

Strategies Worksheet for CJI Priority Goals for 2014 - 2015

CJI Priority Goals

For 2012 – 2015, the Children’s Justice Initiative (CJI) is focusing on the following priority goals:

- Implementing a trauma-informed child welfare system in each county
- Implementing Northstar Care for Children to provide better support for children in foster care
- Achieving timely permanency for all children in foster care, including planning for older youth
- Improving child wellbeing outcomes, including focusing on educational stability; addressing physical and mental health needs; and decreasing prenatally-exposure to alcohol and other drugs
- Finding families to reduce the number of children in foster care
- Collaborating with tribes to implement the letter of the law and the spirit of the ICWA

For the 2014 Regional CJI Team Meetings, CJI is focusing on implementing a trauma-informed child welfare system and Northstar Care for Children.

Instructions for Using the Strategies Worksheet

1. Review your county data and discuss its implications (strengths and challenges) for good outcomes for children and how the data relates to one or more of the CJI priority goals.
2. For each of the six CJI goals listed above, identify at least one strategy (examples are listed below) your team agrees to implement in your county to change practice, procedure, training, or other step in an effort to realize improved outcomes for that goal.
3. Decide how your CJI team will measure whether the strategy is working and improvement is being made (examples are included with each strategy example listed below).
4. Over the coming months, use your CJI team meetings to repeat this process.

Examples of Strategies and Outcome Measures for Each Priority Goal

GOAL: Implement a Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System

- Strategy example 1: Ensure the child and parents have been assessed for historical trauma and that agency reports to the court include information offered by parents and children regarding traumas and losses experienced by family members and ancestors and their impact on the child and family.
 - Why: Historical trauma (e.g., Indian boarding schools) has an ongoing impact on children and families.
 - Measure: Percent of mental health screenings increases.
- Strategy example 2: The court orders treatment based on diagnostic assessment recommendations and referrals to providers trained in evidence-based practices.
 - Why: Children who have adverse childhood experiences require treatment by an appropriate mental health professional.
 - Measure: Agency reports to the court include information from the child’s mental health providers.

- Strategy example 3: Agency, child's GAL, child's attorney, and child's caregivers will help the child to identify existing or potential trauma triggers for the child and coping skills to manage the child's reaction.
 - Why: Practices in foster home settings and/or in court can be triggering events and/or traumatizing to the child.
 - Measure: Children report feeling safe and experiencing less trauma.

- Strategy example 4: Those working in the child protection system have enhanced effectiveness and job satisfaction because they attend to symptoms of secondary traumatic stress in themselves and their co-workers.
 - Why: Judges, attorneys, social workers, GALs, foster parents, and others working in the child protection system can be affected by their ongoing work with abused and neglected children and their families.
 - Measure: Child protection system personnel report less (or more controlled) stress and anxiety related to their work.

- See additional examples in the orange colored document entitled "Action Plan: What Can You Do."

GOAL: Implement Northstar Care for Children

- Strategy example 1: Ensure that judicial reviews from the very beginning of the child's placement address the child's need to be in foster care and the child's needs while in foster care, and that decisions made about the child's placement are on the record, in court orders, and will qualify for Northstar Care.
 - Why: Benefits for Northstar Care for children will not apply if the appropriate findings are not made on the record and in court orders.
 - Measure: Hearing transcripts and court orders include the required findings.

- Strategy example 2: By at least the 6-month permanency progress review hearing, judge inquires about Plan B for the child; if a strong Plan B is not yet in place, the court asks the agency about what further work needs to be done to get one in place immediately.
 - Why: If a child cannot be returned home due to lack of physical and/or emotional safety, then a legally permanent alternative home is required.
 - Measure: Agency and GAL reports always include updates regarding the status of the child's Plan B (concurrent permanency plan).

GOAL: Improved Child Wellbeing Outcomes: Children Have Educational Stability

- Strategy example 1: Ensure there is one adult paying close attention to the child's educational stability and progress.
 - Why: This avoids the result of diffuse responsibility, which means everyone thinks someone else is paying attention and, in reality, no one is pay attention to educational stability.
 - Measure: The court knows who will be responsible for paying close attention to the child's educational progress and receives regular reports from that person about the child's educational stability.

- Strategy example 2: Agency and child's guardian ad litem routinely report to the court on child's educational stability and progress.
 - Why: Regular reporting and review help sustain efforts to maintain educational stability and achievement.
 - Measure: Agency and GAL reports always include updates regarding the child's educational status.

- Strategy example 3: Judge routinely enquires about child's educational stability and progress.
 - Why: Judge's interest helps sustain efforts to maintain the child's educational stability and achievement.
 - Measure: Stakeholders report that judge routinely asks age-appropriate questions about the child's educational status and progress.

