews were reported in July 2017 (see Exhibit A). Year Two, focused on non-Waiver activities that occurred within the Department and outside through partner agencies and state, local, and

legislative changes that may directly or indirectly influence the Waiver outcomes (see Exhibit B).

- b. **Fidelity:** Fidelity measures (adapted from the Family Finding Model) were collected from the case file reviews from the intervention offices. To date, 30 of the targeted 60 intervention case files for Years 1 and 2 have been reviewed. A database was created to enter data from the fidelity measures to analyze and report (see Exhibit C). A second database was created to enter service data from the case file reviews upon completion of Year 1 case file reviews, these data will be entered and analyzed now that the 57 Year 1 case file reviews are almost complete. Fidelity is also assessed through observation, including 14 site-based team meetings (see Exhibit D for Year 2 site-based team summary of 12 offices), one Blended Perspective, and two Life Long Connection meetings. An online survey targeting FESs was conducted and a report of findings was shared with the evaluation committee (see Exhibit E).
- **Readiness:** ASU conducted Organizational Readiness for Change (ORC) surveys and completed the reports as the intervention was rolled out. Year 2 offices included; Gilbert, three locations in Pima County, Thunderbird, Casa Grande, Apache Junction, Glendale, Peoria, South Mountain, Permanency, Northern Region, and West 101 (see Exhibits F through P). For Year 3, there have not been any intervention rollouts.
- **Collaboration:** ASU conducted the third and final administration of the Wilder Collaboration survey (Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 2001) and reported a comparison between Year 1, 2 and 3 administrations of the Wilder Collaboration survey in December 2018 (see Exhibit Q).
- **Implementation Drivers and Action Plan Adherence:** ASU initially completed the Implementation Drivers Assessment Process, National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) (Fixsen, Blasé, Naoom, & Duda, 2015) for the initial implementation stage and created an action plan listing individuals responsible, deadlines, and priority. A decision was made with the FSC evaluation committee to update the action plan at each monthly meeting. In April 2018, the Department of Child Safety took over responsibility for updating the action plan items and leading the FSC evaluation committee monthly discussion meetings (see updated template used by DCS in Exhibit R). This change was purposeful to contribute to the sustainability of the practice beyond the evaluation.
- **Engagement and Satisfaction:** Discussed in Section III A. above.

Outcome Evaluation Overview: The major outcome evaluation activities completed in this reporting period include the following:

- **Services and Family/Fictive Kin Identified:** ASU met with DCS on transfer of case record information: 1) service needs, referrals, and timely access of services; and 2) number of family/fictive kin identified and involved in the case (includes number of searches). The secure file transfer protocol information was shared. Currently, ASU is developing an updated data sharing agreement. In October 2018, ASU received all Year 1 case files (30 intervention and 27 comparison group children) to review and document identified services and family/fictive. In November 2018, ASU began receiving Year 2 case files (15 of the targeted 66).

A case file review tool was developed to identify service needs and chart service referrals, as well as receipt of services, and people involved in the child's life. The tool was reviewed and approved at a FSC evaluation committee meeting and is being used as a data collection tool to conduct case file reviews. A database was created to enter service and identified family data from the case file reviews. To date, the case files of 30 intervention and 25 comparison group children targeted in Year 1 have been reviewed.

- **Permanency:** See Section V, Number 5 below.
- **Safety:** See Section V, Number 5 below.
- **Stability & Restrictiveness of Living Environment:** ASU analyzed change in restrictiveness of living environments from Year 1 and the first half of Year 2, July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 and plotted graphs illustrating change in restrictiveness for children in congregate care during the intervention period in two of the intervention offices (Tempe and Avondale). Specifically, the graphs show the changes in restrictiveness through placement type changes, and number of placement moves (stability) (see Exhibit S). The chart on placement stability show a relatively high level of movement from group home to group home.
- **Days in Congregate Care after Implementation:** See Section V, Number 5 below.
- **Social/Emotional Wellbeing:** ASU developed an electronic scoring program for the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale-2 (BERS-2) instrument and scored all first and second year cohort instruments for the child well-being sub-study as well as the second administration of the BERS-2 for Cohort 1 Year 2 (see Exhibit T).
- **Rate of Exit from Congregate Care:** ASU plotted graphs of entry and exit from congregate care for 12 urban offices in Maricopa County. Tempe and Avondale offices were charted 12 months into the intervention period and 24 months prior to the intervention to establish a baseline (see Exhibit U). Further, ASU compared pre and post entry and exit rates from congregate care in the Tempe and Avondale offices. Exits were classified as favorable, neutral, or unfavorable.