GOAL: Improved Child Wellbeing Outcomes: Physical and Mental Health Needs of Children in Foster Care are Assessed

- Example 1: Ensure there is one adult paying close attention to the child's health care, including communication among health care providers and those responsible for prescribing and administering medication.
 - Why: This avoids the result of diffuse responsibility which is no one is responsible.
 - Measure: The judges knows who the identified individual is and receives regular reports from this person about the child's health care.

- Example 2: Agency and child's guardian ad litem routinely report to the court on child's health care and inform the court of any medication related issues.
 - Why: Regular reporting and review help ensure child's physical and mental health needs are met, including follow-up on all health-related recommendations.
 - Measure: Agency and GAL reports always include updates regarding the child's physical and mental health.

- Example 3: Judge knows about any psychotropic medications child is receiving, who prescribe the medications, why they were prescribed, and insists on appropriate consultation with a mental health professional.
 - Why: Court oversight assists with appropriate consideration by a mental health professional prior to administering psychotropic medication to any child in foster care.
 - Measure: Stakeholders report that judge asks about consultation with a mental health provider when children are prescribed psychotropic medication.

GOAL: Finding Families to Reduce the Number of Children in Foster Care

- Example 1: Non-custodial/non-resident parents are identified for every child.
 - Why: Planning for permanency must include both parents from the beginning of the child's placement.
 - Measure: Non-custodial/non-resident parents are personally served with a summons and petition for every CHIPS matter.

- Example 2: Relative search is begun early in the child's placement (some counties have figured out how to begin before placement).
 - Why: Early identification of relatives helps the agency to identify the best placement for the child, including the best legally-permanent home for the child, in the event the child cannot return home.
 - Measure: Judge makes reasonable efforts findings about relative search as required at three months of placement.

- Example 3: Relatives are involved in planning for the child and supporting the parent in using services, maintaining or building a quality parent-child relationship.
 - Why: Family involvement maximizes the parent's ability to engage in services and reunite with the child.
 - Measure: Agency reports routinely reflect relative involvement in supporting agency efforts at reunification.

- Example 4: Judge routinely inquires about relative search, relative placement, and plans for both reunification and a legally permanent alternative if the child cannot return home.
 - Why: Concurrent permanency planning, which is evidence-based practice, helps achieve timely permanency for children.
 - Measure: Number of children placed with relatives increases.

Strategies Worksheet for CJI Priorities for 2014 – 2015: Part 1

Please print legibly

CJI Team County(s): _____ Date: _____

Name of CJI team member filling out
worksheet: _____

Email address of team member filling out
worksheet: _____

GOAL: Implement a Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System

Strengths and challenges of your county's data related to this goal

Identify at least one strategy your team agrees to implement in your county to change practice, procedure, training, or other step under each priority goal in an effort to realize improved outcomes for this goal

Describe in detail how your team will measure whether the change is working

GOAL: Implement Northstar Care for Children

Strengths and challenges of your county's existing practices related to this goal

Identify at least one strategy your team agrees to implement in your county to change practice, procedure, training, or other step under each priority goal in an effort to realize improved outcomes for this goal

Describe in detail how your team will measure whether the change is working

Strategies Worksheet for CJI Priorities for 2014 – 2015: Part 2

Please print legibly

CJI Team County(s): _____ Date: _____

Name of CJI team member filling out
worksheet: _____

Email address of team member filling out
worksheet: _____

Goal: Achieve Timely Permanency For All Children in Foster Care

Strengths and challenges of your county's data related to this goal

Identify at least one strategy your team agrees to implement in your county to change practice, procedure, training, or other step under each priority goal in an effort to realize improved outcomes for this goal

Describe in detail how your team will measure whether the change is working

STRATEGY 2. Improved Child Wellbeing Outcomes: Improved Educational Stability and Planning

Strengths and challenges of your county's data related to this goal

Identify at least one strategy your team agrees to implement in your county to change practice, procedure, training, or other step under each priority goal in an effort to realize improved outcomes for this goal

Describe in detail how your team will measure whether the change is working

Strategies Worksheet for CJI Priorities for 2014 – 2015: Part 3

Please print legibly

CJI Team County(s): _____ Date: _____

Name of CJI team member filling out
worksheet: _____

Email address of team member filling out
worksheet: _____

STRATEGY 2. Improved Child Wellbeing Outcomes: Improved Understanding of Physical and Mental Health Needs of Children in Foster Care

Strengths and challenges of your county's data related to this goal

Identify at least one strategy your team agrees to implement in your county to change practice, procedure, training, or other step under each priority goal in an effort to realize improved outcomes for this goal

Describe in detail how your team will measure whether the change is working

STRATEGY 3: Finding Families to Reduce the Number of Children in Foster Care

Strengths and challenges of your county's data related to this goal

Identify at least one strategy your team agrees to implement in your county to change practice, procedure, training, or other step under each priority goal in an effort to realize improved outcomes for this goal

Describe in detail how your team will measure whether the change is working