Cost Evaluation Overview:

Service costs at the individual level are currently being documented as reported in the case records. ASU will follow up with DCS in Year 3 for additional cost data at the individual level to develop the most thorough cost estimate for Years 1 and 2. The analysis will be reported by yearly cohort. The comparison group is from the matched sample and is comprised of children served by those offices yet to implement FSC within Year 1 and Year 2.

- C. Challenges to the implementation of the evaluation and the steps taken to address them.

Accessing case files for review has been a significant barrier in Years 1 and 2 of the evaluation. Out of a total of 120 scheduled case file reviews, 75 were accessed, and 60 were completed by the first half of Year 3. However, the Permanency & Youth Services team found a solution to overcome this barrier and case files are now received on a bi-monthly or monthly basis.

IV. Significant Evaluation Findings to Date

Summarize any significant process, outcome, or cost evaluation findings available to date. (NOTE: Evaluation findings may also be presented in a separate report or addendum to the semi-annual progress report prepared by the jurisdiction's evaluator).

Please see reports including:

1. Stakeholder report (Exhibit A)
2. Context report (Exhibit B)
3. FSC Fidelity report (Exhibit C)
4. Site-based Team Summary (Exhibit D)
5. Family Engagement Survey (Exhibit E)
6. Organizational Readiness Survey reports (Exhibits F-P)
7. Wilder Collaboration Survey report (Exhibit Q)
8. NIRN Drivers Assessment action plan summary (Exhibit R)
9. Restrictiveness of Living Environment graph(s) (Exhibit S)
10. Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale-2 (Exhibit T)
11. Entry and Exit graph(s) (Exhibit U)
12. Manuscript on measurement of socioemotional well-being (Exhibit V) was reviewed and approved by DCS to submit for publication,
13. Conceptual manuscript on child well-being submitted for publication and currently being revised for resubmission (Exhibit W)

V. Recommendations and Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

Describe major demonstration and evaluation activities that will be started, continued, or discontinued during the subsequent reporting period. Highlight any recommendations for changes to the design and implementation of the demonstration or evaluation based on challenges encountered during the current or prior reporting period, or based on evaluation findings to date (please see earlier caveat about securing prior approval from the Children's Bureau).

As mentioned in the previous semi-annual report, the Department continues the process of onboarding new FESs with a contracted provider. All will be provided with foundational training and Family Finding techniques hands-on training. Full implementation is now in place in fifteen offices and across multiple regions in the State. . In the remaining time of the demonstration project, it is anticipated that the number of children receiving FSC services will increase.

The Department's Permanency & Youth Services Team will continue to support each office by providing ongoing technical assistance and peer-to-peer learning opportunities. Members of each office's site-based team are also on the statewide implementation team, which allows for continual feedback to be provided to the team while working through any barriers. This support will be provided to the newest locations in the form of initial orientation, as well as continuing technical support once leadership from each site assumes responsibility for the site-based team.

ASU will continue to complete the following tasks:

1. Continue to conduct site visits at the 15 DCS intervention offices using a semi-structured interview guide to gather data on implementation strengths and challenges; as well as observe TDM Life Long Connections meetings and Blended Perspective Meetings
2. Analyze services and family finding data from Year 1 case file reviews
3. Analyze data from Year 2 FES's fidelity tool, and service and family/fictive kin identification that are included in the case files reviews.
4. Analyze DCS data on entry and exit from congregate care, days in congregate care for those achieving permanency, legal permanency, safety (substantiated reports post permanency), stability (re-entry post permanency), and changes in restrictiveness charted until December 31, 2017.
5. Begin interviews to update and complete the Waiver Implementation Context report to include Year 3 Waiver and non-Waiver activities that may influence FSC outcomes as well as solicit additional feedback on the current Context Report.
6. Request Year 1 DCS Cost data to analyze cost changes in congregate care and services; and case level costs between the intervention and comparison group children.